

CCP. That number was not much larger than the total who would play important roles in the GMD, an important reminder of the significant role that Soviet education played in the formation of early governing elites on Taiwan. Nevertheless, for the authors this constituted a failure, one which they attribute largely to two factors: the lack of available personnel who could speak Chinese or teach Russian, or who knew much about Chinese history, culture, and current events, and the involvement of the students in the turbulent Soviet political scene in the 1920s, which meant that students often devoted more time and energy to creating and destroying factions and unmasking supposed enemies of the revolution than they did attempting to learn even basic Marxist principles and Party history.

While the book is comprehensive in the treatment of its subject, the authors do not fulfill their promises to lay out the potential significance of this subject for the larger trajectory of the Chinese revolution, or even the process of international communist revolution as a whole. In the introduction, the authors claim that Deng Xiaoping's reforms resembled the Soviet New Economic Policy of the 1920s and could therefore be explained by the education he received at the time in Moscow, and more broadly that their study "undoubtedly has great significance not only for understanding general problems of the development of the Chinese revolutionary movement in the 1920s and 1930s, but also for comprehending the current socio-political and economic transformation of the PRC" (5). Though this is asserted again in the conclusion, nowhere in the book is there much information on what the students were actually taught about current economic policy or the relevant Marxist-Leninist doctrines. The assumption then, seems to be that a family resemblance plus proximity must be evidence of influence. It will be left to future researchers to build on this work and lay out the significance of this training for understanding the later history of the PRC.

## **Claire P. Kaiser. *Georgian and Soviet: Entitled Nationhood and the Specter of Stalin in the Caucasus.***

**Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2022. vi, 275 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Maps. \$43.95, hard bound.**

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doi: 10.1017/slr.2024.422

The tension between human agency and social structures is an inherently compelling subject. However, exploring human agency within a totalitarian system is challenging. In this context, Claire P. Kaiser's concept of entitlement, portraying Georgians as an "entitled nationhood," is particularly intriguing.

Kaiser defines entitlement as "terminology [that] encompasses both the statistical and legal implications of living in one's 'own' territory, endowing individuals with special rights and privileges to which they could appeal in a variety of ways" (9). The book prompts readers to delve into the entitled positionality of Georgians within the Soviet Union while encouraging discourse surrounding the comparative and contrasting dynamics between Georgian entitled nationality and other ethnicities. Kaiser posits that Georgians were not passive recipients of central policy but actively pursued local agendas. She delineates Georgia's entitled claims, both successful and unsuccessful, and elucidates their negotiation

process within a system that provided both opportunities and limitations. The mere articulation and assertion of such claims can be considered an act of agency.

Ch. 1 discusses the emergence of Georgian entitlement, examining the policies enacted by figures such as Iosif Stalin and Lavrentii Beria that catalyzed the inception of this ideological construct. It discusses Stalin's approach and solution to national questions and his emerging cult, setting the stage for Georgian entitlement. Two pivotal cases are discussed: the Soviet Census, condensing the 191 *narodnosti* into sixty-two categorical ethnonational categories, and the establishment of the official primordialist Georgian historical narrative by historians Simon Janashia and Nikoloz Berdzenishvili. Ch. 2 examines how GSSR foreign policy was endowed only by Soviet institutions. The key actors of the local agency here are historians Janashia and Berdzenishvili, a concerned citizen named Giorgi Gamkharashvili, and officials from the Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kandid Charkviani and Giorgi Kiknadze, under Stalin's patronage. Kaiser then analyzes the unsuccessful claims of the Fereydan Georgians and Saingilo, highlighting the local scholarly and public advocacy that failed to achieve changes (territorial concessions from Turkey and Azerbaijan) but still marked a symbolic victory. In Ch. 3, Kaiser explores the ethnic consolidation within Georgia, despite the expulsion of numerous ethnic Georgians.

This investigation particularly focuses on "Operation Volna," which targeted ethnic minorities for expulsion (Greeks, Turks, Dashnaks, and others). Key political figures (Beria, K. Charkviani, and Akaki Mgeladze) are identified as local agents of demographic homogenization. Chs. 4 and 6 analyze pivotal events, such as the 1956 demonstrations and the Abkhazian independence demand, and entitled agency, illustrating the negotiation of center-periphery relations between Moscow, Tbilisi, and Sukhumi. Despite the protest movement's visible setback on April 9, indicative of ruptured relations between Georgians and the Soviet regime, Kaiser contends that it spurred a notable change in Soviet policy towards Georgia. This shift, marked by reduced intervention, facilitated Georgia's acquisition of greater autonomy and benefits, shaping a transformative path in the region's socio-political landscape. Ch. 5 scrutinizes the advantages stemming from the Soviet Union's urbanization and modernization projects that made "Georgian" Tbilisi's existence possible. Focusing on a post-Stalin national social contract, this is the period she identifies as the one when the "hegemony of the entitled Georgian nationality flourished in Georgia" (7). The novelty and contribution of this chapter is this interesting switch from political figures, such as Eduard Shevardnadze (who is a crucial enabler and assuager in navigating the national social contract) to entitled citizens who become agents of entitled nationhood (explored on the example of Saburtalo, building designs, second economy, and letters of grievances). In Ch. 6, Kaiser brings attention to the 1978 Georgian protests related to removing the Georgian language from GSSR's constitution and illustrates how rights claims were openly made "in the name of a national-civic cause, while still being under a Soviet imperial umbrella" (164).

One of the novelties of Kaiser's analysis is that it incorporates three important times of protests (1956, 1978, and 1989), and she develops the historical context of entitled nationhood. At times, Kaiser points to the non-uniqueness of the Georgian group, such as in migration patterns to urban areas, language clauses in the Constitution, and territorial claims. While its forms were not entirely unique to Georgians, Georgian entitlement was still identified through the ethnic republic-level leadership that resulted more in Georgian-versus-Georgian dynamics rather than a center-periphery dichotomy. Kaiser concludes that the Soviet Union successfully shaped nations, producing Soviet Georgia.

Kaiser's work adds to Erik R. Scott's *Familiar Strangers: The Georgian Diaspora and the Evolution of Soviet Empire* (2016), an examination of the successes and uniqueness of the Georgian diaspora within the Soviet empire. Both authors depict Georgians as both agents and objects of imperial policies, contrasting with the post-April 9, 1989 narrative of victimhood. Kaiser demonstrates a deep grasp of Soviet studies, with particular expertise in the Georgian context and the literature on empires drawing from archival collections in Tbilisi, Moscow, and Stanford; extremely valuable data.

The work stands as an undeniably valuable resource for social scientists studying individual, community, or national agency. Additionally, scholars specializing in the Soviet Union will find the Georgian case an exemplary model for the discussion of nationalism in the Soviet context. Furthermore, the comparative analysis with neighboring post-Soviet nations such as Armenia and Azerbaijan offers a deeper examination and very nuanced approach.

## **Allen J. Frank. *Kazakh Muslims in the Red Army, 1939–1945.***

**Brill's Inner Asian Library 42. Leiden: Brill, 2022. v, 216 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. \$108.00, hard bound.**

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doi: 10.1017/slr.2024.476

Allen J. Frank's book will be of interest to World War II historians, Sovietologists, and Central Asianists, particularly those in cultural and literary fields. The description of Kazakh life-ways on the eve of WWII and the discussion of letters written by Kazakh soldiers was fascinating and potentially crosses over multiple disciplines. Frank discusses literary genres, the military history of the Kazakh steppe, and pre-Soviet and early Soviet Kazakh culture. His work with Kazakh-language sources is truly admirable, and a valuable contribution to scholarship of Soviet Central Asia, though one wishes that Frank took into account the work of Central Asianist scholars of cultural history and anthropology (Diana Kudaibergenova, Jeanne Féaux de la Croix, Margarethe Adams, Julie McBrien, Eva Dubuisson), putting his work in a broader context and in dialogue with recent scholarship.

Frank's is a very rich subject, one on which little is written, particularly in English. The author's contributions to the literature are considerable (as seen in his previous works, *Muslim Religious Institutions in Imperial Russia: The Islamic World of Novouzensk District and the Kazakh Inner Horde, 1780–1910* (Brill, 2001), *Qurban-'Ali Khalidi: An Islamic Biographical Dictionary of the Eastern Kazakh Steppe* (co-edited with Mirkasym A. Usmanov, Brill, 2005), *Bukhara and the Muslims of Russia: Sufism, Education, and the Paradox of Islamic Prestige* (Brill, 2012), and *Saduaqas Ghilmani: Biographies of Islamic Scholars of Our Times*, 2 vols., ed. by Ashirbek Muminov, Allen J. Frank, and Aitzhan Nurmanova (IRICA, 2018). He writes in English, but uses a many Kazakh-language sources and references Kazakh scholars, including ethnomusicologist Gulsym Baytenova (58). He also accesses German-language sources, adding breadth to the subject of Soviet soldiers during WWII, including the fascist and racist assumptions about Central Asians.

This book focuses on a particular kind of Kazakh-language genre, often in verse, called *khat-oleng* (letter poem). Frank writes specifically about the Kazakh focus of these missives, indicating that the letter writers often write about a unique wartime experience they underwent as Kazakhs in the Soviet Army. The genre seems to have a lot in common with spoken and sung poetry, and the author has possibly missed an opportunity to make significant connections between Kazakh spoken and written verse forms. Though Frank mention other verse genres (38–39), he does not delve into the similarities and relationships between oral and written genres. For example, he mentions that accounts of famine are not mentioned in wartime correspondence. But maybe they are present in oral forms of the day, such as *aitys*? The fear of reprisals and censorship would clearly be greater in written verse, making oral