

mainly due to their reluctance to identify and acknowledge the structural, social, and cultural foundations of the problem. The remaining two chapters are devoted to the experiences of women displaced from Abkhazia and South Ossetia due to the separatist conflicts of the 1990s and the 2008 war with Russia. These chapters provide the reader with women's accounts of life as experienced before and after displacement, as well as analyses of the reconfigurations of gender identities and agency resulting from the new economic and social circumstances facing IDP families, in which women increasingly take on new roles as primary breadwinners.

"Part III. Identities, Representations and Resistance" engages with "traditional" gender norms and ideas of what constitutes "proper" femininity and masculinity. Focusing on empirical cases as diverse as images of "the New Woman" in Soviet Georgian Cinema, the transformative experience of female labor migration, public attitudes toward gender equality, and the resistance and attitudes facing transgender persons and the nascent LGBT movement, they all demonstrate the prevalence and power of these "traditional" and predominantly heteronormative constructs in Georgian society. Through the descriptions and analyses, however, they also, implicitly or explicitly, call into question the natural legitimacy of these constructs, something they share with the chapters of the volume as a whole.

The essays of the collection are clearly written and, with varying levels of explicit analytical and theoretical framing and discussion, all provide relevant and important contributions to gaining a fuller picture of the multiplicity of intertwined historical, socio-political, and cultural conditions that have shaped, and continue to shape, dominant gender norms, as well as the gendered experience and agency of women and sexual minorities in Georgia. In doing so, the individual chapters, several of which explicitly draw on personal positioning and experience, do not as much engage in explicit conversation with a common theoretical framework as they offer descriptions of circumstances and processes that are in themselves illustrative of the complexities and contradictions inherent in debates and struggles pertaining to gender in Georgia, as well as to feminist theory and activism in a wider sense.

The book vividly illustrates that in past and present Georgia, gender and sexuality constitute a battlefield shaped by competing geo-political interests and identifications, and are discursively structured around binaries such as "modern—traditional," "liberal—conservative," "moral—immoral," "individual—collective," "Soviet—post-Soviet," and "West—East." Through giving voice to a group of predominantly female Georgian scholars and activists, the volume nuances and challenges these dichotomies and their association with, and attribution to, national as well regional and global actors. As a collection, the volume is valuable reading for anyone with an interest in the complex and contested configurations of gender categories, identities, experiences, and agency in Georgia (and beyond), and for their relation to history, power, nation, and geo-politics.

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***Paradox of Power: The Logics of State Weakness in Eurasia.*** Ed. John Heathershaw and Edward Schatz. Central Asia in Context. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2017. xi, 316 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Figures. Tables. \$31.95, paper. doi: 10.1017/slr.2019.53

Many Eurasian states are often described as weak and by extension violent, corrupt, and/or ineffective. *Paradox of Power*, edited by John Heathershaw and Edward

Schatz, challenges these characterizations and instead offers an insightful analysis of the varied logics of state weakness, demonstrating how purportedly “weak states” can be durable and inspiring, as well as fragile and frustrating (11).

Heathershaw and Schatz introduce the volume with a thorough and illuminating review of existing historical and contemporary social science literature on how the categories of state strength and weakness emerged in the post-World War II era. They challenge this categorization because it hinders our ability to understand how weak states “carry out their duties” and “play roles designed to satisfy an audience” (9). While critiques of the state strength/weakness approach are not new, their original contribution lies in proposing a focus on the *qualities* of stateness, or in their words, the “nature of state institutions and the expectations and performances of it” (11).

The volume identifies three dimensions of state weakness in Eurasia, including: how states consolidated after independence in 1991, how they internationalized and became part of “complex global assemblages” (18), and how they performed their duties and how this performance was projected and experienced. The chapter contributors—leading scholars trained in a range of disciplines, including political science, anthropology, geography, and international relations—expand on each of these three logics using a variety of methods and empirical evidence from Eurasian countries, including Russia, Georgia, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Ukraine, as well as Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The first section (Logics of Consolidation) investigates how bribery, clientelism, corruption, and cooptation of organized crime characterize contemporary Eurasian state consolidation. The chapters answer questions such as why the civil war between 1992 and 1997 in Tajikistan ended so quickly and why the subsequent 20 years since the war have been relatively stable (Jesse Driscoll); how leaders of Georgia and Kyrgyzstan coopt or repurpose local patronage networks to regain authority in restive regions (Scott Radnitz); under what conditions and “how organized crime contributes to state strength” (61, Alexander Kapatadze); how corruption works and constitutes the state in Kyrgyzstan (Johan Engvall); and how the Georgian government uses state-sanctioned imprisonment to address poverty and unemployment (Gavin Slade). While these processes help us understand the logics of consolidation and relative stability in the present, many of the authors in this section argue that relying on them may come at the expense of building state institutions and legitimate authority.

The second section (Logics of Internationalization) illuminates diverse international assemblages in the region. The contributions compare the ways in which Central Asian and African states have similarly internationalized (Klaus Schlichte); explain how Armenia has been able to not only maintain territorial integrity but also to “sustain and consolidate military occupation” (120, David Lewis); explore how the myth of the Russian strong state and great power, *derzhavnost'*, is “produced and performed in international practices and elite discourse” (130, Stefanie Ortmann); and illuminate the domestically- and internationally-influenced efforts to strengthen the state in Bosnia Herzegovina through the creation of a Court (Alex Jeffrey). This section, to different degrees, underscores the centrality and diversity of international influences in the state building and legitimation processes.

Finally, the third section (Logics of Performance) analyzes how states carry out their duties and narrate their performances to domestic and international audiences. Two of the chapters seek to understand variation within states, one asking how in the sphere of religious regulation in Uzbekistan, violence emerged in one context and peace in another (Alisher Khamidov); the other why weak states such as Ukraine seem resilient at certain times and unstable at others (Paul D'Anieri). The other two chapters of this section provide a useful contrast: one exposes cracks in the natural resource-buoyed “strong” Kazakhstani state by investigating the deadly crackdown of

labor protesters in Zhanaozen (Elena Maltseva); while the other investigates how state weakness in Kyrgyzstan coexists with the presence of citizen participating in providing public goods in the form of *ashar*, or “communal commitment and socially compelling modes of volunteerism” in the education sector (220, Madeleine Reeves). The concluding chapter by Mark Beissinger echoes the call by the editors for scholars to move beyond the focus on North American and west European states as universal and teleological ideals (223), and synthesizes key themes and findings from the volume.

In sum, the book offers varied ways of conceptualizing and thinking about state weakness in Eurasia, and the contributions are written in a refreshingly jargon-free prose, thus accessible for teaching at the upper-undergraduate and graduate levels. The chapters also advance our understanding of key features of Eurasian states that may be of interest to readers of *Slavic Review*, including the “power vertical” (Radnitz and Ortmann), center-region tensions (Radnitz, Kupatadze and Khamidov), bribery/corruption (Driscoll and Engvall), and state use of violence (Driscoll, Kupatadze, Maltseva, Khamidov). More broadly, readers inspired by theories of affect and improvisation as they relate to the state will want to read the chapters by Reeves and Jeffrey, and those interested in the ways in which informal practices and institutions are woven into the formal state system (instead of functioning parallel to it) will find almost all of the chapters relevant.

Finally, the volume contains important insights related to how we study state weakness. Existing literature on the state in Eurasia, for example a 2014 edited volume *Ethnographies of the State: Everyday Lives in Central Asia*, adopted by some contributors in this volume such as Reeves and Jeffery, privileges an ethnographic approach. Other contributors, including Driscoll, Kupatadze, Radnitz, Engvall, Slade, and Khamidov, conducted extensive field research and interviews as the foundation for their empirical analyses. And others, including Ortmann, Maltseva, D’Anieri, and Schlichte, rely on close reading and analysis of local texts and international discourses and data. Future iterations of this promising pluralist research agenda could be even more explicit about the methods, logics of inquiry, and language skills conducive to illuminating these paradoxes of power, and the associated challenges and possibilities related to advancing our understanding of state weakness in this region.

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***Rebellious Parents: Parental Movements in Central-Eastern Europe and Russia.***

Ed. Katalin Fábrián and Elżbieta Korolczuk. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017. xii, 364 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Figures. \$40.00, paper.

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Changes in east central Europe and Russia in the post-communist period led many parents to perceive new possibilities to take control over childbearing and rearing. Others experienced these changes as threatening to family autonomy. Given the right circumstance, carefully explored in this volume, both opportunities and threats can provoke intense emotions and spur efforts to collectively resist, rebel, and sometimes constructively influence public policy.

The parental prerogatives in contention include the severity and choice of discipline for children, control over children’s exposure to new beliefs about gender and sexuality, the division of caregiving time and tasks between parents in a marriage, child custody after a separation or divorce, the options for raising a child with mental