

there is such a thing as Bonapartism as an essentialized political type? Did the French Revolution really end “feudalism while simultaneously inaugurating in Europe an age of industrial capitalism” (212)? One also wonders about the depth of understanding of the French revolutions among party members, given their low literacy rates in the early Bolshevik years.

Overall, the book is a goldmine of detail about a formative influence on the Bolshevik leadership.

JONATHAN DALY  
*University of Illinois at Chicago*

***Russian Imperialism Revisited: From Disengagement to Hegemony.*** By Domitilla Sagramoso. *Contemporary Security Studies*. London: Routledge Publishers, 2020. xviii, 368 pp. Index. Tables. Maps. \$136.00, hard bound.  
doi: 10.1017/slr.2022.56

Russia's relations with the former Soviet space has not been linear, the assertiveness of the Kremlin varying over time due to a series of endogenous and exogenous factors. The book of Domitilla Sagramoso examines Moscow's interaction with its “Near Abroad” over almost thirty years, trying to understand whether Russia's actions have been motivated by legitimate state interests or by the desire to restore an informal empire.

After a short theoretical framework, where the author presents the imperialist argument, the book develops an empirical analysis rich in details, aimed at determining whether after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia's actions in the newly independent republics resemble neo-imperialist behavior, similar to that of France in sub-Saharan Africa. Sagramoso looks at Russian policies from different angles: political, economic, military, and institutional, granting particular attention to the integrationist projects—the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Union State of Russia and Belarus, the Eurasian Economic Community (EvrAzEs), the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), as well as the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

The first part of the book scrutinizes Russian relations with the former Soviet space under Yeltsin's two terms as President. The author argues that in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's dissolution, despite the longing for empire, the Russian leadership, motivated by a strong anti-imperialist attitude, recognized the former Soviet republics as sovereign and independent states. However, the harsh criticism of the political opposition, the partial discrimination of Russian minorities, the eruption of military conflicts, and the economic interdependence among the newly independent republics would soon lead to a more assertive stance by Moscow towards the former Soviet space, which only crystalized during the second term of Boris Yeltsin. Yet, the economic weakness of Russia and the chaos in its political decision-making have strongly impacted Moscow's ability to project its power onto the former Soviet space, reducing its ability to behave assertively. As such, the author argues that the record of Russia's neo-imperialism during Yeltsin's Presidential terms is a mixed one, with elements of anti-imperialism, neo-imperialism, hegemony, and legitimate state-interests altering or inter-mingling and co-existing.

With Vladimir Putin as President, Russia adopted a much more assertive policy towards the former Soviet space. While in the early 2000s Russia's policy towards the former Soviet space was characterized primarily by a pragmatic approach, by the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, the Kremlin increasingly put in place

and actively developed a neo-imperialist project, pushing for deeper military and economic integration within the CIS, the Union State of Russia and Belarus, CSTO, and EvAzEs, utilizing energy and bilateral trade as weapons and deepening ties with the separatist regions in Georgia and Moldova. The neo-imperialism paradigm reached a new level during the Dmitrii Medvedev “interregnum,” with the invasion of Georgia and the process of almost complete absorption of the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia into Russia.

A display of evident neo-imperialist behavior has characterized the period since Putin’s return to the Presidency, in 2012. The expansion of military, security and economic ties with the separatist regions, the great pressure on the former Soviet countries to stay away from any close cooperation with the west, and, finally, the annexation of Crimea and the escalation of tensions in eastern Ukraine have shown how far is Russia willing to go to fulfill its strategic objectives.

The author concludes that even if Russia’s neo-imperial tradition was revived more forcefully in the 2010s, its policies did not go as far as revising the entire post-Soviet map and many of its actions did not produce the expected outcomes (Russia annexed Crimea but lost Ukraine). In addition, neither the integrationist projects in the former Soviet space can be seen entirely as neo-imperialist enterprises. Even if Moscow clearly considers the “Near Abroad” as an area of Russia’s “special interests,” its endeavors to develop CIS, the Union State, EvrAzEs, EAEU, and CSTO also in terms of their own security concerns and economic interdependency. In addition, the former Soviet states themselves have often welcomed and benefited from Russia’s economic, financial, or military assistance. As such, in Sagramosos’s opinion, Moscow’s policies in the former Soviet space should be seen through the lenses of an aspiring hegemon, rather than of a fully accomplished neo-imperialist power (344).

The book brings important contributions to the fields of international relations and area studies and is highly recommended for both those studying or conducting in-depth research on Russian politics and the former Soviet space.

VASILE ROTARU

*National University of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest*

***The Bukharan Crisis: A Connected History of 18th-Century Central Asia.*** By Scott C. Levi. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020. xiv, 208 pp. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Figures. Maps. \$32.00, paper. doi: 10.1017/slr.2022.57

Scott C. Levi’s *The Bukharan Crisis* is an erudite and ambitious work that gathers a wide range of ideas, scholarly fields, and historiographic debates into a slim, readable volume. Although thematically related to Levi’s earlier *Rise and Fall of Khoqand*, this is an entirely different sort of book. Above all, it is an intellectual project—a whole-hearted commitment to writing a “connected history,” which places Central Asia into broader Eurasian and global contexts. As such, *The Bukharan Crisis* is light on historical narrative, and relies little on primary sources. Instead, it synthesizes a diverse secondary literature (largely, though by no means exclusively, recent Anglophone scholarship), in order to characterize the economic and political dynamics of early-modern Central Asia, and to point toward causal explanations for the fall of the Ashtarkhanid dynasty in Bukhara.

Structurally, the book consists of four complementary but loosely-coupled chapters. To begin, Levi provides a concise and fairly conventional political history of early-modern Central Asia, with emphasis on the Bukharan Khanate. Second,