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**EURASIA VERSUS CENTRAL CAUCASO-ASIA:
ON THE GEOPOLITICS OF CENTRAL CAUCASO - ASIA**

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Abstract

This paper deals with the rethinking of post-Soviet Central Eurasia. In recent years, the term Central Eurasia, which refers to Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, has been attracting attention as a distinct geopolitical area. According to the approach, which arises from a Eurasianist conception of the region, drawing mainly on geography, equates Russia with Eurasia, an idea that has become popular and much debated in the post-Soviet period. If we proceed from the fact that the eight

countries discussed here form two sub-regions – the Central Caucasus and Central Asia – the larger region, which includes both sub-regions, should be called the Central Caucaso-Asia. The term “Central Caucaso-Asia” reflects a conceptual idea of the interests of strengthening the local countries’ state sovereignty, which, in principle, contradicts the spirit and idea of Russo-centric Eurasianism.

Introduction: Eurasia and Russia

After the Soviet Union’s disintegration recently the relatively new geopolitical term “Central Eurasia” had been gaining currency. It is normally applied to Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, which are treated as a single geopolitical area. I am convinced that this is not completely correct from the geopolitical viewpoint since it still reflects the Russian idea of this geopolitical expanse.

The Eurasian continent consists of two parts of the world—Europe and Asia; for obvious reasons its geographic dimension can be used (and is used) in geopolitical contexts as well. There is another, no less popular, geopolitical idea about Eurasia created by the fact that in the post-Soviet period Russia has been looking for its national and territorial identity. Indeed, for the first time in the last 200 years, Russia has found itself on a much smaller territory. This prompted the search for a conception that would justify its special role at least across the post-Soviet expanse. [1] No wonder the questions—what is Russia? and where is Russia?—remain topical. [2] It should be said that the so-called myths [3] and narratives [4] about the homeland were largely encouraged by the talks about revising the Russian Federation (RF) state borders, which are much more popular in the intellectual and political communities of Russia and among the Russian public than is believed in Western academic writings. [5]

In their search for a solution to the problem outlined above, the RF political leaders can rely on the ideas of Eurasianism that acquired their second wind in the post-Soviet period. [6] Based mainly on geography, [7] they still presuppose a geopolitical revision of the Eurasian continent as a geographical unit. [8]

In fact, late in the 19th century Russian Professor V. Pomanskiy suggested that there were three, rather than two, continents within the Old World. [9] Later, prominent Russian geopolitician Petr Savitskiy called it Eurasia (the limits of which essentially coincided with Russia or, rather, the Russian Empire). [10] He argued that this Eurasia was different from the geographic description of Eurasia offered by Alexander von Humboldt. [11] This gave rise to *Eurasianism*, one of the strongest trends of the Russian geopolitical school that asserted Russia's special historical and cultural role in geographic Eurasia.

Lev Gumilev, a prominent Russian historian, ethnographer, and geographer, who studied the geographic limits of the geopolitical continent of Eurasia, concluded that it consisted of three regions: High Asia (Mongolia, Djungaria, Tuva, and the trans-Baikal area), the Southern region (Central Asia), and the Western region (Eastern Europe). [12]

We all know that geographically the Old World consists of several parts of the world—Europe, Asia (the so-called Eurasian continent) and Africa—while the term “Eurasia” as applied by the Russian geopolitical school narrows down the territorial limits of Eurasia as a geographical continent.

According to the Eurasianists, [13] Russia is a special continent. [14] To resolve the terminological conflict between the geographic and geopolitical interpretations of Eurasia, the geopolitical context uses the terms “Eurasia-Russia,” [15] “Russia-Eurasia,” [16] or “Eurasian Rus.” [17] The problem became topical again in the post-Soviet period: before that geographers used the term “Eurasia” in its geographical meaning. [18] Here it should be said that the discussion of a possible compromise between the correct geographical term for Eurasia and the territory of Russia's domination is still going on. [19]

Since the Russian geopolitical school relies on its own interpretation of Eurasia to justify Russia's imperial ambitions, the term “Central Eurasia” needs specification: to what extent do its geographic and geopolitical interpretations coincide and what problems do they entail?

Traditionally, Central Eurasia as a geographic concept is related to the territory between the Bosphorus in the west and the Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous Region in the east and from the

Kazakh steppes in the north to the Indian Ocean in the south. [20] This means that geographic Central Eurasia almost completely covers geographic Central Asia, but not Central Europe because Asia is much larger than Europe. For this reason Central Europe is left outside the conventional center (Central Eurasia) of the single continent called Eurasia. If, however, the physical dimensions of the continent's parts are put aside, logic suggests that *geographic Eurasia as a continent consists of two parts of the world (Europe and Asia). This means that geographically Central Eurasia should consist of both Central Europe and Central Asia and the the Caucasian region as two links that connect them.* [21] It seems that the geographic interpretation of the Central Eurasian concept is still dominated by its geopolitical interpretation, which equates Russia and Eurasia even in the post-Soviet era. [22]

Those who limit Central Eurasia to Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan are still under the spell of Soviet approaches [23] which leave vast territories, in particular Afghanistan, Northern Iran, the Northern Caucasus, Northwestern China, Cashmere, and the Tibetan Plateau, which share historical, ethnic, and cultural roots with the above countries beyond the region. [24]

While the Russian Eurasian school narrows down the scale of Eurasia as a geographic continent, the differences are less important in the case of Central Eurasia since the Russian geopolitical school is in control of geography.

The Central Caucasus and Central Asia

The contemporary geopolitical interpretation of the term "the Caucasus" appeared when Russia conquered the region. [25] Its presence coined the terms "the Trans-Caucasus" [26] (part of the region found beyond the Main Caucasian Range if viewed from Russia) and "the Northern Caucasus" (the territory to the north of the Trans-Caucasus and the mountain range). At the same time, it should be said that Russian tradition dominated over the international practice of identifying the region.

The entire territory of the Northern Caucasus (which consists of the piedmont and mountain areas) comprises part of the RF. The piedmont area comprises the following RF subjects: the Krasnodar and Stavropol territories, the Astrakhan and Rostov regions, and the Republic of Kalmykia. The mountain area is made up of the republics of Adigey, Daghestan, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachaevo-Cherkessia, North Ossetia-Alania, and Chechnia.

The southern limits of the Caucasus were always identified by the Russian Empire's southern state border in the Caucasus. [27] The border change was amply illustrated by the case of Kars of the late 19th century: when the Russian Empire detached it by force from the Ottoman Empire it came to be known as part of the Caucasus. Later, when Russia lost Kars, Ardahan, and Bayazet, the Russian political and historical documents stopped referring to them as parts of the Caucasus. At the same time, when in November 1918 these regions proclaimed their independence and formed the Southwestern Caucasian (Kars) Democratic Republic, [28] the name clearly indicated its Caucasian affiliation.

This tradition of identifying the southern borders of the Caucasus survived in Soviet times when three Union republics (Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia) were described as Trans-Caucasian.

Early in the 1990s, when the Soviet Union disappeared and the three republics regained their independence, the term "Trans-Caucasus" was replaced by the more correct term "the Southern Caucasus." Russia alone continued using the old term. [29]

Significantly, few academics stop to ponder on the fact that the term "the Southern Caucasus" (as well as "the Trans-Caucasus") reflects the purely Russian geopolitical approach to the region. [30] The terms "the Northern Caucasus" and "the Southern Caucasus" perpetuate the new and old Russian borders in the region.

According to Dr. Ismailov, [31] the Caucasus consists not only of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, and the RF entities enumerated above. It also covers the northeastern Turkish areas (the iles of Agri, Ardahan, Artvin, Van, Igdyr, and Kars) and the northwestern parts of Iran (the ostanha of eastern Azerbaijan—Ardabil, Gilyan, Zanjan, Qazvin, Hamadan, and Western Azerbaijan). This division is based on the fact that the Turkish and Iranian regions have been populated by

Caucasian peoples from time immemorial; for many centuries prior to the Russian conquests they belonged, together with the other Caucasian peoples, to the same ethnocultural and socioeconomic area. This means that these areas can be described as Caucasian on the same grounds as the Northern Caucasus of Russia.

Geographically, the above regions of Turkey and Iran (as well as Armenia, which is described as a Caucasian state) are found at the same distance from the Greater Caucasus and partly fill the space of the Smaller Caucasus.

The above suggests that the Caucasian region consists not of two (the Northern and Southern Caucasus) parts, as the international academic community that relies on Russian geopolitical thought commonly believes, but of three parts: the Central Caucasus (made up of three independent states—Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia); the Northern Caucasus (made up of the RF autonomous units bordering on the Caucasus), and the Southern Caucasus, which covers the parts of Turkey bordering on Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia (the Southwestern Caucasus), and northwestern provinces of Iran (the Southeastern Caucasus).

If we proceed from the specific features of the region's history, Ismailov's conception fully reflects the Caucasian current geopolitical realities.

The region has developed into a meeting place for all sorts of geopolitical and economic interests, [32] while the Central Caucasus accumulates the entire range of regional problems. [33] In addition, the Russian-Georgian war in August 2008 [34] has made a situation in the region more complicated.

Alexander von Humboldt identified Central Asia as a geographic region in the mid-19th century. According to UNESCO, it comprises five former Soviet republics (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan), Mongolia, Afghanistan, Western China, and several parts of India, Pakistan and Iran. [35]

Geopolitical studies of Central Asia became particularly topical in the post-Soviet period when the region acquired five new independent states (previously parts of the Soviet Union). [36]

Despite their more than 15-year-long history, the related system of knowledge—Centralasianism—still demands not only a vaster body of knowledge but also, to a certain extent, renovation. [37]

In Soviet times the region was called Sredniaia Azia (Middle Asia); it included Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan and left out Kazakhstan. [38] Western scholars mostly use the term “Central Asia,” while some Russian authors have not yet dropped the old term “Middle Asia,” [39] which as distinct from the past also includes Kazakhstan. It seems that the latter prefers to get rid of the alien term “Central Asia” because of the threats from the south—it obviously prefers the Soviet formula “Sredniaia Azia and Kazakhstan.” [40]

Another term, Greater Central Asia, is of a more or less recent coinage: in the early 1990s, it described Central and Southwestern Asia and South Asia [41]; later the term was given a more exact geopolitical specification and applied to the five former Soviet republics and Afghanistan. [42]

The above (sometimes contradictory) interpretations of the term “Central Asia” demonstrate that there is no agreement on this issue. [43]

The Kazakh Eurasianists match their Russian colleagues: they insist that Kazakhstan is a Eurasian state which has nothing to do with Central Asia except for bordering on it. [44] It should be said in all justice that a small part of Kazakhstan (Western Kazakhstan) geographically belongs to Eastern Europe; however, Kazakhstan’s historical roots are intertwined with the roots of its Central Asian neighbors. [45]

Why “Central Caucaso-Asia”?

Today academic circles (and not only them) are showing a great interest in studying the problems of the three Central Caucasian countries (Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia) and the five Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) within the same context. The vast region represented by these eight states is now called

Central Eurasia. [46] The same term is also applied to the same eight countries and Afghanistan. [47] I have already written above that, together with the five Central Asian states, it belongs to Greater Central Asia.

There is an even wider interpretation of Central Eurasia, which also includes the Black Sea, Caucasian, Caspian, and Central Asian regions. [48] This means that this approach to the term “Central Eurasia” can hardly be described as constructive—not only because it is rather vague, but also because the regions mentioned above overlap.

The current use of the term “Central Eurasia” not merely fails to describe the region geographically—it is a vehicle of the Russian imperial tradition based on the idea that Russia is Eurasia. If we proceed from this interpretation, we should ask ourselves what geographic name should be given to the region that unites the eight states and what do they have in common? It seems that a geopolitical approach may answer these questions.

The academic community is freely using the term “the Caspian region,” by which different combinations of sub-regions are meant in different publications. This term can hardly be used to denote the region composed of the eight republics enumerated above. Logic suggests that the term should be applied to the five coastal states—Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia, and Turkmenistan. [49] The interpretations of the term, however, are numerous. One of them, for example, implies the western part of Central Asia, southern Russia, the Northern and Central Caucasus, as well as Northern Iran. [50] Other authors apply the term to the five Caspian states and to Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and partly Afghanistan, Pakistan, and even the Middle East. [51] According to the previous interpretation, the region covers a small part of Central Asia and stretches beyond the territories of the eight republics. According to the latter interpretation, the region comprises the above eight states and also many other states, to say nothing of regions, which is not completely justified. The term “the Caspian region” can obviously not be used to describe the region comprising the eight states enumerated above, that is, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

If we proceed from the fact that the eight republics discussed here form two sub-regions—the Central Caucasus and Central Asia—the larger region, which includes both sub-regions, can be called the *Central Caucasus-Asia* (in Russian, *Kavkazia*) [52]: *this preserves the term “Central” as the key one for both regions, while the new term “Caucaso-Asia” is derived from two related terms “Caucasus” and “Asia.”* [53] If the term is applied to nine countries (the original eight and Afghanistan), the region should be called *Greater Central Caucasus-Asia*.

We should not forget that Central Caucasus-Asia as a single region is not integrated because it has no political or cultural homogeneity. [54] At the same time, its component parts have much in common, which makes it possible to regard them as a single region. [55]

All the countries of Central Caucasus-Asia began their post-Soviet lives under more or less identical conditions, without the very much needed institutions of statehood, with a fairly low level of political culture, and a command-(read: communist-)type economy. These problems were reflected, to different extents, in the political and economic transformations in the Central Caucasus-Asian countries. Significantly, all these countries, with the exception of Kazakhstan, demonstrated a reverse dependence between rich hydrocarbon reserves and the pace of market reforms: the reserves obviously failed to stimulate economic reforms. [56]

The Central Caucasus-Asia, to say nothing of the Greater Central Caucasus-Asia, has several conflict sub-regions on its territory, [57] something that interferes, to various degrees, with economic progress in some of the countries; it also prevents the local countries from using local resources to move together in the desired direction.

The region’s rich hydrocarbon resources attract investments and tempt regional and world powers to politically dominate there. [58] Today, when energy policy is blending with the foreign policy of these powers, this is not merely understandable, but also inevitable. [59] At the same time, the Russian factor [60] is still very strong in the Central Asian countries’ energy policies: it seems that this part of the Soviet heritage cannot be eliminated soon.

The Central Caucasus and Central Asia are *mutually complimentary*, which means that they can use their resources together: the West is interested in Central Asian oil and gas, while the

Central Caucasus not only wants to move its own oil and gas to the West, but also to use the energy (and not only) transportation corridor that connects the East and the West. This means that the Central Caucasus can serve as a bridge between Central Asia, a geopolitically closed region, and the West. [61]

It should be said in this context that, according to Zbigniew Brzezinski, Azerbaijan is the most important geopolitical pivot among all the others across the geographic continent of Eurasia. [62] The “geopolitical pivot” status [63] is determined by the country’s geographic location and its potential vulnerability to what the active geostrategic players might undertake in relation to it. [64] By “active geostrategic players” I mean the states strong and determined enough to spread their domination beyond their limits.

By describing Azerbaijan as the “cork in the bottle” filled with the riches of the Caspian Sea and Central Asia, Mr. Brzezinski stresses: “The independence of the Central Asian states can be rendered nearly meaningless if Azerbaijan becomes fully subordinated to Moscow’s control.” [65] Kazakhstan is another of America’s target countries in Central Caucaso-Asia, which is amply illustrated by the Americans’ intention to maximize their investments there. [66]

The idea of post-Soviet state independence and its strengthening as the linchpin of state interests of the Central Caucaso-Asian states rule out their acceptance of not only Eurasianism, but also of the Heartland theory. They both assert their subordination to the imperial schemes of Russia and the West.

The leaders of those Central Caucaso-Asian countries who are seeking a tighter grip on power rather than stronger and developed state sovereignty, to say nothing of democratization, human rights, and a market economy, are prepared to embrace any theory (or rather pseudo-theory) to camouflage their true intentions or justify them.

It would be naive to expect the world and regional powers to step aside and leave Central Caucaso-Asia alone. Reality is much more complicated: these countries should carefully match their national interests and their choice of regional and world powers as partners.

Eurasianism clearly preaches Russia's revival as an empire, but the even more moderate ideas now current in Russia do not exclude the "soft" alternative of imposing its interests on at least some of the local states, irrespective of their national interests.

The USA, on the other hand, is guided by objective considerations [67]: far removed from the region, it cannot dominate over it and is strong enough not to become involved in unnecessary complications in this vast area.

From this it follows that America prefers a situation in which none of the countries dominates over Central Caucaso-Asia to allow the world community free financial and economic access to the region. [68]

9/11 taught the United States how to prevent the threat of new terrorist acts in Central Caucaso-Asia and make victory in the war on terror possible. [69] American interests in the region are not limited to energy issues, [70] which means that it will help the former Soviet republics overcome what remained of the Soviet economic system and promote the market economy and private sector as a solid foundation for economic growth and the rule of law. This will also help them to cope with social and ecological problems and profit from their energy resources and ramified export mainlines. [71]

Some Russian experts admit that Moscow is holding forth about its historical, psychological, and other ties with former Soviet republic, while the United States rejects in principle any theories along the lines of "soft" or "limited" sovereignty of these republics. [72] The Americans are convinced that Russia would profit from richer and more stable neighbors. [73]

The above suggests that America is not seeking integration with any of the regional countries; its policy completely corresponds to the local countries' national interests rooted in strengthening and developing state sovereignty, deepening democratization, and enhancing the market economy.

The newly coined term "Central Caucaso-Asia" does not merely specify the region's geographic identity: it is a conceptual idea of the interests of strengthening the local countries' state

sovereignty, which, in principle, contradicts the spirit and idea of Eurasianism. All the Eurasian deliberations about so-called “Caucaso-Asianism” as potentially a theoretical antipode of Eurasianism are absolutely wrong. This is explained by the political heterogeneity of Central Caucaso-Asia, not all the members of which have similar thoughts about state sovereignty and the road toward it. At the same time, developing and strengthening state sovereignty, deepening democratization, and confirming the principles of a market economy are not prerogatives of the Central Caucaso-Asian countries alone.

Conclusion

There are at least two ways to think about the Eurasian continent in geopolitical terms. The first one focuses on its European and Asian geographic dimensions in its geopolitical vision of the continent. The other approach, which arises from a Eurasianist conception of the region, drawing mainly on geography, equates Russia with Eurasia, an idea that has become popular and much debated in the post-Soviet period.

Viewed from a non-Russian perspective, the Caucasus includes not only Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and the Russian North Caucasus but also northeastern Turkish areas (the ils of Agri, Ardahan, Artvin, Van, Igdyr, and Kars) and the northwestern parts of Iran (the ostanha of eastern Azerbaijan – Ardabil, Gilyan, Zanjan, Qazvin, Hamadan, and Western Azerbaijan). That division reflects the reality that all these regions have been populated by Caucasian peoples from time immemorial. From this it follows that the Caucasus region consists three parts: the Central Caucasus (made up of three independent states—Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia); the Northern Caucasus (consisting of Russia’s autonomous units bordering on the Caucasus), and the Southern Caucasus, which covers the ils of Turkey bordering on Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia (the Southwestern Caucasus), and northwestern ostanha of Iran (the Southeastern Caucasus).

Some geopolitical studies still follow the Soviet tradition and define Central Asia as including only five former Soviet republics: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and

Uzbekistan, a definition that leaves out Afghanistan, Mongolia, and adjacent areas. Another term, Greater Central Asia, is sometimes applied to the five former Soviet republics plus Afghanistan.

If we proceed from the fact that the eight countries discussed here form two sub-regions—the Central Caucasus and Central Asia—the larger region, which includes both sub-regions, should be called the Central Caucaso-Asia, as this preserves the term “Central” as the key one for both regions, while the new term “Caucaso-Asia”.

The term “Central Caucaso-Asia” reflects a conceptual idea of the interests of strengthening the local countries’ state sovereignty, which, in principle, contradicts the spirit and idea of Russo-centric Eurasianism. And this implicit pro-Western vector better suits the interests of these countries for stronger sovereignty, greater democratization, and the expansion of a market economy.

Notes

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[2] For example, Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Geostrategic Triad: Living with China, Europe, and Russia*, Washington, D.C.: The CSIS Press, 2007, pp. 56, 64.

[3] Vera Tolz, “Conflicting ‘Homeland Myths’ and Nation-State Building in Postcommunist Russia,” *Slavic Review*, Vol. 57, No. 2, 1998.

- [4] Şener Aktürk, "Reflections on Central Eurasian Model: A Foundation Reply to Barfield on the Historiography of Ethno-Nationalisms," *Central Eurasian Studies Review*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2006, p. 23.
- [5] Vera Tolz, op. cit., p. 294.
- [6] Lasha Tchantouridze, "After Marxism-Leninism: Eurasianism and Geopolitics in Russia," in Lasha Tchantouridze, ed., *Geopolitics: Global Problems and Regional Concerns*, Winnipeg: Centre for Defense and Security Studies, University of Manitoba, 2004.
- [7] Mark Bassin, "Russia between Europe and Asia: The Ideological Construction of Geopolitical Space", *Slavic Review*, Vol. 50, No. 1, 1991, p. 14.
- [8] For example, Martin W. Lewis, and Kären E. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, p. 222.
- [9] N.A. Nartov, and V.N. Nartov, *Geopolitika*, Moscow: UNITI-DANA, 2007, p. 129. (In Russian).
- [10] P.N. Savitskiy, *Kontinent Evrazia*, Moscow: Agraf Publishers, 1997. (In Russian).
- [11] P.N. Savitskiy, "Geograficheskie i geopoliticheskie osnovy Evraziystva," in A. Dugin, ed., *Osnovy Evraziystva*, Moscow: Arktogeia-Tsentr, 2002, p. 300. (In Russian). According to other authors, it was the Viennese geologist Eduard Suess who coined the term Eurasia in the late 19th century to apply it to Europe and Asia (M. Bassin, op. cit., p. 10).
- [12] L.N. Gumilev, *Ritmy Evrazii*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1993. (In Russian).
- [13] It should be said that the proponents of Eurasianism call themselves Eurasians, which is not totally correct: Eurasians are people living in Eurasia, while those who preach Eurasianism should be called Eurasianists. This term is used here precisely in this context.

- [14] For example, Aleksandr Dugin, *Evraziiskiy triumph*, in A. Dugin, ed., *Osnovy Evraziystva*, Moscow: Arktogeia-Tsentr, 2000. (In Russian).
- [15] For example, N.A. Nartov, and V.N. Nartov, op. cit., pp. 133-135, 137.
- [16] Aleksandr Dugin, *Osnovy geopolitiki. Geopoliticheskoe budushchee Rossii*, Moscow: Arktogeia-Tsentr, 1997, pp. 83-84. (In Russian).
- [17] I. Panarin, *Informatsionnaia voyna i geopolitika*, Moscow: Pokolenie Publishers, 2006, pp. 312-364, 539-543. (In Russian).
- [18] Milan L. Hauner, "The Disintegration of the Soviet Eurasian Empire: An Ongoing Debate," in M. Mesbahi, ed., *Central Asia and the Caucasus after the Soviet Union*, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994, p. 222.
- [19] Ibid., p. 221.
- [20] For example, Kenneth Weisbrode, *Central Eurasia: Prize or Quicksand? Contenting Views of Instability in Karabakh, Ferghana and Afghanistan*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 11.
- [21] Vladimer Papava, "Central Caucaso-Asia" Instead of "Central Eurasia," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (50), 2008, pp. 30-42; Vladimer Papava, "Central Caucaso-Asia: Toward a Redefinition of Post-Soviet Central Eurasia," *Azerbaijan in the World. The Electronic Publication of Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy*, Vol. I, No. 17, October 1, 2008 [<http://www.ada.edu.az/biweekly/issues/156/20090328041927833.html>]. Eldar Islamilov in his article ["Central Eurasia: Its Geopolitical Function in the 21st Century," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (50), 2008], approached the problem from the geopolitical positions and arrived at a similar conclusion.
- [22] Milan L. Hauner, op. cit., p. 217.
- [23] Today this idea of Central Eurasia has gained wide currency (For example, Mehdi Parvizi Amineh, and Henk Houweling, "Introduction: The Crisis in IR-Theory: Towards a Critical Geopolitics Approach," in Mehdi Parvizi Amineh, and Henk Houweling, eds., *Central Eurasia in Global Politics: Conflict, Security and Development*, Leiden: Brill, 2005, pp. 2-

3; Charles Fairbanks, C. Richard Nelson, S. Frederick Starr, and Kenneth Weisbrode, *Strategic Assessment of Central Eurasia*, Washington, D.C.: The Atlantic Council of the United States, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Johns Hopkins University, 2001, p. vii; Karl Meyer, *The Dust of Empire: The Race for Supremacy in the Asian Heartland*, London: Abacus, 2004), p. 206.

[24] Kenneth Weisbrode, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

[25] For example, Nicholas S. Breyfogle, *Heretics and Colonizers: Forging Russia's Empire in the South Caucasus*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2005.

[26] Thomas V. Gamkrelidze, "'TransCaucasia' or 'South Caucasus'? Towards a More Exact Geopolitical Nomenclature," *Marco Polo Magazine*, No. 4/5, 1999.

[27] Eldar Ismailov, and Vladimer Papava, "A New Concept for the Caucasus," *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, Vo. 8, No. 3, 2008, p. 287; Eldar Ismailov, and Vladimer Papava, *The Central Caucasus: Problems of Geopolitical Economy*, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2008, p. 9.

[28] Aidyn Gajiev, *Iz istorii obrazovania i padenia Iugo-Zapadnoi Kavkazskoy (Karskoy) demokraticeskoy respubliki*, Baku: Elm Publishers, 1992. (In Russian); Aidyn Gajiev, *Demokraticheskie respubliki Iugo-Zapadnogo Kavkaza (Karskaia i Araz-Tiurkskaia respubliki)*, Baku: Nurlan Publishers, 2004. (In Russian); Shevket Tagieva, *Demokraticheskie respubliki Iugo-Vostochnogo Kavkaza (Azadistan i Gilianskaia Sovetskaia Respublika)*, Baku: Kavkaz Publishers, 2005. (In Russian).

[29] For example, K.S. Gajiev, *Geopolitika Kavkaza*, Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnoshenia Publishers, 2003. (In Russian).

[30] Eldar Ismailov, and Vladimer Papava, "A New Concept for the Caucasus," op. cit., p. 287; Eldar Ismailov, and Vladimer Papava, *The Central Caucasus: Problems of Geopolitical Economy*, op. cit., p. 9.

- [31] Eldar Ismailov, "O geopoliticheskikh predposylkakh ekonomicheskoy integratsii Tsentral'nogo Kavkaza," *Izvestia AN Gruzii—seria ekonomicheskaiia*, Vol. 10, No. 3-4, 2002. (In Russian).; Eldar Ismailov, and Zia Kengerli, "The Caucasus in the Globalizing World: A New Integration Model," *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2 (20), 2003.
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- [33] For example, Elkhan Nuriyev, *The South Caucasus at the Crossroads: Conflicts, Caspian Oil and Great Power Politics*, Berlin: LIT, 2007.
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