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## **In this Issue**

New waves of globalization and regionalization, accompanied by the competitive struggle of world and regional powers in the geopolitical space, contribute to the emergence of new challenges and security threats to the national interests of all states, including Armenia. One of these threats is the situation of 'no war, no peace' or 'war, no peace' as a new form of hybrid wars, therefore, the study of the phenomenon of modern 'hot wars' and 'cold peace', the characteristics of their most important aspects is of political scientific interest and is the focus of attention of modern social and humanitarian research.

Modern 'hot wars' and 'cold peace' are quite complex phenomena, since by their nature they imply the use of military and non-military technologies simultaneously or alternately, depending on the object of influence. Military technologies include the use of special forces, private military companies, terrorist and extremist groups, partisan detachments and others. Non-military technologies or tools include intelligence and subversive activities of special services, information wars, cyber wars, sanctions wars, media resources, Internet space, social networks, etc.

Modern warfare can include traditional warfare, guerrilla tactics, terrorist attacks, criminal violence, and coercion. All these various activities can be carried out by different methods or even by one department, but with one goal in order to obtain the greatest synergistic and psychological effect. In this context, an example is today's hybrid events in Nagorno-Karabakh, Armenia, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq and other hot spots in which the army, terrorist groups, private military companies, criminals, and protest potential are involved, etc.

At the present stage, within the framework of their geopolitical and geo-economic interests, modern wars are waged among world and regional powers, thereby ignoring the UN Charter and violating international law, moreover, on the territory of another state, while denying or accepting their involvement in everything, taking into account exclusively their national interests. The basic principle of modern wars is that they are never declared and combine various types of combinations of overt and covert actions, provocations and sabotage.

Despite the fact that back in 2015 the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 goals (Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)) were approved, the world community once again shows its inconsistency and lack of commitment to this extremely important topic. In the conditions of modern wars, it becomes very difficult to fulfill the obligations that were strengthened in the document by the 193 United Nations Member States. But the most important thing is that, along with other obligations, the United Nations Member States also assumed obligations to ensure and protect peace, the guarantor of which should first of all be the Five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

In 'From Conflict to Peace? Stateness Assessment of the South Caucasus countries at the crossroads of political processes from 2017 to 2022', Violetta Manukyan analyzes the possibility of transition from conflict to peace, taking into account the stability of statehood of recognized and unrecognized countries of the South Caucasus at the crossroads of political processes from 2017 to 2022. According to the author, the

war and conflicts in the South Caucasus, around Nagorno-Karabakh, Transnistria, Abkhazia and South Ossetia not only pose a security threat to direct participants in military escalation, but also, beyond this framework, pose a threat to the entire region. The issue of resolving these multi-layered conflicts is complicated by the fact that the positions of the parties involved in the conflict are completely opposite, and none of the parties to the conflict at this stage of negotiations is ready to make serious compromises and concessions that would lead to a future resolution of the conflict. Added to this is the complex relationship of the parties involved in their settlement, which is in the sphere of interests of the EU, the USA and Russia. According to the author, the concept of statehood and the methodologies for its assessment have conceptual and functional significance, since the features, difficulties and opportunities for assessing the statehood of recognized and unrecognized states are revealed. Using the Peace Index, the article assesses the levels of statehood of the three recognized countries of the South Caucasus: Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, as well as the three unrecognized states of the South Caucasus: Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia from 2017 to 2022.

The author examines the recognized countries and the conflict of the unrecognized countries of the South Caucasus from the point of view of achieving stable peace and international law, studying it in such legal frameworks as: national legal and international legal principles, the UN Charter, as well as the Charter of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In his research, the author also studies ethnic conflicts in post-Soviet countries, based on economic factors, believing that they are able to explain the causes of wars and ethnic cleansing to a greater extent than political and social transformations.

In his article ‘The role of nuclear and renewable energy in ensuring the energy security of Türkiye in the face of new challenges of geo-economic development’, Mikayel Avanesyan, based on a comparative analysis, determines the strengthening of Türkiye’s role in the internationalization and globalization of world energy, as well as the growth of energy interdependence, developing large-scale cooperation in order to ensuring energy security.

The article examines the political aspects of interaction between Türkiye and Russia in the field of energy policy and the impact of their interaction on regional political stability at the present stage. According to the author, it is a fact that in modern conditions the energy problem in the international arena manifests itself as a global factor influencing the state of the world economy, used as a political instrument of influence in interstate relations and restraining European integration. In the context of the changed balance of power in Eurasia, Türkiye is increasing its rapid activity in the post-Soviet space, with the countries of which it had historical, cultural, and ethnic ties. The supply of energy resources from the region to world markets was the most important area of this activity. In addition to the fact that the diversification of routes for transporting energy resources from the Caspian Sea region to world markets with the help of Russia strengthens its geopolitical status, the perception of Türkiye not as a conductor of US interests in the region, but as a regional partner of Russia, which cannot but cause justified concern for the US and the EU.



The article notes that by developing cooperation with Russia, Turkey is taking decisive steps for the strategic development of nuclear and renewable energy with the help of Russian companies. At the same time, the author should keep in mind that all this is happening in a country in which three-quarters of the various energy resources are provided by imports and for which Russia is already the largest supplier of energy resources. The article also notes that the prospects for the development of bilateral cooperation in the energy sector will be influenced by third parties and, above all, the West. The influence of third forces and its nature will be determined not only by the development of relations with Russia, but also by Turkey's overall course towards acquiring the status of a powerful regional force in the process of globalization.

In 'The imperative to shift Armenia's peripherality: contradictions of institutionalisation and functioning in conditions of democratic transition', Valentina Gevorgyan analyzes the main trends of the modern foreign policy process of Armenia, which is influenced by globalization, transnational political participation, geopolitical factors of the regional system of international relations, and internal political changes. The limited number of energy resources puts on the political agenda of the Republic of Armenia the issues of finding and using other resources to achieve foreign policy goals and ensure the national interests of the small state. The relevance of the topic of this article is determined by the fact that in the conditions of globalization and European integration, the system of interaction between participants in the regional and world political process is undergoing a period of transformation. The author pays special attention to the fact that state institutions and civil society organizations remain the most important actors, under the influence of the globalization process and the associated post-modernization cultural shift, they are forced to take into account group and institutional impulses emanating from horizontal networks of political participation. In this sense, a comparative study of the possibility of active participation in the global and regional political process of the Armenian state with limited resources, as well as the prospects for its use of new types of resources based either on information and communication components, or on the potential of civil society actors in international relations, seems very relevant.

In the article 'Historical rethinking of relations with the First Republic of Armenia and the United States of America: the dilemma of orientation and expectations', Gegham Petrosyan discussed issues of the history of the Armenian people from the point of view of the dilemma of orientation and expectations of the Armenian political elite in the conditions of state-building of the First Republic of Armenia. The author analyzes the events of the First World War and after the war, which became a real challenge to the unresolution of the Armenian issue, and its consequences for the Armenian people were ambiguous. Despite the efforts of the United States and its allies to protect the Armenian people, nevertheless, taking advantage of the outbreak of hostilities, the government of the Young Turks organized the Armenian Genocide and the mass deportation of the population of Western Armenia. The purpose of this study is an attempt to rethink the historical process of restoration of independent Armenian statehood at the end of May 1918 in the context of geopolitical events. The author highlights the characteristic features of the USA role in supporting the efforts of the Armenian political elite, thereby contributing to the preservation of stability in the

Transcaucasia. However, the First Independent Armenian Republic arose in an extremely unfavorable military and geopolitical situation. According to the author, Independent Armenia could not withstand the Turkish onslaught alone, since the troops of the Ottoman Empire crossed the pre-war Russian-Turkish border, invading Transcaucasia. The government of the First Republic of Armenia was forced to take into account the circumstances that arose, and the Turkish authorities were ready to recognize the independence of Armenia, but only if they renounced claims to the territory of Western Armenia.

In ‘The smart power of Abenomics: shadows of Japanization and long-term challenges’, Simona Chuguryan, Kristina Baculakova and Rudolf Kucharcik analyze the “Japanese economic miracle” and the policy of Abenomics in Japan, which was able to successfully borrow foreign achievements while preserving Japanese identity, their use in the process of forming a national economic model in coordinates of the market system are rooted in the national task of self-strengthening of the country. The authors argue the key role of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe Japan, taking into account the effective reform of conservative industrialization, creating a two-level industrial structure, which can serve as a useful example for solving modern problems of further reforming and improving the economic system of modern Japan. According to the authors, the smart power of Abenomics lies in the fact that Shinzo Abe’s rise to power in 2012 and his early initiatives fundamentally changed Japan’s foreign policy and defense policies through the Abe Doctrine. In this context, the strengthening of the Japanese-American security alliance was important, which allowed the Abe government to solve complex foreign policy problems. From the conclusions of the article it is clear that the Abe government covers the maximum number of areas in which Japan has managed to achieve great success in the development of political dialogue, economic cooperation, and interaction in the field of security and defense. The European direction received significant development; a strategic partnership agreement was concluded, as well as an economic partnership agreement with the EU.

In ‘Reconstructing the political future of Armenia: overcoming contemporary turbulence through role models’, Garik Poghosyan notes that public life and the political system of Armenia cannot develop without foreseeing the future, without forecasting it. According to the author, as practice shows, the higher the level of development of forecasts, the higher their quality, and therefore the more reliable and effective, the more effective the planning of the political development of post-war Armenian society and its management. The author’s political forecasting as a relatively new vision is of not only academic interest, since its necessity is also due to the fact that the components of post-war Armenian politics are dynamic in nature, that is, they are characterized by constant fluidity and variability. Without the ability to scientifically foresee the course and development of political processes, it is impossible to ensure the stability of the development and functioning of the political system of Armenia as a whole, to promote its painless adaptation to internal and external changes, adequate response to the impulses and demands of social groups and individuals, articulation and aggregation of their interests. And one of the parameters of a stable functioning political system of post-war Armenia, which any governance actor strives to achieve, is the predictability of the dynamics of its internal processes.

Obviously, to achieve the latter, as well as to ensure rational management of society, forecasting, based on taking into account known patterns and identifying trends in the political sustainable development of Armenia, is called upon, among other things.

This Second Issue of the Journal includes three book reviews on liberal hegemony, international reality, as well as political populism and Caucasian Albania. In this sense, the concept of regressive development has retained a strong position only within the framework of an illiberal and populist worldview. The decline in popularity of the theory of linear progress was facilitated by modern humanity's awareness of the impossibility of endless progressive upward development due to a whole complex of political, economic, natural, climatic and other reasons. Cyclic models are used in studies of political processes of a circular nature. Consideration of the problem of periodicity and recurrence of political development within the framework of the books under review allowed us to conclude that today the theory of nonlinear wave and cyclic rhythms of historical and political evolution, in which a synthesis of linearity and cyclicity is carried out, is popular among political scientists, transitologists and political forecasters. In its context, the processes of political modernization and transformation of transitional political systems and societies are studied.

*Ashot Aleksanyan*  
*Magda Arsenyan*

## FROM CONFLICT TO PEACE? STATENESS ASSESSMENT OF THE SOUTH CAUCASUS COUNTRIES AT THE CROSSROADS OF POLITICAL PROCESSES FROM 2017 TO 2022

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### Abstract

The article reflects on the sustainability and security perspectives of the South Caucasus region. While discovering the different approaches to the notion of “stateness” and its assessment methodologies, the article brings up the problems of insufficient clarification of the concept, the need for further work on its conceptual and functional formulations. As the assessment also covers the non-recognized states, the peculiarities, difficulties and possibilities of stateness assessment of non-recognized states are revealed. The article proposes a definition of stateness and an integral model for stateness assessment, which would make it possible to carry out the stateness assessment of both recognized and non-recognized states within the framework of one model. With the help of the developed ‘Peace Index’, the article comprehensively assesses the levels of stateness of the three recognized: Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan; and the three non-recognized states of the South Caucasus: Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia through all four fields of stateness – political, economic, social and security for the years of 2017 to 2022. On the basis of the carried-out assessment, the article articulates policy recommendations for the South Caucasus countries and the region as a whole - guiding how to handle the current delicate situation in this strategically and geopolitically important region. The article suggests a) an immediate regional integration, b) economic cooperation as a key for conflict resolution, c) change of peace mediation format, d) support to the reconsideration of government-civil society relations format, making the civil societies of the South Caucasus states the inner constant peace-demanders and development-forcers - as the package-wise steps to transfer the South Caucasus region from conflict to peace

**Keywords:** stateness, sustainability, state effectiveness, assessment, peace, resilience, South Caucasus, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh.

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## Introduction

After the collapse of the Soviet Union more than two dozen of countries (including the South Caucasus states) declared their independence and had to undergo a unique process throughout the history of mankind: post-Soviet transformation (Torosyan, Sukiasyan 2014). The societies of these countries faced unprecedented challenges along the way of formation of statehood and stateness, as neither experience, nor knowledge of previous decades was applicable, at the same time being compelled to cope with another not less complicated transformational process: globalization. But the problem is even more complicated for the group of those countries, which haven't been recognized, as there exist additional difficulties for stateness, particularly, conditioned by challenges and consequences of conflict phase, stringent limitation of international relations and its consequences, lack of experience and knowledge of building sovereign state, etc. The afore-mentioned is a prolific base for state fragility and failure – as a result imposing a great threat to domestic and regional stability and security, and hence requires precise study. The Five-Day War in 2008 (in South Ossetia), April 4-Day War in 2016 (in Nagorno-Karabakh) and 2020 44-Day-War (in Nagorno-Karabakh) came to prove that the neglect of the stateness processes in the non-recognized states can and, in fact, is bringing destabilization to the whole region. Suffice to note, that the destabilization is seen not only in the security field, but also flows into economic loses, political and social decline.

However, the issues of stateness (especially of non-recognized states) have been understudied. So, the point is not only the study of the problems, but the presentation of an assessment tool, which would help indicating the existing and potential problems and their roots - for their prompt solving. An integral model of assessment of 'stateness' the Peace Index (developed by the author) is a new integral assessment index, which not only gives an opportunity for the comprehensive assessment of non-recognized states, but also to assess them alongside with the recognized ones. It's also noteworthy that index is composed of 4 field-indexes: political, economic, social and security, and their sub-indexes, which comprehensively represent each field. Integral assessment of stateness allows to record simultaneously both progress and regress in all the fields of stateness, hence giving an opportunity to the states and international community to focus on the problem areas and to promptly undertake their solution process. Such approach would allow fighting against security threats and destabilization, thereby fostering peace and security, which conditioned the name of the Peace Index. Using the assessment model - Peace Index, this paper will comprehensively assess the levels of stateness of three recognized: Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan; and the three non-recognized states of the South Caucasus: Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia through all four fields of stateness – political, economic, social and security for the years of 2017 to 2022.

### What is “stateness” and how can we assess it?

This article is not only representing a comprehensive and compound topic, reviewing a complex notion of “stateness”, but is also the ‘closing chapter’ of the large-scale research project of 10 years. Having reviewed the core features and conditions of state-building (Petrosyan 2016a) and stateness (Petrosyan 2016b; Manukyan 2018a) – including post-conflict contexts, segregated field and integral stateness assessment models (Manukyan 2020a), as well as the difficulties pertaining to the assessment of stateness of not only recognized, but also non-recognized states (Petrosyan 2016c; Manukyan 2020a; Manukyan 2020b), it was not only possible to come up with a comprehensive definition of stateness, but also to use it as an axis for the developed index, enabling the synchronous assessment of recognized and non-recognized states. But before jumping into the developed definition and index, it should be noted that though the concepts and models of assessment of stateness have started to develop since the 60s of the past century, they are still in the stage of elaboration and improvement. The term of stateness was first suggested by J. Nettl in his article “The state as a conceptual variable” (Nettl 1968) published in 1968, where he mainly focused on the idea of independence of variables of ‘stateness’ and ‘nationness’. But still the concept of stateness remains not distinct enough, as further tough work on its conceptualization and operationalization is needed. It can be explained by objective difficulties of formulation of the notion, which are associated with the complexity of the notion and the variety of views (Meleshkina 2011, 11). The diversity of the viewpoints on ‘stateness’ concept can be clearly demonstrated by the study of works dedicated to this issue.

The studies dedicated to the issue of stateness focus on giving definitions to separate components of stateness process: 1) attempts offering conceptual definitions of statehood (Nettl 1968; Tilly 1975; Tilly 1985; Spruyt 1996; Lindberg 2001; Lindberg 2009; Lehbruch 1993; Fukuyama 2004; Fukuyama 2005; Bartolini 2005); 2) search of strategic types of stateness (Rae 2002, Brubaker 1996, Linz and Stepan 1996); 3) conceptualization and institutionalization of communities’ political construction (Lijphart 2007; Lijphart 1977; Lijphart 1969; Libaridian 2023; Daalder 1974; Lehbruch 1993; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Caramani 2004); 4) the process of creation of states and nations (Moore 1968; Rokkan 1973; Rokkan 1987; Rokkan 1980; Rokkan and Valen 1962; Eisenstadt and Rokkan 1973); 5) the impact of historical institutionalization (Pierson 2000; Pierson 2004; Mahoney 2001; Collier and Collier 1991; Skocpol 1979; Skocpol 1985; Ziblatt 2006; Lange and Rueschemeyer 2005); 6) attempts of multilateral study of stateness, but, in fact, still facing problems with comprehensiveness (Fritz 2007; Bartolini 2000), but comprehensive conceptual works and empirical comparisons are still missing.

Can we assess stateness?: Yes, and in political science there exist two methods of stateness assessment (Manukyan 2020a):

- the assessment of segregated fields of stateness by separate indexes (Freedom in the World, Worldwide Governance Indicators, Human Development Index,

State Fragility Index and Warfare, Index of Economic Freedom, Political Atlas of the Modern World 2010)<sup>1</sup>,

- the assessment of stateness by integral models (Fragile States Index<sup>2</sup>) (Melville et al. 2010; Melville and Stukal 2011).

However, all the existing indexes – both integral and segregated field assessment, had some specific fragile points, particularly taking into account the comprehensiveness of our approach. At the same time all of them are not only eliminating the assessment of non-recognized states, but, logically, also fail to represent sub-indices that are so vital for assessing non-recognized entities, which, as a rule, are also in post-conflict phase. Simultaneously, there was also a need to ensure assessment objectivity, the equivalence of assessment criteria for all the states and the universality, i.e. applicability of each sub-index to all the states – no matter recognized or non-recognized. For the solution of the afore-named problems we have developed an integral model for the assessment of ‘stateness’, which remains at present the main evaluative and analytical tool of ‘stateness’ available: an integral model of assessment of stateness, the main evaluative and analytical tool of which should be the ‘stateness’ – as the state’s capacity of performing its main functions, becoming a full member of international community and a subject of international law. This definition has been elaborated in the result of comprehensive study of all the factors ensuring the processes of state-building and stateness. That same study led to the idea, that statehood/legal personality is a constituent part, particularly, in fact, the very basis and driving force ensuring state development and sustainability. The lack of it inevitably leads to a number of problems for stateness, which will be hereinafter practically shown on the example of the reviewed non-recognized states. So, one can assume that non-recognized status is a real challenge for a state, but the dilemma is that a number of states - both recognized pretty long time ago and comparatively freshly recognized – are in a way worse situation than some non-recognized states, though they enjoy the privileges of being recognized and do not have to face the challenges deriving from being non-recognized. So, though statehood/legal personality is a must and basis for the efficiency of state-building and stateness processes, the existence of it is not automatically ensuring development and sustainability (Manukyan 2020b).

This is the reason why the index aims to represent an integral model of assessment of stateness, which will be applicable both for recognized and non-recognized states. The creation of a model, which will have a practical implementation, can become truthfully helpful tool for identifying the existing and potential problems. Integral assessment of stateness allows to record simultaneously both progress and regress in all

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Freedom House. 2022. “Freedom in the World.” Accessed July 16, 2023. [https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world#.Uio2cV\\_vVc](https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world#.Uio2cV_vVc); The World Bank Group. 2023. “Worldwide Governance Indicators.” Accessed July 21, 2023. <https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/>; UNDP. 2023. “Human Development Index.” Accessed August 14, 2023. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi>; The Fund for Peace. 2023. “Fragile States Index.” Accessed June 11, 2023. <https://fragilestatesindex.org/>; The Heritage Foundation 2023. “Index of Economic Freedom.” Accessed July 16, 2023. <http://www.heritage.org/index/>.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Center for Systemic Peace. 2020. “State Fragility Index and Warfare in the Global System 2019.” Accessed June 14, 2023. <https://www.systemicpeace.org/warlist/warlist.htm>; Center for Systemic Peace. 2021. “Polity IV Project.” Accessed June 14, 2023. <https://www.systemicpeace.org/polityproject.html>.

the fields of stateness hence giving an opportunity to the states and international community to focus on the problem areas and to promptly undertake their solution process. Such approach would allow fighting against security threats and destabilization, thereby fostering peace and security. Within the “Peace Index” a precise methodology has been developed, which would allow to carry out as objective evaluation as possible for each state. As the index assesses stateness level of both recognized and non-recognized states, there was a need to develop a methodology, which could have been implemented for the both, which was indeed a real challenge (Manukyan 2020a, Manukyan 2020b).

**Table 1. Peace index**

<b>Political Index</b>	<b>30</b>
State legitimacy	5
Political stability	5
Governance effectiveness	5
Constitutionality and rule of law	5
The right to vote	5
Effective Mechanisms against corruption	5
<b>Economic Index</b>	<b>30</b>
GDP per capita (USD)	5
Fiscal balance (GDP %)	5
Import / Net exports (GDP %)	5
External debt to GDP ratio (%)	5
Efficient income distribution (Gini coefficient)	5
Economic freedom	
<b>Social Index</b>	<b>30</b>
Employment indicator	5
Quality of public services	5
Accessibility and quality of health care and mandatory medical insurance	5
Literacy rate and quality of education	5
Minimal social conditions and protection of rights of refugees and IDPs	5
Environmental protection	5
<b>Security Index</b>	<b>30</b>
Quality and Efficiency of Security Agencies	5
Border and customs control	5
Absence of secessionist tendencies, civil wars, units having territorial claims, illegal armed units, not self-determination conflicts and domestic armed conflicts	5
Absence of foreign military bases and peacekeeping missions	5
Absence of illicit activities (drugs, illegal arms, trafficking)	5
Absence of external threats	5



The Peace Index assessment is a three-level system for assessing and processing the results: 1) case-study; 2) cluster analyses – according to the regions (with both recognized and non-recognized states within the region), as well as separate cluster analyses only for the non-recognized states; 3) global comparison (see Table 1).

For each of the outlined assessment levels has been developed a precise methodology, which would give an opportunity to solve the proposed tasks within each level as efficiently as possible (see Table 1 and Table 2). At the same time, within the scope of each level of assessment and processing of results detailed reports are planned to be published.

### **Case-Study**

Within “Peace to World” model each sub-index has a precise assessment criterion. I.e., if each sub-index is assessed within 5 points, then there should be pre-determined criterion for each point (0-5) representing in which case this or that condition within the sub-index will be given this or that score (See below the example of pre-determined criterion for one of the sub-indices).

<b>State Legitimacy</b>	
State power ratified by the people and exercised in accordance with constitutional principles	5
A number of non-serious problems in government-society relations	4
Problems in government-society relations, violations of constitutional principles by the authorities are recorded	3
A divide in government-society relations, the authorities violate the constitutional order	2
The government-society connection is disrupted. the authorities do not enjoy the people’s trust and regularly violate the constitutional order	1
Lack of legitimacy. the authorities were not elected by the people, there is no government-society connection	0

The political, economic, social and security indexes, each comprised of 6 sub-indexes and being assessed within 0-30 points, also have pre-determined positional ranking framework:

1. 25-30
2. 19-24
3. 13-18
4. 7-12
5. 0-6

A special five-level positional ranking methodology is developed for the “Peace Index”, which will help to group the results according to the following levels:

2. Sustainable – 100-120
3. Middle level of sustainability – 75-100
4. Fragile – 50-75
5. Under the threat of failure – 25-50
6. Failed – 0-25

Table 2. Stateness Assessment of the South Caucasus States by “Peace Index”

	RECOGNIZED STATES OF THE SOUTH CAUCASUS															NON-RECOGNIZED STATES OF THE SOUTH CAUCASUS																				
	ARMENIA					GEORGIA					AZERBAIJAN					NAGORNO-KARABAKH					ABKHAZIA					SOUTH OSSETIA										
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005						
Political Index	19	23	19	16	17	16	23	22	19	15	16	15	10	11	11	11	11	11	17	17	17	13	13	13	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3
State legitimacy	3	5	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Political stability	3	3	3	2	1	1	4	3	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
Governance effectiveness	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Constitutionality and rule of law	2	3	3	2	3	2	4	4	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
The right to vote	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Effective Mechanisms against corruption	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Economic Index	18	16	18	15	17	18	18	18	20	15	17	18	21	22	24	19	23	22	9	9	7	7	7	8	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1
GDP per capita / USD/	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Fiscal Balance GDP	2	2	3	1	2	3	3	2	3	1	1	2	3	4	5	1	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Import / Net exports /GDP %/	4	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	4	2	3	3	5	5	5	4	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Public debt to GDP ratio%/	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Efficient income distribution / Gini coefficient /	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Economic freedom	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Social Index	22	22	21	17	20	19	21	21	22	18	22	22	16	16	15	14	15	16	17	18	16	16	16	13	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4
Employment indicator	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Quality of public services	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Accessibility and quality of health care and mandatory medical insurance	3	3	3	2	4	4	3	3	4	2	4	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1



## **Stateness Assessment of the South Caucasus States by “Peace Index” 2017-2022**

It is vital to detect the most significant problem in each state, which is the factual starting point of all the other problems in these entities. Instead of compelling states to adhere to a universal model of good governance, development, stability, and so forth, a unique approach should be developed for each particular case (see Table 2). A vivid example for this is East Timor, where the UN’s demand of ‘universality’ ended in fragility close to that of a failed state.

### **Recognized trio**

Georgia - the promising state of the South Caucasus, used to be firmly moving towards consolidated democracy, has found itself in a situation, where its central problem is the rapid and drastic decline of democracy. Before the rounds of political crises Georgia has faced since 2019, the central problem of the state could have been named poor communication and cooperation between the civil society and civilians, but not decline of democracy, especially a drastic and rapid one.

### **Policy recommendations**

Georgia’s international reputation as being committed to European values such as democracy, the rule of law, and an independent judiciary is at great risk. This hasn’t affected the investments greatly, but it definitely would. The democratic regression has already negatively affected Georgia’s opportunities to attract Western businesses that have left Russia (were making their products in Russia). Now the country’s economics is yet improving, but the politics drains it down. A state heading towards consolidated democracy, should not let itself transform into a state regressing to autocracy. It is rather easy to represent policy recommendations for Georgia, as the European Commission has done the greater deal of the job and provided Georgia with a 12 points list of improvements that need to be made before candidate status can be considered<sup>3</sup>. But more importantly, these amendments are aimed at stabilization, recovery and democratic advancement of the state. So, in summary, Georgia needs to establish an independent anti-corruption body to hold the government accountable for its actions, pursue strict laws aimed at “de-oligarchizing”, encourage diverse political representation and resolve the issue of severe political polarization. Of course, there are also points covering the need of reconsideration and adoption of a new judicial policy that would bring forth reforms aimed at improving transparency and independence of the state’s judicial branch. In fact, the Commission and other European institutions have vividly expressed their willingness to help Georgia in these processes. And after one round of the Georgian Government’s failure or/and non-willingness (from June to December, 2022) to carry out the reforms, the latter has the second round of chance.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: European Commission. 2022. “Opinion on the EU membership application by Georgia.” Accessed June 24, 2023. [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/QANDA\\_22\\_3800](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/QANDA_22_3800).

So, the ball is once again on the Georgian Government's court. If failed again, that would indicate they were purposeful to do it, and a big wavy red flag for the Georgian society.

Talking about the society: one of the 12 points is directed to ensuring the involvement of civil society in decision-making processes at all levels, which is vital for Georgia's democratic advancement. Despite being heavily targeted and harassed by the Government, the civil society is still a powerful force in Georgia. Apparently, the members of the society, who are either non-interested, or are non-informed, are outnumbering the ones, who are ready to step up and make an effort for their state's future. This is, to some extent, the result of civil society's oversight and mistargeting. And there is no better timing for the civil society to start working even harder: this mainly entails start working with broader strata of society, especially with elder generation and habitants of peripheries/remote settlements, who are the main target of electoral fraud.

All the 12 points outlined by the European Commission are undoubtedly vital, but addressing the issue with polarized and personalized political environment is an emergency. The increased polarization of political space between Ivanishvili's Georgian Dream party and Saakashvili's United National Movement will continue at the expense of Georgia's democratic transition, democratic institution-building and the common good of Georgian society. Season this polarization with inter-society battles between the defenders of traditional values and those who favor greater social, cultural, and religious diversity, and you will get the "happy train" riding straight to autocracy. The EU should focus on reforms boosting an environment friendly for the emergence of new alternative political forces. The ruling party and the opposition have contradicting opinions on major topics. And the inability to reach a consensus has resulted in a situation, where currently there are insufficient dedicated democrats in parliament to defend democratic principles against an overbearing executive. In fact, democratic institutions are exposed to strong political interests, with most actors in parliament and the justice system being either unable or unwilling to resist them.

Though the EU's decision to not offer Georgia candidate status disappointed a nation that has long aspired to join the bloc, it would hopefully be a good wake-up call for the citizens. In fact, the mass rallies both in June, 2022 and December, 2022, were a bright manifestation that the Georgian society would not tolerate any alternative to their European future.

Georgia's democratic decline is not only merely a Georgian issue, it is a serious regional issue: Georgia has been the beacon of democracy of the region, and the South Caucasus just can't lose its loadstar. The only prospect this region can have is through democracy, so it is not only about the Western partners' money and effort input to this state, but also the democratic and peaceful future of a whole region.

Oil-rich Azerbaijan is in a way better economic shape than the other states of the region, however its economic improvements were not translated into social and political reforms, leading to its central problem – rich state, poor people. Gap between the socio-political and economic scores is eye-catchingly massive. Though its successful oil and gas policy and improved investment climate, the center-periphery gap is immense: the wealth is concentrated in the capital, whereas the peripheries are

experiencing extreme poverty and poor standards of living. Extensive corruption and embezzlement of already three decades has resulted into the concentration of the state benefits and wealth in the hands of the ruling clan and its companions accompanied by already annual international corruption and offshore scandals. In fact, embezzlement-oriented government and their satellites are solely concerned about their own profit, shaping the political system in a way that would facilitate their activity.

### **Policy recommendations**

The international society should bear in mind that the social-economic problems faced by the society would inevitably lead to yet another rise of distrust and discontent with the ruling regime. The ruling regime would undoubtedly do everything to keep its power, including the genocide of Nagorno-Karabakh population and the resumption of another war (this time directly with Armenia), as they would try to repeat the success of boosting their approval rating by military victory. For more than two decades the ruling regime was using the need of constant rearmament as a justification of state's wealth not transferring into social welfare, however in reality it has been a justification of their large-scale embezzlement. As the change of the ruling regime is not what is forecasted in the nearest future, the international society - mainly the organizations dealing with peace and security matters – should make an effort to compel the ruling regime to restrain from starting another war. Both war with Armenia and civil uprising can be ruinous for the most sustainable field of its stateness level - economic development results and prospects. Actually, if civil uprising could be “just” erosive and retarding for the economic progress, the war may cause the actual destruction of it, e.g., the gas and oil reservoirs, pipelines and/or railway roads, hindering the effectiveness of the investments, mainly foreign ones, in the country.

Instead, currently the West, especially the EU, is not decently backlashing some extremely troublesome events (e.g. the blockade and as a result serious humanitarian disaster they caused in NKR), as they are reviewing Azerbaijan as an alternative gas supplier. They even went so far as to call Aliyev a “trustworthy partner” and his regime a “reliable” one, whereas before the gas deal, they were not very happy with him and his deeds. So, in fact, they are silencing their democratic voice in exchange to gas supply. But the irony is that the alternativism of the deal and the mission of lessening the energy dependence from Russia has been failed: Azerbaijan is buying the gas<sup>4</sup> for re-exporting it to Europe, but at much higher price. So, Russia is still exporting its gas, and Azerbaijan is over-profiting both by obviously getting a great deal of money for re-exporting and having the EU in its pocket. But, the West, and especially the EU, should be back on track for the sake of the democratic and humanistic principles they are the bearers of.

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<sup>4</sup> The shipments under the terms of the agreement signed between SOCAR and Gazprom began on November 15 and will run until March 2023. The total amount will be up to 1 billion cubic meters of gas up to March next year (Source: “Russian gas supplies to Azerbaijan start on November 15 under new sales and purchase agreement.” *Gazprom*, November 18, 2022. Accessed July 16, 2023. <https://www.gazprom.com/press/news/2022/november/article559243/>).

Armenia is truthfully the most shattered state of the region of 2017-2022 years, the central problem of which is the lack of decent state-policy and effective action plans. Post-Soviet social system transformation saw little success in this country, which led to the rise of political-economic-security bouquet of problems. The only possible solution could have been the implementation of efficient problem-solving and social-system transforming action plans, which was not what was happening in Armenia of 2018-2022 years.

### **Policy recommendations**

Vital decisions are on agenda, hence Armenian Government should stop erratic drifting: there is no better timing for the Government to start planning, planning and once again planning. The quite visible attempts of the Government to change the political and integrational vector of the state, implies taking measures for ensuring the economic, industrial and energy security of the state in advance. And any measure assumes very precise action plans and road maps. And more importantly, all the processes Armenia goes through – be it the change of the political vector or moreover, the peace deal, need a guarantor, which the Government has yet failed on ensuring. At the same time, the Government is in great need for well-trained diplomats, as this is not the best timing for amateurs' training in this extremely pivotal turnover for the country.

And what is more vital – the Government should perceive that weak-skinned is no way equivalent to being peaceful, it's weak-skinned, period. There are a number of realities that the Government should at last put up with: 1) concessionary policy, where there are so many compromises only from one side, is destructive for the state and its statehood perspectives, as everybody would try to take away anything they can from the weak; 2) giving up on own sovereign territories, as well as betraying the struggle for the right of peoples to self-determination is horrendous, and would be forgiven neither by the own people, nor the enemies - for the latter perceived as a sign they can try to get more; 3) the peace sought only by one side is not and will never be peace, quite the opposite. Yet another important note: the Government should start undertaking the responsibility for any state failure: constantly blaming "the formers" for any problem is, mildly saying, strange, especially for the problems emerged very late into their ruling period, as the current Government is ruling for already 5 years and has spread its power to all the 3 branches of the state. That has been a decent amount of time and power for making at least one positive and durable amendment for the state. At the same time, the society's frustration with them is getting bigger literally daily, so the ruling regime should stop being even a worst regeneration of the former regime. The Armenian society was assuming there won't be any force worse than the formers, but the current one is proving them wrong, showing the new horizons of being unbearable. So, the Armenian Government have a lot on its plate for the sake of not only Armenia's well-being, but simply being.

## Non-recognized trio

When studying entities like Abkhazia and South Ossetia, it is rather hard to distinguish the central problem, as the number of problems and all their side-effects is indeed spectacular. However, deep and comprehensive study allows for the disclosure of the central problem in each of these states, which is the same in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Despite the fact that Abkhazia and South Ossetia are characterized by rather bad governance – permanently facing problems like inability to fulfil their basic functions and to provide public goods and services, extreme political instability<sup>5</sup>, poor administrative coordination, a high rate of corruption, the central problem is the steady decrease of control over their own statehood, particularly the control over political, economic, social and security processes, which are gradually being passed on to their ‘patron’ state Russia<sup>6</sup>. As a result, any assistance mission is bound to hit this ‘wall’, i.e., it is practically impossible to help a state overcome any issues, while that particular state is transferring state functions to a ‘patron’ state at the same time. Especially when that ‘patron’ state is not very interested in ensuring welfare, stability, security, and the like, but rather seeks to ensure its control over the entity, more precisely - its territory. This means that a vicious circle is being created, which makes it practically impossible to amend any of the stateness fields. Unless this situation is fixed, there won’t be any visible progress in improving the stateness level of these entities. Nevertheless, this is not an easily amendable problem, as neither the local governments, nor the ‘patron’ state see a problem in this situation: in fact, the latter is getting the desired, whereas the governments are enjoying all the privileges of a non-controlled status coupled with the ‘patron’ state’s permissiveness of their illicit activities and embezzlement. In recent years a number of Russian officials have started voicing concerns about the large-scale embezzlement of Russia’s funding, but it was directed not to solving the problem of corruption and embezzlement, but to impose another dose of political pressure on the entities. Hence neither party has a true interest in changing this set-up, which is so beneficial to them.

## Policy recommendations

So, yet the only obtainable solution could be the employment of a bottom-up assistance policy – supporting the societies of these entities in issues like human rights, social

<sup>5</sup> In Abkhazia Prime Ministers are frequently replaced: 5 Prime Ministers in 5 years, and 2 Presidents were forced out of office amid anti-governmental protests, the current one – Aslan Bzhania is likely to become the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> Source: “Agreement between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Abkhazia on Alliance and Strategic Partnership.” December 23, 2014. Accessed July 16, 2023. <http://en.kremlin.ru/acts/news/47288>; “Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Abkhazia.” November 24, 2008. Accessed July 16, 2023. <https://docs.cntd.ru/document/902151096>; “Agreement Between the Russian Federation and the Republic of South Ossetia on the State Border.” March 19, 2016. Accessed July 16, 2023. <http://en.kremlin.ru/acts/news/51539>; “Agreement with Abkhazia on a unified Russian military base in the republic.” October 6, 2011. Accessed July 16, 2023. <http://en.kremlin.ru/acts/news/12951>; “Treaty on Alliance and Integration between the Russian Federation and the Republic of South Ossetia.” May 20, 2015. Accessed July 16, 2023. <http://www.en.kremlin.ru/acts/news/49493/print>.



development, and in developing a functioning civil society. It is noteworthy that the societies of these entities have themselves more than once boycotted the devolving of broader power to Russia. This ongoing criticism is a sign of hope that if assisted by other external actors, there could be a change towards establishing and developing human rights, social development, and more importantly – a civil society. And the functioning civil society would be hopefully understanding the need of launching dialogue with Georgia. Any delay is making assistance more complicated, as at the behest of Russia both South Ossetia and Abkhazia are eliminating the activity of NGOs (especially the ones with foreign funding) in their territories. In South Ossetia NGO legislation amendment made in 2014<sup>7</sup> is very similar to Russia's 'foreign agents' law of 2012, and deliberately increased the oversight capacity over NGO activity, especially the ones with foreign funding – constraining them to more detailed and more frequent reporting. Until 2020 NGOs in Abkhazia used to get their funding mostly from abroad and were able to execute a certain influence on the government's policies, however in 2020 pandemic and economic downturn made Abkhazia sign an agreement with Russia that called for changes in a number of laws, including amendments that would give broader rights to Russian investors and impose restrictions on local NGOs that receive foreign funding<sup>8</sup>.

And finally for Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh) the central problem is the threat of extinction. Before September 27, 2020, the central problem was the war: not 'frozen, not 'hot', but full with everyday tension across the whole borderline, where soldiers and sometimes even civilians were wounded or shot dead. After the 'hottest' 2020 44-day-war, when Russian peacekeeping forces were deployed in Nagorno-Karabakh, not 'frozen, not 'hot' war has been transferred to Armenia-Azerbaijan borderlines. This situation is kept alive by the continuous and immense financial input from the conflicting parties on each side of the conflict, currently especially in the case of Azerbaijan. The 2020 44-days war was a crushing blow for Nagorno-Karabakh (full with Azerbaijan's war crimes, even against the civilians), but aftermath of it has become an everyday struggle for existence (for people living there).

### **Policy recommendations**

A good starting point could be the OSCE Minsk Group addressing the problem of sale of more and more dreadful weaponry to both sides of the conflict, especially by the OSCE Minsk Group co-chair country- Russia, while at the same time also restraining any other state from doing the same. Simultaneously, a change of the OSCE Minsk Group format should be initiated, particularly the rationality of format of three co-chair

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<sup>7</sup> Source: Law of the Republic of South Ossetia "On Non-Profit Organizations." Accessed June 7, 2023. <https://ugo-osetia.ru/politika/ofitsialno/zakon-respubliki-yuzhnaya-osetiya-o-nekommercheskikh-organizatsiyakh> (in Russian).

<sup>8</sup> Source: "Program for the formation of a common social and economic space between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Abkhazia based on the harmonization of legislation between the Republic of Abkhazia and the Russian Federation." Accessed June 7, 2023. [http://presidentofabkhazia.org/upload/iblock/dc5/programma-1.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2bIYhoxFbOL8wnV\\_k-9i35RokgOyKt6xqPWvB3YaWKySLebxjrIVbqMp0](http://presidentofabkhazia.org/upload/iblock/dc5/programma-1.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2bIYhoxFbOL8wnV_k-9i35RokgOyKt6xqPWvB3YaWKySLebxjrIVbqMp0) (in Russian).

countries, which in their turn have deliberately divergent and colliding policies and interests.

Certainly, another round of an armed conflict, more accurately – invasion, would take place the moment the Russian peacekeeping forces leave Nagorno-Karabakh. However, the further presence of the Russian peacekeeping troops is under a big question mark both from ideological/ethic and functionality considerations: ideological/ethic consideration lies in the fact that “can a country, who started a bloody war on another nation, be the peacekeeper/protector of the other?”; functionality consideration lies in the ability and resources of Russia to provide to their peacekeeping troops to do their job considering the largescale war they started and for a long time are engaged in, and especially after their anticipated defeat in the Ukrainian war. Hence, though Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh were relying on Russian support and asked the latter for a more vivid one, that would be just a temporary remedy, where “remedy” is extremely questionable. The blockade was a vivid example of that, as the Russian peacekeeping forces had the opportunity to resolve the problem right away, as they are the ones authorized to do so by the Trilateral Statement of November 10, 2020.

The people of Nagorno-Karabakh should persist on immediately transferring peacekeeping mandate to another peacekeeping mission (more preferably the EU/UN/NATO) and on opening air corridor and ensuring its security, which would be the only sustainable and durable solution.

## **Conclusion and discussion**

The cumbersome region of the South Caucasus can be researched and, what is more important, understood and given accurate policy recommendations, if the following peculiarities and challenges are taken into account:

- First and foremost, it is “rich” with 3 recognized and 3 non-recognized states in one teeny-tiny region – a phenomenon not found elsewhere. So, in order to discover and solve the region’s challenges, the non-recognized states should also be researched and assessed, no matter what attitude one has over their existence. The idea of researching these entities is not about accepting, recognizing or encouraging them, it’s about the accurate and comprehensive assessment of the challenges the regions faces/may face.
- It is a region of strategic position, hence of vital importance for modern-day superpowers (all of them + local big players - Turkey and Iran): one can notice the echoes of Cold War continue to play out in this region decades after the collapse of the USSR and the realignment of the global world. Once being a “crossroads of civilization”, in our days it has transferred into a crossroads of energy routs, becoming of pivotal importance for the energy, economic and security interests of the West and Russia. As a result, e.g., the South Caucasus region finds itself in the midst of the “battlefield”, where Russia has been longing to strengthen its energy monopoly over the Europe and Europe has been trying to lessen and in longer perspective – terminate, its energetic dependency

from Russia. However, the EU has failed in its search of alternative supply, as it opted for buying gas from Azerbaijan, which, in its turn, buys the gas from Russia and resells it to the EU, but at way higher price.

- It is a region, which suffers from significant economic disparities, especially Armenia and Georgia, as well as, of course, the non-recognized entities. In the case of Azerbaijan, though the state's economic situation is not that challenging as in the cases of Armenia and Georgia, but the phenomena here is that though state is in good economic shape, the people of Azerbaijan are still suffering from extreme poverty issues. A set of common economic problems have been prevailing in the region for 3 decades, which were also accompanied by the Covid 19 pandemic consequences for the last 3 years. The unsettled conflicts have created, so called, "no-go zones" in the region, making the trade and free movement between the states tangled, costly and in some cases even not secure, at the same time hindering the possibility of establishing truly investment-friendly environment in the region. At the same time, migration, brain drain and high rates of poverty for already three decades have been eroding the prospects of overcoming the economic problems.
- It is a region of 3 unsettled conflicts and sequential security issues. While researching it, one should acknowledge the complexity and interrelated nature of security threats in the region: either separately or jointly, the unsettled conflicts, inner-state power struggles, transnational crime, foreign interference, geopolitical and geo-economic battle over the region, all aggravate the current and potential regional security threats. There used to be a false trend of calling the conflict in the South Caucasus region "frozen", which is extremely not accurate. Though conflicts over Abkhazia and South Ossetia are in a kind of a sleeping mode, they have not gone anywhere, moreover - resolved. Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is also far from being resolved, despite Aliyev's assurances. As a consequence of 2020 44-Days-War in Nagorno Karabakh, the presence of Russian peacekeepers and Turkish military observers has created a very fragile and complicated geopolitical configuration in the region. All in all, 2008 5-day-war, 2016 April 4-day-war, 2020 44-days-war and Azerbaijan's constant attacks on Armenia's sovereign territories have shown how fragile is the stability and how disastrous is any armed conflict in this region, making it, mildly saying, not an investment friendly one.
- It is a region only geographically: the lack of economic/political/any integration and cooperation between the recognized trio and, mildly saying, tense relations with the non-recognized trio have put ray of doubt on whether the South Caucasus can be considered a region of 21<sup>st</sup> century. Instead, the geographical perception of the region is extended due to tighter relations with the economic and political power centers of the eastern Mediterranean and Persian Gulf. The fragmentation of the region has reached to the extent of a closed borders between Armenia and Azerbaijan (and Turkey) since 1993. In fact, the lack of historical experience of collaboration and integration issue have made it a region of solo-players: each having its own route of integration and strategic partnership: Armenia is a member of the Eurasian Economic Union and strategic

partners with Russia – at the same time, with tight ties with the EU, Georgia is trying hard for EU membership, Azerbaijan wants none of it, instead preferring keeping up with Turkey’s “Great Turan” plans.

### **Policy recommendations for sustainable peace and security in the region**

To address the afore-mentioned challenges, a number of steps should be taken both by the South Caucasus states and the international society. The multi-layered and cumbersome nature of the regional issues makes them hard addressable and soluble, hence the policy recommendations are directed to the actors, who can be eager to assist. The following steps are proposed to undertake in short-term perspective and “package”, i.e., instantaneous logics:

#### *I. Integration is a must and emergency: regional peace and security is not obtainable without it!*

The South Caucasus states should start working on regional integration without further ado, trying to shape a “Steal and Coal Union”-like entity. Why particularly a Steal and Coal Union like entity? As Schuman has noted in 1950, “The solidarity in production thus established will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible”. This is the motivational precedent for the region, as if France and Germany were able to reconcile after two world wars and form a strong unity in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the South Caucasus states should be able to do the same in the 21<sup>st</sup> one. Obviously, the South Caucasus states have not been able or, to be more precise, haven’t had the political will to establish peace for 3 decades. And who can be the best candidate to assist the process? - the EU, which might repeat its success – this time being able to reconcile a way smaller region than it had to do in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. If succeeded, aside from being able to cope with social-economic and security challenges, the South Caucasus states would be able to stand as a united front against the geopolitical storm that has been raging for the last 30 years in the region and the upcoming 30 are not leaving hope for any chill.

Why this rush? Any further war between Azerbaijan and Armenia lessens the possibilities of success and deepens the crisis: Azerbaijan just keeps on starting war on sovereign territory of Armenia, settling its troops further into Armenia’s sovereign lands, as well as would definitely try to invade the remaining part of Nagorno-Karabakh, as soon as the Russian peacekeeping troops would leave the region in 3 years or before that – with Russia’s “blessing”. Another option is by constant military assaults make Armenia to finish delimitation and demarcation process and recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as part of Azerbaijan.

#### *II. Economic cooperation is the key for conflict resolution.*

Currently a kind of a deadlocked circle is established: though the regional economic cooperation and subsequently regional integration could be the perfect pathway for conflict resolution, in essence the conflict resolution lies as the precondition for any economic and regional cooperation. At the same time, another deadlock is the diverse economic integration trajectories of the South Caucasus states, hence the solution to the

economic cooperation should be found in the most facile layout, as if not to further complicate the already complicated situation, i.e., not messing up with the current economic integration configurations. As the three recognized states of the South Caucasus are the part of Eastern dimension of EU's Neighborhood Policy - Eastern Partnership, the EU has the precise levers to propose a "joint association agreement"-like document, which should be certainly anchored around first and foremost economic cooperation and interdependence, which would make the South Caucasus states more than non-reluctant to cause any drama to the established situation, as it would inevitably mean causing big drama to their own economy.

*III. The change of the peace mediation format (the hardest to fulfill).*

Peace is what one cannot find in this region. Hence, something has been obviously going wrong with peace mediation format for conflict resolution processes over Nagorno-Karabakh (the OSCE Minsk Group) and Abkhazia/South Ossetia (the lack of it). If one thinks that conflict resolution process is a tough one in Nagorno-Karabakh, he is not familiar with the one over Abkhazia and South Ossetia: the lack of conflict resolution process for almost 2 decades has hampered the process a lot. These entities are simply under Russia's control (occupation - if you wish), and, in fact, Russia is not letting any peacekeeping or monitoring mission to enter these entities since 2008. So, any mediation initiative should get Russia's permission. Here one thing is for sure: Georgia wouldn't be reluctant to work, moreover, trust Russia its peace and security perspective.

In the case of the conflict resolution process over Nagorno-Karabakh, a change of the OSCE Minsk Group format should be initiated, particularly the rationality of format of three co-chair countries (the USA, Russia and France), which in their turn have deliberately divergent and colliding policies and interests. However, the further presence of the Russian peacekeeping troops is under big question mark both from ideological/ethic and functionality considerations: ideological/ethic consideration lies in the fact that "can a country, who started a bloody war on another nation, be the peacekeeper/protector of the other?"; functionality consideration lies in the ability and resources of Russia to provide their peacekeeping troops to do their job considering the largescale war they started and for a long time are engaged in, and especially after their alleged defeat in Ukrainian war. At the same time, currently in Armenia there is a visible shift of public moods over the strategic partnership with Russia and membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), as Russia is currently and in the upcoming years would try hard to maintain the current situation of episodic slow-motion war, where they (CSTO in pack) "don't see" how Azerbaijan periodically starts armed conflict against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. What concern Russia more is placement of its troops in strategically important locations in the South Caucasus region, even by the cost of genocide of Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh and, why not, of Armenia itself.

So, what can be done in such a delicate situation? One should start from reviewing the regional and global players. So, the regional players: Iran is fighting for establishing and maintaining peace in the region, whereas Turkey does the mere opposite. International players: Russia is not even reviewed as an option for Georgia and has lost Armenia's trust, as for the last 2 decades has manifested that finding a

sustainable solution is not its goal; the USA has not been interested in the region for the last 15 years, however recently is active (on the highest congress level), and only time would show whether those are baby steps of coming back to the region or just a one-time action before November midterm elections, the EU temporarily deployed 40 EU civilian monitoring experts along the Armenian side of the international border with Azerbaijan (the EU Monitoring Capacity in Armenia (EUMCAP) by deploying EU observers from the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia) with the objective of monitoring, analyzing and reporting on the situation in the region (ended in 19 December, 2022, and a new mission (initially mandate of two-years) starting its work on 20 February, 2023) and the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia in distant 2008. Though the EU Monitoring Capacity in Armenia was a great start, but just 40 monitoring experts were not enough to cover the whole borderline, and the Azerbaijani and especially Russian politicians have been trying to discriminate the effectiveness of that mission, hence the EU should have made an effort, as “you never get a second chance to make a first impression”. The vital example is the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia, comprised of 200 monitors, which is referred as not very effective, as it is not preventing anything. Actually, it is not a fair judgment, as the goal of a monitoring mission is not prevention, but problems reporting, which the mission is fulfilling. However, it is not what these types of conflicts need, instead they need a rough-tough mediation, which is not the EU’s story. Therewith, the EU doesn’t have strong mechanisms for conflict resolution and after some time it should pass the baton: the UN is a better option – with the US as the main player, of course, if the latter would be interested (Kosovo has been a vivid example). The same for Abkhazia and South Ossetia – the ongoing EU monitoring mission across the borderline (only from Georgian side, obviously), should be handed over to the big old peacekeeper – the UN. Would that be hard? Yes! Is there any other option to come to a solution? No!

One thing is for sure - Russia would fight for staying at least in the mediation pack: taking into account its significant military presence in Armenia, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and peacekeeping troops in Nagorno-Karabakh. One cannot be that naive to think that Russia would one day just take its whole weaponry, equipment and troops and go away from the region (even in case of defeat in Ukraine), can one? However, if the first policy recommendation, i.e., regional integration, would be fulfilled, it would be quite possible with a joint effort to tell Russia “sorry, not sorry”.

#### *IV. Civil society as the inner peacekeeper and development-forcer.*

The only solution to an ongoing regional peace is the constant social demand of restraining from any further armed conflict, the main demander of which should be the civil society. There is still an immense work to be done in this field in the South Caucasus states, as the civil society is yet consolidating in Armenia and Georgia, but decimated by continuously increasing repression in Azerbaijan, hence currently they would not be able to execute that role without support. At the same time, the civil society organizations share the same troublesome feature in all the South Caucasus states (as well as in many post-Soviet ones): not having state support and funding, they get foreign ones and find themselves kind of obliged to represent fund-givers satisfying oriented researches, as a result reducing their objectivity, credibility and what is more important - the effectiveness of support to problem solving. At the same time, a few

“chosen ones” work with the governments, more accurately say and do whatever the government wants, hence cannot be considered authentic members of civil society.

So, the solution could be the support to the process of reforming and reconsidering the format of government-civil society relations: their relations should be elevated to a formally established interaction format, where 1) the civil society would become inseparable part of decision-making process – on constant basis providing the needed studies and policy recommendations; 2) the governments would stop treating these organizations as merely grand-seekers, instead would approach them as the vital driving force towards sustainability and development. Undoubtedly, Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum is an immense help, but a reconstruction of government-civil society relations is needed. This is the only way to craft the civil society of this region as a two-sided sword, which would make both the governments and the societies of their states to stick to idea of so much needed peace.

### **Supplementary material**

The supplementary material for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.46991/JOPS/2023.2.5.011>

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### **Conflict of interests**

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

### **Ethical standards**

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

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# THE ROLE OF NUCLEAR AND RENEWABLE ENERGY IN ENSURING THE ENERGY SECURITY OF TÜRKIYE IN THE FACE OF NEW CHALLENGES OF GEO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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## Abstract

The article deals with the issues of Türkiye's energy development on the challenges of non-carbon energy sources, nuclear and renewable, which over the past 20 years have become new forms of energy for the country. It is most important to consider the aspects of their inclusion in the country's unified energy citadel, to project certain problems in the country's internal development. Despite the strategic approach of the Turkish government on the implementation of energy federalism in terms of renewable sources, where in fact each territorial and administrative unit determines the development vectors, there are certain trends towards unification and standardization in the nuclear energy industry. All this is projected onto the geo-economic field, strengthens the course of asserting energy independence in foreign policy, and also allows control (in particular, hydrological ones) over neighboring countries. The article also examines topical issues of a social and economic nature that have a direct impact on the political conjuncture of the ruling Justice and Development Party.

**Keywords:** energy security, Türkiye, geo-economics, nuclear energy, renewable resources, energy federalism, Greater Middle East.

## Introduction

Starting in the late 1960s, the need for electricity on a global scale began to increase, as a result of which the development of nuclear energy in countries without the fundamental principles of civilian or military atoms became a priority.

In Türkiye, which has a rapid demographic growth, the practical importance of nuclear energy is increasing. The significance of this type of energy for the Türkiye, first of all, comes from the high level of electricity consumption, and the possibility of placing them in the eastern part of the country compensated for the integration of the

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regions into the country's overall power transmission chain. As for the other area, renewable, the development of new (alternative) energy sources, initiated by Western countries since the early 1990s, has transformed the classical approaches to obtaining resources. Gradually becoming a new type of energy, the restructuring of the economic sector began, where common features and prospects for alternative sources were derived at the level of public administration.

Given the fact that green energy has become a key determinant policy approach of the EU, since the early 2000s, significant approaches have been borrowed in Türkiye, where the presence of wide geographical landscapes and territories can potentially contribute to the development of the following sources of alternative energy: solar, wind, and also a hydroelectric power plant.

Based on the above aspects, there is a need for a comprehensive consideration of Türkiye's energy potential in geo-economic and strategic contexts. The development of nuclear energy in Türkiye is quite new, where there is the importance of political reflection in the system of energy trends and devices, its uniqueness and the possibility of applied use. In contrast to the previous area, Türkiye's renewable energy industry is the most developed, based on extensive regulation by the ruling Justice and Development Party over the past twenty years.

### **Nuclear energy as a basic direction for ensuring the energy security of Türkiye**

Given this fact, the increase in electricity consumption in Türkiye, since 1990, has increased by 5% annually. For 2020, electricity consumption in Türkiye has reached 260 TWh in total, which, if generalized, can be classified as a country with a dynamically developing domestic demand. Accordingly, before the adoption of the nuclear strategy, Türkiye's main source of electricity was small hydroelectric power plants, which were initially developed for the western regions and later became part of the entire supply chain to the east of the country.

A significant progress in the formation of the political basis for Türkiye's energy security was the creation of a single state body in the field of nuclear energy in 1956, whose tasks included maintaining the government's approach to the new, at that time, energy policy. Despite the fact that the organization was disbanded in 2020 (the Turkish Council for Nuclear Energy and Mining Research was formed in its place), the foundations of the modern stage of nuclear energy were laid in 1993-2005.

Consideration of minerals, whose isotopic characteristics contributed to the development of nuclear energy in Türkiye, can also be considered a weighty fact. About 6% of the world's thorium reserves are located in Türkiye (roughly in the eastern regions), which is about 374,000 tons of pure products, whose potential is used in power plants of this kind (Ağbulut et al. 2021, 1447-1455). Another constituent element is uranium, the total volumes of which are 5,7 million tons, but it has not yet been fully explored how much can be mined, enriched and converted into useful value. Due to the lack of a technical base, as well as the construction of new power units, it is assumed that these two materials will be imported either from Russia or from Kazakhstan. This fact can be confirmed by the fact that in order to discover these

resources in Türkiye, the government will have to use private land, including for research and evaluation work (Temurçin and Aliğaoğlu 2003, 25-39; Karahan 2018, 340-343).

In the context of the increasing level of electricity consumption in Türkiye since the mid-1990s qualitative assessments of the prospects for a new energy security agenda were carried out, where general problems and prospects for an individual approach were formulated at the level of a theoretical approach (Eroğlu and Finger 2021; Şahin 2021). Theoretically, the authorities emphasized either the promotion of alternative energy (then only initiated by the EU, for which Türkiye actively sought membership until 2010), or the defragmentation of the 60-year-old nuclear program. Based on this, new subtexts have emerged: emissions from nuclear power plants, the high cost and low efficiency of new alternative technologies. In addition, in matters of general energy security, the Turkish authorities paid attention to the fact that only 30% of the resources are directly obtained in the country, the rest is imported. From the point of view of political reality, the authorities faced another dilemma: to ensure complete energy independence, since the level of danger in case of accidents at nuclear power plants is high (Akyuz 2017, 7-9). At the social level, there are serious trends in the development of anti-nuclear discourse. Objectively, the main arguments of the representatives of this movement have practical features: the proximity of nuclear power plants to urban and residential infrastructure, the lack of economic goals (due to the high cost of construction and maintenance of nuclear power plants), giving preference to renewable energy (Balkan Şahin and Bodur Ün 2022, 32-36).

The issue of inclining the official government of Türkiye towards nuclear energy in terms of political aspects has several important principles. Firstly, the construction of new nuclear power plants will be carried out through the use of foreign technologies, and the lack of personnel will be compensated by their further training abroad. Secondly, since the end of the 90s of the XX century, the official position of Türkiye has been aimed at the complete diversification of the energy sector, where the final goal is to reduce import dependence as much as possible, increase the share of domestic resources for full energy independence in terms of 2020-2030. In addition, the development of nuclear power will significantly reduce the use of coal, to a certain extent, and natural gas for combined heat and power plants (which are especially well developed in the west and south of the country). The development of nuclear energy is also able to meet the energy needs of the eastern part of Türkiye, where at the moment the system of small hydroelectric power plants is exceptionally developed.

Despite the dissolution of the previous body in the field of nuclear energy, the Government was officially presented with strategic plans for the development of this area in the interval of 9 years. The first strategy, from 2014, calculated until 2018, mainly updates the Vision 2023 agenda: to develop and diversify the area to achieve a supply volume of 5% to the total chain from nuclear power plant systems by the deadline. Certainly, such a volume is calculated in connection with the issues of other energy sources, but it should be noted that in case of successful launch of all nuclear power plants in the project, the above figure will increase either by 2 or 3 times. The cooperation of this organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was aimed at the development and proper use of the peaceful atom strategy (TAEK

2013). The other strategy, which covers 2019-2023, is practically the same, moreover, the framework in the Vision 2023 projects is confirmed, namely, the transformation of Türkiye into a country with a priority nuclear direction, which also has a position on the world stage (TAEK 2019).

Based on official documents, the Turkish government, however, to this day has not developed a unified political strategy in the field of nuclear energy. This fact reveals common foreign policy disagreements, when nuclear energy was transformed into internal regional development. To resolve these disputes, after the financial crisis of 2001, at the official level, a decision was made to privatize this sector (indirectly, in Vision 2023, all energy implications were included in the course of liberalization), and state coverage will have more legislative implications than beneficial (Kaya and Göral 2016). Nevertheless, one cannot fail to emphasize the state interest, which demonstrates the significant inseparability of nuclear energy and the internal, party approach. By integrating new nuclear power plants into the network, the idea of an ever-widening gap between energy imports and expected consumption is being implemented, that is, the government's goal is to provide a stable 10,000 MW/h by 2030, capable of covering the needs of developing regions (for example, the eastern Mediterranean Sea and the central western part of the Black Sea).

In the field of uninterrupted power supply, the ruling Justice and Development Party is primarily focused on reducing Russian gas imports, which will further reduce the operation of thermal power plants, but will significantly promote the role of nuclear power plants and technologies to strengthen the internal cycle of independent electricity supply (Keçeci 2020). It is expected that by 2030-2035 Türkiye will be able to compensate the need for natural gas to a greater extent, however, objective difficulties arise at the stage of assessing profits, and in general, do not allow nuclear power plants to be correctly classified in the country's energy security system.

From a political point of view, at the internal level there is a certain approach in the field of nuclear energy, which, in fact, does not have a strategic isolation. From the point of view of foreign policy, the reduction of natural gas imports from Russia testifies to the dualistic approach of the Turkish government: while reducing this area, joint projects are being carried out with Russia in the nuclear energy industry. A relatively equidistant approach contributes to the principle where none of the representatives of the project has certain advantages, the role of foreign actors has been brought to the maximum permissible threshold (Gabrielyan 2022, 15-21).

Existing projects for the construction of nuclear power plants in Türkiye are actively developed with the participation of foreign consortiums, which are most often state-owned. The operation of such types of strategic facilities is often in the nature of political agreements at the highest level. The politicization of nuclear energy in Türkiye is almost always associated with the diversification of the domestic energy market, the heterogeneous functionality of tasks and technologies. This policy was developed in the early 2000s (when the current ruling Justice and Development Party came to power), when a liberal, non-state, institutional approach was first updated in Türkiye in the entire energy sector of the country. The second stage, which began in early 2015 and continues to this day, when the free market system was officially established, the neoliberal policies of the Justice and Development Party were

associated with technological heterogeneity, respectively, with a more flexible state approach that promotes vectorial foreign policy activity. Nuclear energy has become more of an instrument of foreign policy flexibility for other actors, where Russia, the countries of East Asia (Japan) and Western Europe (France and Germany) are making adjustments and proposals in the development of this energy sector.

The current and former partner in the construction of a nuclear power plant in Türkiye is Russia, where, together with the state organization Rosatom, an infrastructure of four Akkuyu reactors (VVER-1200) is being organized. The specified nuclear power plant is being built on the territory of the southeastern part of Türkiye, on the coast of the eastern segment of the Mediterranean Sea. The project to build a nuclear power plant in this part of the country has been developed since the mid-1980s, but the final proposal was formulated in 2007, with the final decision of the Turkish parliament to transfer the development and construction of the plant to another state (Varış 2020). The intergovernmental agreement signed in 2010 between Russia and Türkiye provided for the construction of a nuclear power plant, taking into account the use of Russian technologies and with a total capacity of 4800 MW/h<sup>1</sup>. The end of construction and commissioning of the first power unit is expected to be completed by 2023 (in honor of the centenary of the formation of the modern Türkiye, one of the goals of Vision 2023), and the rest by 2026.

It is noteworthy that the agreement will be implemented according to the BOO (Build-Own-Operate) model, which includes, among other things, operation from the Russian side, where, as a result of the agreements, a corresponding organization was opened in Türkiye (*tur*: Akkuyu Nükleer Güç Santrali (NGS) Elektrik Üretim A.Ş.). It should also be noted the latest agreements, when the Turkish Electricity Trading and Contracting Company (TETAŞ) for 12,35 c/kWh will buy the final products and redistribute the electricity prices to the regions at the agreed state rate (the contract was concluded for 15 years) (Androulaki 2022).

Returning to the topic of Türkiye's practical energy dependence on Russia, it should be noted that, based on the fact that the Akkuyu nuclear power plant is currently the most promising option for the development of nuclear energy in Türkiye, a bilateral energy precedent is being created in the political interconnection of the geostrategy of both countries<sup>2</sup>. Here, the possibilities of the Turkish government, aimed at reducing the share of electricity imports in general, are significantly limited, moreover, the issue of constant and affordable provision of the eastern regions is on the agenda of internal energy security<sup>3</sup>. The Akkuyu nuclear power plant, first of all, is aimed not so much at

<sup>1</sup>“Agreement between the Government of the Russian Federation and the Government of the Republic of Turkey on Cooperation in the Construction and Operation of the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant in the Republic of Turkey.” Accessed June 13, 2023. <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2010/10/20101006-6-1.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Akkuyu Nuclear. 2010. “Akkuyu NPP construction project.” Accessed June 13, 2023. <http://www.akkunpp.com/akkuyu-npp-construction-project>.

<sup>3</sup>“Joint Declaration between the Republic of Turkey and the Russian Federation on Progress towards a New Stage in Relations and Further Deepening of Friendship and Multidimensional Partnership, Moscow, 13 February 2009. Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs.” Accessed June 13, 2023. <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/joint-declaration-between-the-republic-of-turkey-and-the-russian-federation-on->

the operation of a facility of this kind, but rather at compensating for electricity consumption in the territory of the eastern Levantin. The most important safety issue is the factor of the very participation of the Russian state body Rosatom, where the most updated technology is not fully developed and operated. Nevertheless, despite such a critical approach (including the seismic stability of a nuclear power plant), the developers themselves position the Akkuyu nuclear power plant as the most relevant program that meets all standards and environmental requirements (Iban and Sahin 2022; Bıçakcı and Evren 2022; Aydın 2020).

Another project within the framework of Türkiye's nuclear energy is the construction of the Sinop station, located in the city of the same name, in the north of the country, on the Black Sea coast. The significance of this project was incomparably great in political terms in the historical period of 1995-2010, when the use of the Western (European) vector in Türkiye's energy policy was a priority. The participation of Western and Asian companies made a significant contribution to the integration of the European energy production system, which was strategically linked to the idea of a hub thesis in foreign policy (Kryukov 2016; Güney 2016; Uyar 2017, 110-114). However, a significant fact in the uncertainty of this project was, perhaps, the unwillingness of the official government of Türkiye to financially allow the state approach, and the recent trend of the depreciation of the lira, the uncertain situation of the economy does not allow us to imagine the expediency of a nuclear power plant as a whole. Another negative factor was the preparedness of countries in the implementation of the technical base, when certain key approaches were not revised (Akgün, Ada and Koçkar 2015). Perhaps a practical problem was the fact that the presentation of the Sinop nuclear power plant also had political problems, where it was impossible to situationally assess the role of the object in the Turkish energy stronghold system (Yavuz 2023). This thesis can be confirmed by the aforementioned fact, namely the absence of a strategic state approach in the field of nuclear energy (Ozmen 2020).

As in the case of the Akkuyu nuclear power plant, Sinop envisaged the BOO model, where all development, construction and operation were supposed to be transferred to foreign consortiums, that is, in 2013, the Japanese Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, as well as the French Areva. The memorandum signed at a high level provided for the construction of four power units, where in total each produced 1120 MW/h, when the completion and commissioning of the first power unit were calculated for 2031 (Demircan 2020). In general, the technical novelty of the Japanese project had some ambiguities after the incident at the Fukushima nuclear power plant in 2011, which called into question the significance and environmental future of this project.

Given the previous man-made disasters, there is a need to consider safety issues, as a result of which the Japanese consortium Mitsubishi Heavy Industries left the Sinop NPP project in 2019, and the further participation of the French side in the person of Areva was in doubt, based on the fact that the development was carried out jointly. Another factor was the final estimate of the Japanese consortium (44 billion US



dollars), which the Turkish side refused due to the lack of such material resources<sup>4</sup>. This factor was facilitated by the fall in the value of the lira, which politically determined the rejection of further mutual cooperation (Erat et al. 2021; Baltas et al. 2019).

The construction and operation of new nuclear power plants from the point of view of reducing the impact of electricity imports is of fundamental importance. From the position of political strategy, the infrastructural value of nuclear power plants is aimed at reducing long-term costs, in return receiving their own resources, respectively, and state control, regardless of the liberal course of the country's energy policy (Aydın 2018; Kryukov 2016, 87-92; Güney 2016, 69-71). Before the immediate launch of the NPP construction programs, it was expected to reduce the level of imports by 7.2 billion US dollars, and in the future (in the context of an increasing level of electricity consumption), the reduction in funds would increase significantly<sup>5</sup>. The official approach of the Turkish government in the long term can be explained by the goal of increasing the level of energy independence of the country. The future of the Sinop NPP has repeatedly been a priority in Türkiye's energy strategy, but hypothetically, the project is currently frozen, despite the possibility of the Russian side to unify it with Akkuyu, offering the same political and technological conditions<sup>6</sup>.

The last, third, planned nuclear power plant in Türkiye, Igneada, is the result of a joint development with China. The new Igneada NPP, unlike others, is located in the west of the country, near Istanbul, not far from the Bulgarian border, on the Black Sea coast. As in other nuclear power plants, it is similarly planned to build four new power units, whose total capacity (one) will be from 1250 to 1400 MW/h (Harunoğullari 2019). The plans to build a nuclear power plant in a fairly populated region proceeds from objective goals, where the level of increasing energy will increase in the interval up to 2040. The next factor is that this technology is not Chinese, but the result of a joint development with the American Westinghouse, the certification of which comes from the fact that power reactors are also approved in many Western countries (Gürel and Kozluca 2022).

Despite the fact that the details have not been discussed, the implementation of the standard option in the energy strategy of Türkiye, the BOO model, is supposed to be implemented. The presence of China's energy capital in Türkiye is not fundamentally new, but cooperation in such a strategic project is the result of many years of negotiations between the official authorities (Guo and Fidan 2018). As a result, in 2016, a memorandum of cooperation was signed between the state-owned energy companies of China and Türkiye with the approval of the strategic project turnover, the

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<sup>4</sup> Tsuji, Takashi. 2018. "Japan to scrap Turkey nuclear project." *Nikkei Inc*, December 4, 2018. Accessed June 13, 2023. <https://asia.nikkei.com/Economy/Japan-to-scrap-Turkey-nuclear-project>.

<sup>5</sup> Karaaslan, Bulent. 2013. "Nuclear plants to help Turkey shave 7.2 bn \$ off energy imports." *Anadolu Ajansı*, May 4, 2013. Accessed June 13, 2023. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/world/nuclear-plants-to-help-turkey-shave-72-bn-off-energy-imports/249638#>.

<sup>6</sup> Spasić, Vladimir. 2021. "Turkey to construct two more nuclear power plants - Erdoğan." *Balkan green energy news*, November 10, 2021. Accessed June 13, 2023. <https://balkangreenenergynews.com/turkey-to-construct-two-more-nuclear-power-plants-erdogan/>; WNN. 2023. "Turkey 'aiming for 20 GW of nuclear by 2050s'." *July 10, 2023*. Accessed July 30, 2023. <https://world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Turkey-aiming-for-20GW-of-nuclear-by-2050s>.

obligations of Beijing and Ankara in the field of nuclear safety (Pekar 2019; Eliküçük Yıldırım 2022; Atlı 2022). However, the uncertain outlook for the Igneada NPP is indicative of some aspects related to the positioning of the project itself. Given the complexities of US-China relations (in particular, energy relations), it is impossible to assess the use of certain developments in a third country. Unlike the Sinop and Akkuyu projects, at the current stage, the final estimate, the construction price and the surplus for the Chinese side have not been presented for Ignead. Meanwhile, no official political negotiations took place after 2017, and construction was supposed to start before 2023<sup>7</sup> (Gündoğan and Turhan 2017; Degang, Xu and Tu 2022; Eliküçük Yıldırım 2022). Based on these facts, the prospect of the Igneada NPP is uncertain, given the objective political and financial components and the impossibility of the Turkish government to present the position of the project in the country's energy system.

Comparing current strategies and programs, the position of the nuclear component of Türkiye's energy security can be inferred from common distinctions and trends. Based on the analysis, the lack of a comprehensive strategic approach in the current area, the influence of the state interest is limited to the guiding role. The influence of the neoliberal course in the energy sector as a whole puts the nuclear section on a part with the renewable and oil and gas sectors, where the position of the state is considered exclusively in the macropolitical system, attracting external actors, as well as the possibility of implementing the general trends of Vision 2023, as well as establishing a special pricing policy, reducing the government's strategic interest to a minimum. In certain aspects, this trend in the field of energy can be characterized as a general political one, where new resources diversify this area (Kulaksız 2019; Pekar 2019; Guo and Fidan 2018).

The shortcomings in the field of nuclear power plant construction are associated with a holistic approach to the importance of this area for the state. If in the period before 2015 (in particular, the presidency of Abdullah Gul) the development of nuclear energy was considered a priority, then after 2016 (during the presidency of Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the premiership of Ahmet Davutoglu) there was a sharp political decline, namely: an increase in the importance of the oil and gas region as a central component of the energy citadel of Türkiye. The lack of progress in the construction and operation of the Sinop and Igneada nuclear power plants can also be explained by the state's fixation on the more accessible Russian organization Akkuyu, which, nevertheless, indicates that the lack of a complementary policy is compensated by strategic partnership.

Based on this, the influence of Russian technologies in the field of nuclear energy can also be considered in other political aspects. In foreign policy, it can be stated that the Turkish side, represented by the ruling Justice and Development Party, does not include nuclear energy in the context of the hub strategy, respectively, the nuclear power plant service (in the foreseeable future) will be aimed at conditional generation

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<sup>7</sup> Baldoni, Mattia. 2022. "New Reactors Will Help Meet 'Massive' Demand For Energy And Reduce Reliance On Fossil Fuels." *NucNe*, January 17, 2022. Accessed June 21, 2023. <https://www.nucnet.org/news/new-reactors-will-help-meet-massive-demand-for-energy-and-reduce-reliance-on-fossil-fuels-1-1-2022>.

of electricity on an intra-republican scale. Russia's monopolistic position in Türkiye's nuclear power industry significantly increases foreign policy efforts. However, the increase in energy alternatives reduces other areas, including nuclear. The construction of nuclear power plants in Türkiye by Russia in the foreseeable future is likely to become much more intensive, but the importance of the former in the energy citadel will not change significantly. An assessment of the future of nuclear energy in Türkiye may also be the fact that in the context of political transformations, the country's position in the Western system of energy security is not yet so clear. If in the case of oil and gas projects it is possible to argue about favorable political positions, then the still unfulfilled nuclear energy does not have any prospects in the context of geostrategy.

### **The status of hydrological resources through the geopolitical processes of the Greater Middle East**

Occupying a key position in Türkiye's energy policy, hydropower is one of the developed and proven systems of an uninterrupted source of electricity. Several practically important reasons contributed to this factor, where, not having sufficient oil and gas reserves (most of them are imported), the Turkish government has been considering a hydroelectric power system since the 2000s as a priority industry. Considering this issue through a historical prism, it must be noted that the importance of hydroelectric power plants was consolidated in the future, while giving priority to small systems. According to the geographical position of Türkiye, as well as the limited funds, in the face of the insufficiency of other energy sources, it is relevant that the hydroelectric power station is the central and most important resource for the country. It was expected that by 2020 the total production of electricity from the hydroelectric power plant will be 35,000 MW/h, in parallel offsetting the level of coal use (Ozturk and Yuksel 2016).

Based on these factors, the development of alternative energy in Türkiye is also facilitated by the general state approach. The trend of neo-liberalism, which began in 2015, indicates a general privatization of this sector, where in the case of hydropower, the approach indicated the formation of a market economy of territorial significance. The increase in the level of investments of private interests contributed to diversification into the local economy, especially in the eastern regions, where the level of investment is significantly inferior to the same central or western regions. This condition was also helped by the fact that in the early 2000s, the ruling Justice and Development Party approved a law allowing, using a simplified procedure, to expropriate territories that are privately owned, but used for their intended purpose. It is noteworthy that these lists included regions mainly inhabited by Kurds, that, in addition to aspects of private law, political issues were also raised (Erensü 2017, 127-129; Adaman and Akbulut 2021). Considering the fact that the lack of energy developments in the territory of eastern Türkiye, which contributed to the development of a separate block in alternative energy, the construction of small hydroelectric power plants, where it is possible not to use huge financial resources, while solving issues of uninterrupted power supply. Small hydroelectric power plants are designed to

compensate for the missing electricity (up to 10 MW/h in Türkiye), reducing the level of state influence by an order of magnitude lower than in the case of oil and gas or nuclear energy. As confirmation of this thesis, by 2023 it is calculated that out of 1391 small hydroelectric power plants 1164 will be under the control of private investors (about 73.2%) (Erensü 2017, 124).

The course of neo-liberalism in Türkiye's energy policy is often reflected in the hydroelectric system for several probabilistic reasons. The limited resources and constant financial crises in Türkiye (both in 2001 and the current serious one in 2017) have actualized many issues of public administration, and the increasing level of electricity consumption in the medium term would require state guarantees in the regulation of pricing and logistics strategies. In order to compensate and protect against further social shocks, the government, based on the development of the region, established a constant purchase value, which was further distributed among the beneficiaries.

Another factor is political, when the purchase of electricity from border countries is not possible. The eastern regions of Türkiye in the energy context are significantly abstracted from international communications, the level of self-sufficiency forces regional administrations to take into account Ankara's requests and proposals. During the last 20 years, the development of small hydropower plants has brought a general characteristic of the entire energy policy of the country, increasing the role of the private and free market. Energy federalism in Türkiye shows that an active course of neo-liberalism can succeed if other issues, in particular agriculture, are ignored. It is possible that in the medium term the role of foreign investment from Asia may also increase.

Exploring the significance of classical (large) hydroelectric power plants, several assumptions are put forward in the framework of ensuring the energy security of Türkiye. Unlike small hydropower plants, large ones are heavily politicized due to their location, potential and environmental friendliness. Another important difference is that the majority of classical hydroelectric power plants are at the disposal of the state, and the role of non-profit organizations is limited. Based on the official neo-liberal course recommended since the period of Türkiye's EU membership strategy, it also embraced the republican layer, taking into account the establishment of state capitalism in much more important infrastructures. Such dualism testifies to the indicated state approach to diversification of each energy sector, but taking into account global practices. Of significant political interest is the strategic importance of the water and logistics potential of the two largest rivers in the Greater East, the Tigris and Euphrates. The transformation of water policy, first of all, has a strategic aspect to use the entire hydrological potential of Türkiye by 2023 (Islar 2012). The logistical potential is largely of secondary importance, where the ultimate goal is to have a stable hydrological resource to serve Türkiye's large energy sector. A certain autarchy in this issue indicates that in the future political disputes with Syria and Iraq regarding the water strategy will become an instrument of foreign policy influence in case of failure of some of Türkiye's initiatives in these countries.

The active construction of large hydroelectric power plants in Türkiye began at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, namely, in 1992, one of the largest platforms in the world, the

Ataturk Dam, was commissioned, located in the southeast of the country, not far from the Syrian border (Kalkan 2014; Kartal and Kadrioglu 2019). Except for its energy and agricultural importance, the construction of the new dam signaled the beginning of a comprehensive approach to artificially restrict resources for other countries. Attention is drawn to the importance of this hydroelectric power plant, which has a capacity of 2,400 MW/h, allowing it to actively meet domestic electricity demand. The concentration of the Turkish government in the energy subtext indicates the priority of the sector, the need to monopolize the potential of the Euphrates to the detriment of the interests of other countries. Moreover, the current situation disrupts economic cooperation between Türkiye and Syria since 1986, where 58% of the water potential of the Euphrates was to be distributed among the Arab countries (Al-Ansari 2019). Despite the fact that both Syria and Iraq had to adjust their approaches to water policy, however, in the context of civil wars, the current situation is capable of provoking a humanitarian catastrophe, and not only in the matter of drinking water, but also in all agricultural security. In addition to the above, it must be emphasized that the Tigris and Euphrates are key sources of logistics for Syria and Iraq, and access to the Persian Gulf can solve many transport issues.

As a continuation of the topic of Türkiye's hydrological autarchy in the political dimension, it is necessary to consider another topical hydroelectric power station, Ilisu, built already at the source of the Tigris River. Put into operation in 2019, this hydroelectric power plant had both technical and environmental and political problems from the very beginning. As a result, attempts were made to governmental intervention in the project, and in 2008 the Turkish government allocated approximately 8,5 billion liras for the construction of the entire complex. The nominal capacity of the hydroelectric power plant was 1200 MW/h<sup>8</sup>, and the estimated potential is aimed at solving many issues (in particular, energy) of the southeastern part of Türkiye (Zwahlen 2022, 461-465; Şenel 2019). During the development of the project, the British investment company Balfour Beatty gradually came to the fore, and then Swiss, Austrian and German concerns. It is not known for certain whether this is the result of political pressure from European environmentalists or whether it is an unsatisfactory financial component with significant risks. As in the case of the Ataturk hydroelectric power plant, so with the Ilisu there is a threat of the PKK's combat impact, and with the outbreak of civil wars and the emergence of terrorist organizations in Syria and Iraq, the security of infrastructures is in the zone of real defeat by various means (Hourie 2019; Kibaroglu and Sayan 2021).

The essential importance of the hydroelectric power plant for Türkiye was marked by a period of energy isolation and ignoring the interests of neighboring countries. Having a colossal water reserve, the hydroelectric power plant system is the most developed among the entire list of alternative energy types, and from an economic point of view, it is more diversified: volatility is on a positive markup. However, the neoliberal approach does not allow us to assert that the region has a free market trend:

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<sup>8</sup> T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı. 2020. "Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan, Ilisu Barajı ve Hidroelektrik Santrali birinci ünitesinin açılışını gerçekleştirdi." 19.05.2020. Accessed June 21, 2023. <https://www.tccb.gov.tr/haberler/410/120264/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-ilisu-baraji-ve-hidroelektrik-santrali-birinci-unitesinin-acilisini-gerceklestirdi>; Batman Valiliği. "Ilisu Barajı ve HES." Accessed June 21, 2023. <http://www.batman.gov.tr/ilisu-baraji-ve-hes>.

small hydroelectric power plants are more designed for regional development than for national development. From the point of view of foreign policy impact, of course, reducing the domestic demand for electricity, there is no question of its import from other countries. As already mentioned, water policy has become a key element in influencing neighboring countries, which, being in a post-conflict period, are only now solving new problems, not excluding entry into an energy and logistical confrontation with Türkiye. This kind of political dualism indicates the emergence of a new and non-traditional hotbed of conflict, where alternative energy is at the center of political clashes.

Consideration of the deep details of the development of alternative energy in Türkiye contributes to the classification of some strategic approaches. In this case, the strategic feature is formed from the official plans of the ruling party, the work of the relevant bodies. In this context, the authorized Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources considers the development of the following sectors of renewable resources as determinant: solar, wind, geothermal, organic and hydrological<sup>9</sup>. Starting with the most massive sources of solar, wind and hydrological, it is important to note that in the total volume the potential of these energy resources can be incomparable competition with traditional sources. As of the end of 2022, hydroelectric power plants managed to generate about 31,558 MW/h of electricity (total percentage 31%), solar stations 8,479 MW/h (8,35%), and wind 10,976 M/Wh (10,81%)<sup>10</sup>. Comparing official statistics, the wind and hydrological components have had a significant increase since 2019, while the solar one since 2016, due to the beginning of the spread of this area throughout Türkiye<sup>11</sup>.

The development of other types of alternative energy sources in Türkiye (organic use of biological waste, geothermal) have recently begun to be used more intensively than in the period 2011-2015. This is facilitated by the fact that Türkiye ranks first in geothermal sources in Europe, 4<sup>th</sup> in the world. In total, for 2022, 1686 MWh (1,66%) of energy were obtained by enriching mining sources, re-exploiting the Kyzylter power plant. It is noticeable that in 2008 the course of liberalism also affected this type of alternative energy, where some specialized organizations were partially privatized<sup>12</sup>.

A significantly different situation is observed in the organic part of alternative energy. It is important to note that the processing of biomass into energy is a relatively new direction, with a number of legislative initiatives taken in Türkiye since 2011 (Law No.5346). Despite a much smaller role, agricultural enterprises currently provide 2,14% of the total number of alternative energy sources, the so-called 2,172 MW/h,

<sup>9</sup> "TURKEY: Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources (MENR) Strategic Energy Plan 2015-2019." *Asia Pacific Energy Portal*. Accessed June 21, 2023. <https://policy.asiapacificenergy.org/node/2245/portal>.

<sup>10</sup> Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources. 2022. "Türkiye national energy plan." Accessed June 21, 2023. [https://enerji.gov.tr/Media/Dizin/EIGM/tr/Raporlar/TUEP/Türkiye\\_National\\_Energy\\_Plan.pdf](https://enerji.gov.tr/Media/Dizin/EIGM/tr/Raporlar/TUEP/Türkiye_National_Energy_Plan.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> Official Website of the International Trade Administration. 2022. "Electric Power - Renewables, Smart Grid, Energy Storage, Civil Nuclear." Accessed June 21, 2023. <https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/turkey-electric-power-renewables-smart-grid-energy-storage-civil-nuclear>.

<sup>12</sup> T.C. Enerji ve Tabii Kaynaklar Bakanlığı. 2022. "Jeotermal." Accessed June 21, 2023. <https://enerji.gov.tr/bilgi-merkezi-enerji-jeotermal>.

significantly increasing the importance, especially in those regions where there are no wind, solar or geothermal stations<sup>13</sup>.

The development of new alternative energy industries in Türkiye is realizing a dynamic political and economic transformation of the entire industry. From a political point of view, although protectionism is observed at the legislative and executive levels, it is nevertheless aimed at diversifying the investment level and ensuring a self-sufficient energy course at the level of administrative units. From the point of view of economic transformation, the state presence remains, which is created by specialized budget funds, subsidy programs for small national (local, Turkish) energy companies. It is noteworthy that already in 2021, a total of 1 billion US dollars was allocated for the development of wind energy, which is an unprecedented measure of political regulation in the context of the domestic financial crisis. In addition, the issue of reducing environmentally harmful emissions into the atmosphere is being updated (the Mejlis of Türkiye ratified the Paris Agreements in October 2021), where by 2053 there is a global trend of abandoning carbon and oil sources<sup>14</sup>. As part of the state program to reduce CO2 emissions by 2030 to 21%, and in 2020 the figure approached 524 million tons<sup>15</sup>. Along with other natural sources of renewable energy, the system of using solar energy is also developing. Thus, in 2022 in Türkiye, the total installed capacity is 8479 MW, that is, the percentage of use has increased to 8,35 percent compared to 7,83% in 2021<sup>16</sup>.

The presence of an economic (currency) crisis in the country significantly regulated the new agenda of alternative energy. When creating block and autonomous units, there are no risks that are present in the western regions. Based on the level of general social development, when the eastern regions are significantly inferior to the western ones, there are no sharp financial gaps among the social status of the population. Perhaps this principle will migrate from energy experience to political experience in the future. This idea has certain prerogatives as a possible stage in the decentralization of the entire political administration of the country, where energy experience had a significant surplus.

The development of renewable energy in Türkiye at the strategic level did not have significant trends towards the transformation of value approaches. Since the 2010s, this subtext has been repeatedly updated until it is included in the official government program. In particular, the strategy of the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources of Türkiye (2013-2023) highlights the critical importance of developing new facilities,

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<sup>13</sup> T.C. Enerji ve Tabii Kaynaklar Bakanlığı. 2022. "Biyokütle." Accessed June 21, 2023. <https://enerji.gov.tr/bilgi-merkezi-enerji-biyokutle>.

<sup>14</sup> Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 2022. "Türkiye's International Energy Strategy." Accessed June 21, 2023. <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkeys-energy-strategy.en.mfa>; Turkey - Renewable Energy Integration Project. Sustainable Development Bonds Results. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. Accessed June 21, 2023. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/535711506333805464/Turkey-Renewable-Energy-Integration-Project>.

<sup>15</sup> Kucukgocmen, Ali. 2022. "Turkey raises greenhouse gas emission reduction target for 2030." *Reuters*, November 15, 2022. Accessed June 21, 2023. <https://www.reuters.com/business/cop/turkey-boosts-greenhouse-gas-emission-reduction-target-2030-2022-11-15/>.

<sup>16</sup> T.C. Enerji ve Tabii Kaynaklar Bakanlığı. 2022. "Güneş." Accessed June 21, 2023. <https://enerji.gov.tr/bilgi-merkezi-enerji-gunes>.

developing local infrastructures by diversifying various renewable energy opportunities. Presumably, this strategy aims at a political perspective on renewable energy policy in general. In favor of this judgment is the fact that already in 2009, at the government level, a decision was made on direct interaction between the state and the private market, where the implementation of a new energy policy plan in the possibilities of renewable resources became an end in itself (Kulaç and Ciğeroğlu Öztepe 2020, 893). Significantly, the formation of a new political agenda for renewable energy was manifested in an active approach on the part of the EU since 2005, after a legislative initiative to develop a new plan (Kulaç and Ciğeroğlu Öztepe 2020, 891-892).

The direct directive affected not only the legal field of EU members, but also countries seeking integration and membership in the latter. If we consider the stage of the EU-Türkiye relations in the indicated time intervals, the energy agenda was a fundamental part, partly a priority. Despite the phasing out of the Turkish government in favor of integration with the EU, since 2016, the main state approaches in the field of renewable energy have been developed at the intra-republican level. It should be noted that at the moment there are no mechanisms developed to determine this context in foreign policy programs, namely: complete independence in a closed cycle or partial integration into EU renewable energy projects in Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

In the context of geo-economic interests in renewable energy, interstate projects are being carried out to build new hydroelectric power plants. Definitely, the development of hydropower infrastructures around the Kuro-Araks region is the most promising, where Georgia is a good example. Since 2010, interstate negotiations have been held between Türkiye and Georgia, and specifically to use the Black Sea area to build new energy capacities, aimed at the joint distribution of electricity. In total, the cost of construction of the new Namakhvani hydroelectric power plant (as well as the secondary Tvishi) was to be about 800 million US dollars, and the construction site was the Rioni River in the Imereti region. As part of the agreement, the construction was entrusted to the private Turkish company Enka, whose production capacity was 250 MW, and the maximum energy generated by each of the five turbines was 50 MW<sup>17</sup>. However, recent events with the withdrawal of the Turkish consortium from the project testify to practical intractable difficulties, including environmental ones. However, the main problem is the Georgian government's gradual abandonment of the course of energy liberalism, in particular with an increase in the state's share<sup>18</sup>.

With the exception of external programs in the field of renewable energy (at the moment, the prospects for a hydroelectric project in Georgia are rather pessimistic), it is geo-economically important for Türkiye to preserve the independence of domestic sources, including the use of maritime spaces. At the moment, it can be stated that the entire sector of alternative energy is aimed at reducing import dependence, respectively, maintaining the policy of diversifying the sector as a whole. Support for

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<sup>17</sup> Khvicha Vashakmadze. 2021. "Power Struggle in Georgia." *Transitions*, March 8, 2021. Accessed June 21, 2023. <https://tol.org/client/article/power-struggle-in-georgia.html>.

<sup>18</sup> Palazzo, Claudia. 2021. "Namakhvani HPP: Georgian Hydropower Between Energy Security and Geopolitics." *The Jamestown Foundation*, June 16, 2021. Accessed June 21, 2023. <https://jamestown.org/namakhvani-hpp-georgian-hydropower-between-energy-security-and-geopolitics/>.



the private sector in the political sense is a necessary measure to maintain the stable work of domestic actors, and the issue of retaining domestic capital is relevant due to the unstable inflation rate. In the long term, inflation and uncontrolled rise in prices for basic needs will affect both the energy sector and the transport sector. If we take into account that it will be possible to accumulate renewable energy sources, then in fact the export procedure may not take place due to an undeveloped logistics line, where the construction of new branches will require quick investments. This subtext at this level has not yet been officially considered, and since the Turkish renewable energy sector itself has not been finally assessed, potential counterparties interested in stable supplies of clean sources have not been found. However, the development of strategies for oil and gas and carbon energy projects is taking place on a par with the renewable one, which implies a slight defragmentation, but the prioritization of the latter (it must be taken into account that the main action plan is aimed until 2023). In this regard, at the moment, for the solvency of the entire renewable energy sector, investments in the amount of 60 billion US dollars are needed, which even according to the most optimistic estimates is very difficult in an unstable economy, and more voluminous state guarantees for individuals will also be required (Kalehsar 2019, 12).

Updating the transport agenda, which should be viewed through the prism of building new eco-friendly infrastructures, will require about 47 billion US dollars of investment, of which 18.6 billion should be received immediately to combine the needs in the industrialization of the country. A significant part of these investments (about 24 billion US dollars) should be aimed at reducing carbon sources and phasing out the use of this product as a whole (Kalehsar 2019, 13).

The energy balance in Türkiye as a whole is a conglomeration of various resources, which has been developing intensively since 1990, with an increase in the positions of non-carbon sources. According to the statistics of the International Energy Agency in a thirty-year time interval, energy consumption has risen by 78,25%<sup>19</sup>. According to the world energy statistics report (data provided by the UK Energy Institute), carbon and oil and gas sources continue to dominate, dynamic consumption fragments the statistics thoroughly. Thus, oil consumption in terms of power is 583,71 TW/h (in 2017 this figure is 576), natural gas is 512,12 TW/h (515,68 in 2017), coal is 484,84 TW/h (458,91 in 2017). Of the renewable sources, hydropower has a fundamental position (total number of small + medium) 175,19 TW/h (154,94 in 2017), wind 91,62 TW/h (against 47,65 in 2017), solar 41,49 TW/h (7,69 in 2017)<sup>20</sup>. There is no situation with nuclear energy due to the construction of the Akkuyu nuclear power plant for 2022.

The development of renewable energy in Türkiye is aimed at creating a new business environment where local companies are given priority (or Asian companies can become a potential donor). The accumulation and concentration of capital in this area of energy underlines the importance of the neoliberal course, which is relatively stable in the current conditions, which cannot be said about the long term. Given the

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<sup>19</sup> IEA. 2022. "Türkiye: Key energy statistics, 2020." Accessed June 21, 2023. <https://www.iea.org/countries/turkiye>.

<sup>20</sup> Our World In Data. 2023. "Energy consumption by source, Turkey." Accessed June 21, 2023. <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/energy-consumption-by-source-and-country?stackMode=absolute&time=2017..latest&country=~TUR>.

gradual increase in electricity consumption in the country, it is necessary to point out the diversification strategy at the moment, which has been developed and is being used in the eastern regions of the country. It is not possible to assess the position of renewable sources in the west of the country, where the level of consumption is traditionally increased. In general, despite this problem, small and large hydropower plants may compensate for the demands of the eastern regions, but in the long term, the status of renewable energy in Türkiye will be fixed as politically important.

The EU has played a special role in the political understanding of renewable energy in Türkiye, setting the main legal and strategic vector used by the current ruling Justice and Development Party. It is noteworthy that the idea of green sources is not new, that is, it is considered as an integral part of the entire energy sector, but does not dominate oil and gas or carbon resources<sup>21</sup>.

## Conclusion and discussion

Fundamental changes in government strategies have significantly transformed Türkiye's energy policy system over the past 20 years. Despite the primacy of oil and gas energy systems in Türkiye, there is a strengthening of the position of renewable sources.

The study emphasized repeatedly that the development of certain energy systems is directly reflected in geostrategic initiatives. In the case of renewable energy at the domestic level, there is a significant isolation of production, the approval of the agenda of regional energy sovereignty. The export of this strategy to foreign policy initiatives has not yet been successful, primarily due to the lack of proven geo-economic technologies. At this stage, a process of autarky is observed in alternative and hydrological energy, which, for reasons of the Turkish government, will reduce the energy deficit in the regions, given the high dynamics of the country's industrialization. However, at the same level, there are also elements of hard power policy in relation to the southern neighboring countries, where the limitation of hydrological resources carries a significant political context.

As a negative side of the energy context, it must be stated that the principle of uneven regional energy development is inherent in Türkiye at the present stage. The investment mechanism is most conciliatory towards the most developed regions, while the rest remain on the possibilities of internal financing (including through local private initiatives), less often, within the framework of state financing. At the current stage, the development of renewable resources corresponds to the logic of the EU amendments, to some extent serve as a practical guide. From a geo-economic point of view, the system of a hub thesis in the political discourses of Türkiye, namely integration into large regional energy transport projects, is not excluded. The positions of some Asian

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<sup>21</sup> Akçalı, Emel, Evrim Görmüş, and Soli Özel. 2022. "Towards A 'Green' Mediterranean? Environmental Geopolitics of Turkey, Egypt and Israel." *Institut Montaigne, February 17, 2022*. Accessed June 21, 2023. <https://www.institutmontaigne.org/en/expressions/towards-green-mediterranean-environmental-geopolitics-turkey-egypt-and-israel>.

countries may be the most promising, combining factors of internal development and geopolitical.

The position of nuclear power in Türkiye's electricity supply chain is clear on the scale of the southern regions, but not specified in the future development agenda. It is important to emphasize that the construction of the Akkuyu NPP in Türkiye has significant geopolitical implications, the country's nuclear energy system is being developed, with a traditional system of technology diversification. However, given the interest of Rosatom in the construction of the Sinop nuclear power plant, it is possible to transform to some extent into a unification subtext. Due to the practical novelty of nuclear energy in Türkiye, it is possible that in the near future the area will be monotonous and not diversified, unlike oil and gas or renewable energy sources.

Based on the above conceptual aspects, it is necessary to draw certain final theses on the nuclear and renewable components of Türkiye's energy balance:

- The perspective of the Akkuyu NPP in the energy security system of Türkiye is significantly uncertain. However, the construction of more than four power units with a capacity exceeding 4000 MWh is the most possible in the foreseeable future. The nuclear energy system in Türkiye is at the stage of development, where real prerogatives are taken into account, the creation of new energy supply systems.
- The position of the Akkuyu NPP in the political plane proceeds from the geo-economic features of Russia, increasing its own capital in foreign countries, and under the conditions of sanctions, this process is increasingly stimulated.
- Despite the development of the renewable energy system, it will not be able to surpass the importance of carbon sources. Stable high consumption of coal is a consequence of the developed energy technology in Türkiye. In contrast, the importance of small hydroelectric power plants is increasing.
- The construction of small hydroelectric power plants is of significant political importance to minimize the risks for states, as well as the creation of complex autonomous power supply systems. The expansion of the system of large hydroelectric power plants is developing with Türkiye's water policy of exclusivity, that is, causing direct damage to neighbors in favor of its own. This principle has a clear political connotation; it reduces the energy transport capabilities not only of the Arab countries, but also of the Kurdish autonomies in northern Syria and Iraq.
- The development of wind energy systems in Türkiye is very promising, while solar energy can be listed among the well-established ones. Global energy trends stimulate the development of such systems, but despite this, the Turkish example is biased due to the dynamic level of consumption of all energy resources.

### **Supplementary material**

The supplementary material for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.46991/JOPS/2023.2.5.034>

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### **Conflict of interests**

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

### **Ethical standards**

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

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## THE IMPERATIVE TO SHIFT ARMENIA'S PERIPHERALITY: CONTRADICTIONS OF INSTITUTIONALISATION AND FUNCTIONING IN CONDITIONS OF DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION

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### Abstract

This article offers a discussion about the possibility for Armenia's democratisation, and shift of its peripherality. The intention is to develop a thinking around the opportunities towards creating an environment in which a democratic transformation may be possible. The article uses the centre-periphery model and a decentring research agenda to build on the argument and a possibility for the shift of Armenia's peripherality by means of its civil society. The article argues that if the former practices have failed the country today, it may be relevant to consider the shifting of former practices, which may as well result in shifting country's peripherality. In this context, the process of democratisation of modern Armenia, which is conditioned by a number of factors, presupposing, first of all, the active participation of its civil society, is analysed. This article concentrates on the analysis of one of the necessary conditions for democracy and democratic transition, namely country's local agency, the civil society. The article is prepared based on the premise that public policies shall follow opinion and expertise of country's local agency.

**Keywords:** Armenia, civil society, democratisation, centre-periphery model, democratic transformation, democratic transition, institutional relationship, civic activism.

### Introduction

The intention of this article is to evaluate a possibility of a country, burdened by Soviet and post-Soviet past, towards democratisation. The possibility towards democratisation

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is defined or understood as a contribution to creating an environment, in which a democratic transformation may be possible. There is a vast scholarship showcasing institutional problems of countries, once members of the Soviet structure, having moved on to a 'post-Soviet' period, however failed the task of building democracy and accountable governance. The intention of this article is to develop a discussion about the possibility towards a shift of practice, based on the value and potential of local agency or civil society, to help shift country's peripherality. For this purpose, the article locates Armenia in the centre-periphery model in relation to its former centre Russia (Filippov, Hayoz and Herlth 2020). The hypothetical discussion here develops in the context of the need for former peripheries to shift their peripherality, if they seek to shift former practices.

The centre-periphery model remains a relevant approach for assessing the dynamics on the post-Soviet space, considering the dependency contexts and behavioural tendencies of former centre. The next important variable in this discussion, offered by this article, is the capacity or potential of the Armenian civil society. The conceptual intention here is to identify the opportunities for country's democratisation, by means (or with the support) of its civil society. Another research enquiry would be towards providing an understanding of how the Armenian civil society can support country's democratisation. This article draws on the examples of developed democracies and the wealth of literature evidencing the obvious direct contributions of civil society for democratisation (see, for example, Cohen and Arato 1994; Cohen and Rogers 1995; Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti 1994; Salamon, Sokolowski, and List 2003).

In particular, however, the intention here is, based on the case of Armenia, to provide an understanding of the possibility for country, by means of its civil society, to move towards democratisation, and therefore shift country's peripherality. For this purpose, the article uses theoretical contour and a decentering research agenda offered by Huber and Kamel (2016), to see whether the efforts of the local agency on the peripheries, can be determinant of shifts, such as a shift of peripherality. The internal developments and domestic processes of the peripheries are crucial in order to understand the main transformation and the opportunity structures opened by such processes. Authors suggest a decentering research agenda for the internal dynamics, actors, and strategies of countries on the peripheries (Huber and Kamel 2015, 2016). The contribution of this approach is that the variances in a political context of the peripheries provide diverse opportunity structures and can lead to diverse outcomes. The approach advocates that the peripheries can be the ones leading the political, social, and cultural transformation, considering the opportunity structures, among others, defined as civil society. A significant contribution of this framework is that the operationalisation of the opportunity structure is pursued from the viewpoint of peripheries, and that the strategies adopted by the actors in the peripheries can transform their very constitution as a periphery.

Huber and Kamel advocate that the tangible changes in the countries on the peripheries are possible by taking advantage of the opportunity structures emerged in the post-revolutionary environments.

According to authors, the opportunity structure is located at the meso-level, with civil society, political parties, trade unions, social movements and the media (Huber

and Kamel 2016). In applying this contour, the intention of this article is to put stress on the local agency: the Armenian civil society. Also, it is to understand how its potential can be useful in peripheral internal dynamics, and how it may contribute to a post-Soviet country's attempted democratic transformation process.

### **Description of methods**

This article uses data from methodology originally designed by author. It draws from data collected for the purpose of author's doctoral dissertation (book), titled "*Civil Society and Government Institutions in Armenia. Leaving Behind the 'post-Soviet' Title*" (2023). The research applied a meso-level qualitative analysis design, based on the units of analysis representative of institutional relationship between civil society and government in Armenia. The innovative element of the methodology comprises the offer of the available institutional formats, which facilitate civil society's attendance to public policy in the country, including: (1) local and bilateral institutional platforms (involving CSOs and government institutions); (2) regional and international multilateral institutional platforms (involving civil society organisations (CSO), government institutions and third parties, such as international institutions, donors, other members of civil society); (3) international advocacy opportunities (facilitated by the United Nations, European Union, and other international structures and institution-led formats providing opportunities for civil society advocacy); (4) thematic and ad-hoc cases manifesting civil society advocacy function (inter-governmental commissions, working groups, etc.). The analysis has been reduced to observable units, to be able to study the past, and develop a discussion responding to the conceptual frames and research intention of this article.

Research techniques applied for the collection of data include, (a) desk research and secondary data analysis, using the available data on Armenia's social and political context, mainly reports by the community of local and international experts to understand country's political regime performance and civil society research; (b) analysis of legislative framework and policy developments in Armenia (including data triangulation through consultations with legal experts); (c) content analysis of documents, including national strategies and concepts, which are not legally binding, but demonstrate country's intention or commitment towards civil society and human rights policy development, human rights monitoring and advocacy reports produced by leading CSOs and experts in Armenia; (d) semi-structured and in-depth interviews with scholars, policy experts, human rights defenders, leaders and members of CSOs, international institutions and donors. Interview data applied thematic analysis of qualitative data (Gibson and Brown 2009).

### **Stages in the development of Armenian civil society**

Throughout the history, the Armenian people have witnessed unprecedented cases of mass mobilisation and expression of public attitude, manifesting democratic ideals and

public will. Spanning from antiquity to present, Armenia is a state-survivor of the invasions, wars, treaties, and a rich cultural history of Armenian monarchies. Armenian people have also been scattered among the different empires, with a worldwide diaspora (Ter Minassian 1984). The Armenian history can be summarised as the one of struggle to liberate Armenian literature, language, the right to schooling and secular thinking. The quest for education, research and enlightenment is wrapped in the exploratory and explanatory enquiries of Armenian thinkers that the nation, luckily, had more than a few.

The First Armenian Republic was declared on May 28, 1918, to last until the Soviet arrival and the restructuring that ensued throughout the region. Next came Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic officially from 1920, to last until the departure of the Soviet structure, upheld by the national mobilisations of public confidence, new demands and beliefs. During the Soviet period (Solzhenitsyn 1974), the Armenian people had several unprecedented for the Soviet history manifestations of public activism. In 1965, around 100,000 people gathered at the Yerevan Opera Square to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. According to Karlsson (2007) the gathering evolved into a 24-hour rally, the first of such type and scale to occur in the Soviet Union. The first human rights organisation, the Helsinki monitoring group was found in Soviet Armenia in April 1977. The Armenian civic activism was the first to become a headline in the international press in February (1988), when more than a million people peacefully gathered in Yerevan in support of the constitutional demand of the cessation of the Supreme Soviet of the-then NKAO (region) in the SSR of Azerbaijan (Gevorgyan 2020, 126).

Additionally, as a response to a devastating earthquake in 1988 in Armenia, voluntary groups and organisations were formed to provide humanitarian assistance (Paturyan and Gevorgyan 2014a). By the end of 1980s, the Armenian, along with other Soviet societies would try to locate a new way forward. The period of late 1980s came to be known as the (re)birth of the Armenian civil society (Abrahamian 2001; Abrahamian and Shagoyan 2011a) stressing its mass rallies and street activism.

The events of 1989 gave the needed sparkle, energy and enthusiasm to the nationalities and their discontent within the Soviet borders, including the moods and organising of Armenians. Armenia's what later became known as the 'Karabakh Movement' was first and foremost a movement of democracy, democratic principles, ideals and human rights. The Armenian democratic and revolutionary movement in the Soviet Union started in 1987-88, as a direct and clear opposition in their ideology against the communist rule, adjoined by mass demonstrations in Yerevan in support of Artsakh or Nagorno Karabakh: a predominantly Armenian region, which became a subject of dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan when both gained independence from Russian Empire (1918). The Soviets, upon expanding into South Caucasus, gave the region the status of an autonomous oblast within Azerbaijan. Towards the years of Soviet dissolution, the overwhelmingly Armenian-populated region again became the subject of dispute, resulting in war (1991 [1988]-1994). Since then, almost the entire territory of NK and the territories surrounding it have been under the joint control of the Armenian and Artsakh Defence Forces. In September 2020, Azerbaijan's political-military leadership, backed by Turkey, launched aerial and missile attacks on the entire

line of contact with Artsakh, targeting also the peaceful settlements, including the capital of Stepanakert. The unprecedented aggression developed into a full and large-scale war.

The developments and transformations within Armenian society in result of the war, and the security, social and other dangers ensuing from it place Armenia under the burden and a necessity to rethink country's policies and practice, towards shifting its peripherality, which is the intention of this article, and to which the discussion will return.

The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic was renamed the Republic of Armenia with the Armenian Declaration of Independence (1990)<sup>1</sup>, forming the basis for the development of the Constitution and legislation of the republic. In the end of the twentieth century Armenia was a product of national resistance, collapse of a despotic domain, a war and an economic failure. The country located itself in transition, along with other newly independent states, with challenges to regional integration, full of continuous perceptions of insecurity and systemic problems shaping its political and economic changes (Gallina 2010; Stefes 2006). The parody of democratic reform went hand in hand with multiplicity of authoritarian components entrenched in government system. And importantly, a feature of the post-Soviet space – the informality (Giordano and Hayoz 2013; Hayoz 2015), arbitrary decision-making, centralised media control, monopolies, the lack of accountability, and most certainly, the lack of space and a meaningful role for civil society. Since early 1990s the development of civil society in Armenia has been somewhat questionable and democracy suffered (Dudwick 1995a; Dudwick 1995b; Dudwick 1997b; Stefes 2006; Cooley and Mitchell 2010).

In the early years of independence (during the period called 'post-Soviet'), the country experienced a new reality, full of challenges or large-scale problems. In that reality, however, there was no agenda of establishing an independent non-governmental sector. That reality was characterised with a devastating economic situation (as a consequence of the First Nagorno-Karabakh War, until ceasefire reached in 1994) and mismanagement in the way policies were to handle, mainly through informal and arbitrary decision-making, partisanship and corruption. Similar to other post-Soviet countries, the early years of independence witnessed an extensive reliance on informal networks and personal contacts. Human rights, participation and accountable governance, unfortunately, did not serve as the guiding principles for Armenia's political leadership of the consecutive regimes, which skilfully manipulated the reform process throughout years.

The development of the post-Soviet civil society in Armenia is of particular interest. The country has moved through several curious stages of societal development, from the Soviet to the so-called "NGO-ised" civil society, and to a new stage defined as civic activism (Paturyan and Gevorgyan 2016), where cooperation of formal and informal civil society actors has been most visible. The "NGO-isation" argument has been described by Ishkanian (2009) as the period of "mushrooming of NGOs" and a process of "genetically engineered civil society", or a "baby-boom" of NGOs, to borrow the term by (Chimiak 2006), thanks to the range of international donors rushing

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<sup>1</sup> Armenian Declaration of Independence. Adopted 23.08.1990. Accessed July 30, 2023. <http://www.parliament.am/legislation.php?sel=show&ID=2602&lang=arm&enc=utf8>.

to support the management of a new republic. The major philanthropist George Soros has served a great aid to Armenia, along with helping other countries of the post-Soviet region to revitalise former authoritarian practices of closed societies.

In 2000s, the country attempted to register a visibility on the international stage through memberships in international platforms, signing agreements and committing to a range of responsibilities in line with recognised standards of democratic governance. The domestic conditions, however, would largely remain as plaguing the economy and social life due to lack of meaningful collective decision-making constrained by centralised powers, the expressed lack of checks and balances, an arbitrary rule and selective justice. The first years of a new decade, and a new century involved the politicised judiciary system, education and other sectors, thus undermining capacity to institutional development.

Roughly since 2007, Armenia experienced gradually evolving mobilisations or issue-based activist campaigns, with citizens rejecting decision-making contradicting public good in different sectors. In the upcoming eight years, there have been up to around 50 civic initiatives, with many of those resolved in favour of the activists. An important introduction and a benefit of the so-called civic activist campaigns has been their contribution, defined as somewhat changing public attitudes towards the non-governmental sector as confined to solely formal representatives. Because of the changes in original policies and decisions, in result of civic activism, these initiatives elevated public trust towards the sector and the possibility of change, in general (Paturyan and Gevorgyan 2016). The data of a four-year study (2012-2016) analysing the formal and informal members of Armenian civil society, among others, their behaviour, public attitudes, and perceptions towards the third sector and its members, shows the attachment of people to the concept of unity. A unity, through which it is possible to register a change, conceptualised as political decision-making in favour of public good (Paturyan and Gevorgyan 2014a, 2016). The study of Armenian civil society conducted in the preceding years of the revolution (2018) displayed evidence on an overwhelming agreement among public that the only sphere capable to lead the development of the country in the right direction – has been the third sector or the civic sphere (Paturyan and Gevorgyan 2021).

Data has also portrayed the informal civil society members (so-called civic activists) as the ones providing for the formal actors (CSOs or legal entities) the link to the public (Gevorgyan 2017). Research stressed the inevitability for formal and informal members coming together and recognising each other's legitimacy if the society is to progress to the next level. Such a uniting formula for both actors within the civil society domain, envisioned as the next step of societal development proved true manifesting in Armenia's 'Velvet' (2018). A revolution, or otherwise a multiplicity of elements in a big puzzle joining forces with the leading role of youth characterised by spontaneity of action and increased participation.

In 2015, the Armenian authorities initiated constitutional changes, to shift the semi-presidential form of governance to parliamentary. The framing used to justify constitutional initiative was about the necessity for a new quality of governance, required to solve a range of social and economic problems. The argument was weak, did not work, considering the low and regressing public trust towards political

institutions and the obvious intention of the regime to remain in power<sup>2</sup>. The intention and reasons towards a simple change of form, instead of norms and practice, have been obvious for the expert community, but also public. This intention and its moving-forward through possible and necessary means, including the role of the CoE Venice Commission, accumulated in civic rejection, a protest campaign against constitutional changes. Notwithstanding public resistance, the referendum was held (by many accounts and expert assessments forced and falsified) and changes adopted. Armenia became a parliamentary republic<sup>3</sup>.

Since its independence (1991), Armenia had a semi-presidential system of government; after the forced constitutional changes in 2015, the country adopted a parliamentary system. The false promise of this shift, let alone the intention of the third president to cling to power (by using constitutional change to serve the purpose), brought people to the streets. It also generated harsh criticism in Armenian political discourse, along with the public demand contributing to the eventual loss of trust towards political institutions<sup>4</sup>. April's parliamentary elections (2017) sparked a new wave of demand and increased protests echoing the events of the 1980s.

### **The advantage of civil society's functions**

Among the methodological intentions of this article has been to focus on the implementation of Armenian civil society's advocacy function, to provide an understanding of the role, values and possible impacts of the local agency towards supporting country's shift of peripherality (Huber and Kamel 2016). The advocacy choice is central to relations between civil society and government institutions. In Armenia, in the light of continual flaws in governmental strategies towards civil society and the implementation of human rights policy in the country, over the years civil society, and not the government, has prioritised the human rights agenda. Despite the environment of continual crises, along with the third sector's internal problems, CSOs have managed to maintain public interest-oriented, human rights issue-specific and social-group targeted strategies. Despite the governmental strategy towards civil society and human rights policy, cooperation with government for the sake of the public has been on the actual civil society's radar since the early 2000s, throughout three consecutive administrations.

Service provision as Armenian civil society's power-function in the 1990s came to shift towards attendance to public policymaking, roughly from the early 2000s, demanded by political changes in the country. Civil society's advocacy choice was

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<sup>2</sup> Such has been possible through a changed constitution as the former one disallowed presidential serving for more than two terms. Becoming a prime minister with a new constitution has been the intention, and a replication of a largely practiced experience in former states of the Soviet Union.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, report by US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor 2017, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Armenia. Accessed July 30, 2023. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2017-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/armenia/>.

<sup>4</sup> Which has been continuously low, Caucasus Barometer data (Caucasus Research Resource Centers 2010, 2011, 2015).

conditioned by the inevitable strategy shift towards upholding government accountability and human rights standards. Although with some instances of bilateral success, for example CSOs monitoring of closed institutions, overall, the failed governance practice seemed to deepen, triggering a new stage of development in the relational dynamics between the two entities. The recurring cycle of crises led to a period of informal civil society and collective action in the decade 2007–16, shifting the understanding of the third sector as synonymous with CSOs. The period of small and big issue-based civic campaigns, merging their strategies with civil society institutional actors, creating a larger ecosystem of Armenian civil society (Paturyan and Gevorgyan 2021), eventually resulted in the uprising of 2018. This necessitated a reconsideration of the civil society advocacy function. Prior to the revolution, CSO-government platforms have been ineffective and CSO-parliament dialogue almost non-existent. Although there were policy provisions available to strengthen civil society's presence in local institutional structures, Armenia's government failed in its initiative-taking strategy, while CSOs rendered a proactive advocacy approach.

After 2018, the implementation of reforms became the defining variable for civil society's advocacy choice, and the strengthening of that choice became an imperative. The different members of the new political leadership seemed to attach themselves to different qualities, to fear different things. Such a behavioural tendency has led to strategic chaos, preventing clear-cut ends and means towards civil society and human rights policy in the country. Such confusion, combined with inaction on the part of the government, has generated aggressive or more demanding civil society strategies for reform. The revolution has produced somewhat paradoxical conditions for the implementation of civil society's advocacy function. Although the seemingly new post-2018 political and social circumstances promised a friendly environment (where the CSO advocacy function could manifest), the developments targeting civil society have delayed that promise. The qualitative data shows that the period after the revolution in Armenia led to the development of new factors, or variables, for understanding civil society's advocacy function.

Armenia's 'Velvet' offered a somewhat counterintuitive dynamic for civil society. The period that followed witnessed a fresh outbreak of anti-civil society campaigns, purposely targeting third sector actors, and in particular, their advocacy function. The forces, having lost their influence and power as a result of the nationwide uprising, invested harshly into discrediting active civic domain. Civic actors have been framed to blame for changes in a post-Soviet country mired in partisanship, the decisions deepening the country's dependence on the former centre. The revolution has placed Armenian civil society into an unprecedented twofold situation: on the one hand, space for them seemed to emerge, in terms of new participatory opportunities; at the same time, the real or critical civil society members have become the main target of disinformation. Before the revolution, there were few tangible spaces for engagement. Since 2018, such spaces have seemed to emerge. But along with these, the burden of manipulation has similarly surfaced. Whether aggressive or confrontational, cooperative or contained, civil society's advocacy function has manifested in being prepared to counter a wide range of information manipulations and physical attacks.



After 2018, among the pioneer civil society concerns has been the rejection of a dangerous route towards dissociating from reforms and commitments promised by April's uprising. 'A revolution gone wrong' remains a primary concern for the critical civil society. For the implementation of civil society's advocacy function, not the attacks, but rather society's lack of or faulty understanding of concepts that are core and vital for democracy is a challenge. These concepts include the relations among and responsibilities of different actors in public life, the relevance of human rights standards for reform, and the actual role of non-governmental actors in supporting such. For many years, a short-term vision in governance has damaged the country's institutional progress and the rule of law. The events of 2018 displayed a public quest for a new period, with the main highlight being that a change of political leadership is practicable and real. However, during the past two and a half years, 'to make the revolution go wrong' became an openly established purpose of the forces that lost their power, and have positioned themselves in the civic domain. Therefore, Armenia finds itself in an interesting interplay. On the one hand, upholding the promise of the nationwide mobilisation has become a challenging task for the revolutionary leadership. On the other hand, damaging the promise of the revolution has become the target of the group that lost their power. This is where civil society actors try to locate their performance and remain effective, in an environment of crossroads '*full of thorns*', not to speak of the internal and foreign security and social challenges, post-war.

But then, can the Armenian civil society support country's democratic transformation? The main intention here is an attempt towards providing an understanding on the possibilities for the country's democratic transformation, identified within the domain of relations between civil society and government institutions. For a long time now, the literature on post-communist civil societies has explained the 'weakness' of societies based on low membership in voluntary organisations, low levels of public trust towards the voluntary sector and low levels of volunteering (Howard 2003). The data generated in result of research, presented in this article, offers a new definition viewing a 'weak' civil society from the perspective of the lack of public policy expertise and access to influence. In Armenia, with numerous challenges and growing concerns, still, there seems to be a new understanding in the public policy community that a 'weak' civil society means one lacking expertise. This finding seems to suggest an understanding that a strong and a professionalised model of CSO activity is one that concentrates on public policy. Understanding the civil society advantage here may be helpful.

During the round of crises in Armenia, CSOs did not abandon their public-oriented strategies; in fact, they offered continual monitoring and advocacy, even during times when the government was not very cooperative. The civil society advantage is understood through considering the different but recurring behavioural practices from the discussion of institutional platforms in this research. These include civil society's engagement in a number of local and international institutional platforms, working groups, councils and committees; research and monitoring activities; efforts to understand the steps that government designs and implements to support human rights; the support provided to government institutions in the development of national

strategies; qualitative assessment of reforms as opposed to solely output-based assessment; contributions in terms of conceptualisations of reforms and government actions; contributions in terms of providing an understanding of area-based crises and developing responses to them, as well as regularly presenting evidence and so on. Over the years, it has been civil society, and not any other actor, that has pointed out that there is more to upholding human rights in the country than the training of public officials or creating more e-governance mechanisms. Civil society's potential and initiative-taking qualities have supported the implementation of reforms, including in the areas of the judiciary, anti-corruption and the upholding of a number of human rights, without which it might not be possible to shift country's peripherality. Armenia's governance needs to take advantage of the local agency and listen to the available expertise. The country needs to establish relations between government institutions and civil society actors based on public policy and regulation, not traditions, informality or stereotypes. The political and social assessment of past policies and practices may develop into civil society and government institutions' strategic objectives (Najam 2000). The findings suggest that the country should distance itself from former failed practices through a better alignment of institutional goals and strategies between civil society and government agencies. The alignment of goals and strategies to achieve them might produce an experience that is different from earlier.

The performance of institutional platforms and initiatives in Armenia prior to the revolution manifested a tendency towards a weakening reform agenda, which lowered public trust in government institutions and their credibility. The government's superficial strategies or tactics regarding reform were a determinant factor that led to the national uprising of 2018. Sadly, half a decade into revolution, not much has actually changed, except the leadership. It has been the local agency and the civil society forces, not government institutions, that pushed for reforms, the implementation of which post-war seems now doubly challenging. Similar to the historical practices (Kale 2004), the critical part of the Armenian civil society has sought for mechanisms prioritising an enlightened public opinion, and engagement in collective reflection on common good and constitutional order.

### **Rejecting the adjustment of Armenia's future to its past**

We may as well reframe Armenia's 2018 "*Re-volu-tion*" to a "*Re-value-tion*", considering the nationwide public quest and a demand of changing the established practices absorbed in *post-Soviet* values, free from human rights standards and guarantees. Human rights and justice have been the main quest of the 1989 revolutions, which facilitated the departure of the Soviet Union. In April 2018, Armenia witnessed an unprecedented mobilisation, a nation-wide uprising, known as *the Velvet Revolution*, sparking an immediate interest of local and international scholarship and journalism (to name a few, for example, Abrahamian and Shagoyan 2018; Baev 2018; Cooper 2018; De Waal 2018; Niculescu 2019; Riegg 2018; Way 2018). The Armenian citizens woke up against the lack of justice and transparent governance uphold

continuously by the previous consecutive regimes. Armenia's 'Velvet' was also a quest to the elevation of human rights, social justice and a calling for reforms (Abrahamian and Shagoyan 2018; Lanskoj and Suthers 2019; Markarov 2018; Markarov and Davtyan 2018). A study shows that thirty years into 1989 revolutions, the countries of the Eastern and Central Europe are still fearful of the future of democracy and their freedoms<sup>5</sup>. It is the same concern that the small states with a legacy of almost a century under a totalitarian regime are still fighting to regain, while the local agencies help governments in doing so. A long period of informal and arbitrary practices in Armenia transformed into a quest to establish a rule of law and respect for human rights. The events were sustained by a continued and increasing public discontent over the levels of poverty and corruption, and the decay of democratic institutions during the years of former regimes' uncontested rule.

Revolutions are events, not processes (Chartier 1991), and massive mobilisations do not emerge from a vacuum. In Armenia's case, issue-centred civic advocacy has prepared the terrain for the revolution. In May 2018, the Armenian citizens welcomed new Prime Minister Pashinyan, and new government appointees. In December 2018, Armenia voted in the first parliamentary elections of the so-called "*new Armenia*", where Pashinyan's alliance gained the majority of seats in the parliament. The parliamentary elections institutionalised the demands of the revolution, with citizens voting for a new era of political governance, and, hopefully, a new mission for civil society. After 2018 the country faced a number of challenges in a seemingly new political and social context. Armenia found itself at an interplay of exciting, but also risky for democracy challenges. A relevant question for Armenia's post-revolutionary period has been whether the new leadership is able to develop functional tendencies rejecting former practices. The question remained whether the new leaders are able to convey a certainty to the future by the improved practice of relations between government institutions and civil society, notwithstanding the security shocks and egregious challenges imposed on the country from the outside.

In September 2020, the neighbouring Azerbaijan waged a large-scale war against Armenians and Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh (NK)). In a period when the entire world was fighting a common enemy, the Covid-19 pandemic, Azerbaijan initiated a war, what proved to be a cumulative of discontinued aggression, war crimes, mass human rights violations and grave breaches of international humanitarian law<sup>6</sup>. Beyond doubt,

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<sup>5</sup> See, Lan (Bui-Wrzońska 2019) "States of Change: Attitudes in Central and Eastern Europe 30 Years after the Fall of the Berlin Wall", Open Society Foundations, November 2019. Accessed July 30, 2023. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/publications/states-of-change-attitudes-in-central-and-eastern-europe-30-years-after-the-fall-of-the-berlin-wall> (Research administered in seven countries: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia); a similar concern also argued by Timothy Garton (Ash 2019) "Democracy is under attack in post-Wall Europe, but the spirit of 1989 is fighting back", October 2019. Accessed July 30, 2023. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/oct/30/democracy-europe-1989-berlin-wall-velvet-revolutions-populists>.

<sup>6</sup> Azerbaijan's non-stop aggression, even in result of three declarations for humanitarian ceasefire negotiated by the three members of the OSCE Minsk Group countries, led to violations of numerous human rights of the citizens of Artsakh, including the right to life, the right to education, the right to health, the right to property and many others. Arrogance, propaganda, deception and terror became defining characteristics of this dirty war, where civilians and the vital for human life infrastructure and cultural

the lack of experience of Armenia's new leadership, country's three decade-governance style and failed negotiations on NK, and Armenia's militarily and otherwise overwhelming dependence on Russia – offer main variables to understand the reasons for war's outcomes benefiting all direct and indirect parties involved – but Armenians. The war brought Armenia and the Armenians around the world on the brink of disappointment and anger, anxiety and pain. In fact, the war has been forced on a small and a landlocked country with intentions to democratic transition. The war took the lives of thousands on both sides proved a blatant power-seeking function of regional authoritarians.

In the centre-periphery context involving Russia, as an actor, the war has manifested also the former centre's intention to target a periphery for civilian, military and economic destruction and, therefore, more influence. The war manifested an intentional targeting (or a silent agreement to target) a legitimate government of a smaller country – a former periphery with hopes for its reorienting of local agenda and external dependence. As the history teaches, the post-Soviet countries pay high price for their intentions to detachment from the centre, independent decision-making and importantly, a legitimate governance. Along with Georgia, Armenia is the only country with an actual democratic potential in its immediate neighbourhood. Armenia's recent history is a showcase of security and other shocks, employed by a former centre on a periphery, which has taken a chance to shift its peripherality; which has showcased an intent towards a legitimate government and decisions, commensurate with the title of an 'independent' republic.

After revolution, the lack of the assessment of former practices and the lack of capacity to analyse the reasons for governance failures based on multivariate analyses, remains problematic. The legacy of the dysfunctional governance mechanisms and the enduring practices of informality (Giordano and Hayoz 2013; Hayoz 2015; Klíma 2019), institutional gaps, partisanship and corruption (Stefes 2006; Falkenhain 2020), and the lack of tangible reforms – either before or after revolution, along with government's lack of competence – have led to the tragic losses in war. Over the course of three years 2018-2020, Armenia witnessed three major shocks: a revolution, a pandemic and a large-scale war. The three processes have generated new challenges, and became critical junctures, influencing harshly the developments today.

The developments suggest that the centre and periphery model for countries on the post-Soviet space may remain relevant for future research and policy. This war, its consequences and effects on the regional dynamics must remain a subject of multidisciplinary research, to provide an understanding of, among others, the challenges imposed by regional autocrats on members of the EU's Eastern Partnership countries, with potential and collective demonstrated will for democratic transformation.

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objects were bombed, including general healthcare facilities and maternity hospitals, schools, theatres, churches, fauna and the natural habitat. Regarding specific human rights violations, see, "Human Rights Violations During the 44-Day War in Artsakh", Fact-finding Report produced by (Open Society Foundations-Armenia et al. 2022) in cooperation with civil society partner institutions (2022). Accessed July 30, 2023. [https://www.osf.am/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Fact-Finding-Report\\_FINAL\\_web.pdf](https://www.osf.am/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Fact-Finding-Report_FINAL_web.pdf).

The years after Armenia's independence (1991) reflected a continuity of the Soviet practices relevant to the curtailed and intentionally disabled civil society function. More than two decades of independence did not manage to be successful, in terms of breaking cultural and behavioural ties with the ones of its former centre, Russia. The concepts, framing, ideologies and beliefs in present-day Russia, resonate with the Soviet-era governance and thinking. Selected examples of fake patriotism trampling on any possibility of human rights being a priority confirm this<sup>7</sup>. Also, to remind that, the post-Soviet world was built on the ideology advocating, *"...if we remember the suffering of millions of people, it will distort the historical perspective. If we seek the essence of our temper, it will overshadow material progress."* (Solzhenitsyn 1992) [1973], 91).

Opportunities for domestic reforms helped the collapse of the Soviet Union (Bunce 1999). The assessment of former practice may be the reforms. However, the failure of countries to revise their own history after declaring independence from the Soviet Union emerged in the replication of authoritarian practice. Previous enquiries searched for stabilising factors in hybrid regimes (Levitsky and Way 2010; Robertson 2010), which may, as well be reframed as a search for factors that will help to divert from the former centre-periphery model towards democratic transformation, and therefore a change of peripherality. In that process, the assessment of what worked and failed to work in the past becomes necessary. The contributions that civil society is able to provide may become the stabilising factor in Armenia's transition to democracy, where public and civil society exercise channels to influence institutional decision-making, through institutional engagement on different levels.

For a democratic transformation of a country, it may require a development from perspective of institutionalising the available public policy expertise. More than a decade ago, Schmitter, reflecting on the lessons learned from democratic transitions put forward fifteen findings (2010). Among those is one about the democratisation process requiring professional politicians, not amateur citizens (Schmitter 2010). Considering that Armenia's revolutionary government may lack required expertise in a number of areas, it may also mean that taking advantage of the available expertise that civil society actors provide may become inevitable. In Armenia, the need for policy expertise remained constant. The Armenian civil society's professionalised capacities may positively influence the process of institutionalising expertise. Institutionalising expertise means developing a process not dependent on persons or groups in the government, but the system. Institutional participation will also contribute to the increased political trust, which has been declining in Armenia during the former administrations, as there is a positive correlation between political trust and institutionalised participation (Hooghe and Marien 2013).

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<sup>7</sup> Some examples of fake patriotism overruling human rights include Russia's political leadership's dominant narratives about the 20th century and Stalin's victory of the WWI, justifying the egregious number of deaths (both soldiers, but also civilians, in result of his years of terror); and the spread of the modern truth in Russia, separating the realities, best explained in essay (see, "The roots of Russia's Atomised Mourning" by Kiril Kobrin 2016, Open Democracy, November 2016. Accessed July 30, 2023. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/roots-of-russia-s-atomised-mourning/>).

Decades ago, Migdal argued that weak states produce strong societies, and the choice of methods in this process is governed by resources, ideas and organisational means (Migdal 1988). Such resources and organisational means were also referred to as opportunity structures (Tarrow 2011). In Ukraine, for example, same opportunity structures were opened for reforms in the immediate aftermath of the revolution. However, the reforms did not have time to develop into democratic, due to Russia's war in Ukraine. The post-Soviet countries seem to share the same behavioural traits by former centre Russia, meddling into the sovereign decision-making and public will over the choice of countries' peripherality and progress.

## **Conclusion and discussion**

The hypothetical frame for the discussion in this article revolved around the assumption that if former practices and country's established peripherality and an overwhelming dependence on its former centre Russia – did not succeed (moreover, have brought about new challenges) it may be relevant to consider the shifting of former practices, which may as well result in shifting country's peripherality. The theoretical approach applied for this discussion, also advocates that the peripheries can be the ones leading the political, social, and cultural transformation, considering the opportunities, among those defined as civil society (Huber and Kamel 2016).

Research on local civil society has demonstrated shifts and development dynamics within the larger eco-system of Armenian civil society (Gevorgyan 2017; Paturyan and Gevorgyan 2018; Paturyan and Gevorgyan 2021). Also, and in particular, that during the years preceding 2018, there has been an agreement among public that the only sphere capable to lead the development of the country in the right direction is the third sector or civil society (Paturyan and Gevorgyan 2021), which has proved true manifesting Armenia's 'Velvet'. Following the changes in the country, the implementation of reforms became the defining variable for the critical civil society's advocacy choice. Data also demonstrates public shifting understanding of the actual roles and contributions of local agency, offering a new definition of a 'weak' civil society from the perspective of the lack of public policy expertise and access to influence. Armenian government's former and superficial strategies or tactics regarding actual reform implementation were a determinant factor that led to the national uprising. Policies of Armenia's former administrations (by default resulting in more dependency on Russia) have led to the revolution.

Beyond doubt, the post-2018, and especially post-war (2020) circumstance have generated multiple and new challenges for a young, and still a post-Soviet Armenia. At the same time, and notwithstanding, the country resides among the very few representatives in the region (along with Georgia), with potential and collective will to democratisation and accountable governance. Surrounded by immediate and regional neighbours, consolidated authoritarian regimes, Armenia strives to sustain the opportunity for creating an environment, in which a democratic transformation may be possible. For a democratic transformation of a country, it may require a development from the perspective of institutionalising the available public policy expertise.

Otherwise, an alignment of government's goals and strategies with those of professionalised civil society actors, with years of reform implementation and human rights monitoring experience, to help produce a country practice different from earlier ones.

Understanding the trajectories of change and developments in post-social movement environments remain a necessity, especially on the post-Soviet space. Russia's war in Ukraine may be one obvious and relevant case in point. With today's Russia promoting power, violence and isolation, openly rejecting modernity and progress (Etkind 2023; Galeotti 2022), and with interest in occupation of neighbours, Armenia is bound to revisit its peripherality. In that process, reference to local agency may be crucial. The analysis suggests, that distancing from former, failed and post-Soviet practices may be possible in result of taking advantage of civil society's functions and expertise. Changing the meaning of the peripheries may mean a change in methods of handling things that were practised before. Updating local institutional platforms involving civil society, and importantly, taking advantage of the expertise it has to offer is one way to do this; shifting the former faulty experience, by also shifting country's peripherality. With multiplicity of new, security, social and political challenges, it seems an imperative for Armenia to reject country's future adjusting to its past, to establish new practices at home, and to shift its peripherality.

### **Supplementary material**

The supplementary material for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.46991/JOPS/2023.2.5.056>

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### **Conflict of interests**

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

### **Ethical standards**

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

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# HISTORICAL RETHINKING OF RELATIONS WITH THE FIRST REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: THE DILEMMA OF ORIENTATION AND EXPECTATIONS

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## Abstract

This article examines the features of relations with the First Republic of Armenia and the United States of America in the context of the dilemma of orientation and expectations of the Armenian political elite and society. The purpose of this study is to determine the characteristics of the influence of interethnic conflicts on the Armenian population and political elite after the February Revolution of 1917 on the territory of the Russian Empire. The main attention is paid to identifying general and specific elements in the process of restoring independent Armenian statehood at the end of May 1918.

The scientific novelty lies in the study of transformative processes and the long break of independent Armenian statehood, the people's and liberation struggle, as well as the geopolitical developments in the region in the context of the clash of both diplomatic and military, political and economic interests. As a result, after lengthy negotiations, on February 25, 1919, the assembly was presented with a single demand of the Armenians for recognition of the Armenian state.

The characteristic features of such decisions are highlighted and described, on the basis of which it was proposed to transfer Armenia under the guardianship of the Entente and transfer its mandate to one of the countries for at least twenty years. It is emphasized that the Armenian delegations expressed their desire to transfer the patronage (mandate) of a united, independent and free Armenia to the United States of America or the newly formed League of Nations.

**Keywords:** First Republic of Armenia, United States of America, revolution, Armenian National Central Council, Ottoman Empire, Ottoman Turkey, Armenian-Turkish Peace Pact.

## Introduction

The February revolution of 1917 was a kind of a shock not only for Russia itself, but even the distant outskirts of the large empire, including the Caucasus.

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In the post-revolutionary period, important historical events of pivotal and fateful significance for the Armenian people took place. The main thing, of course, at the end of May 1918, after a long break, was the restoration of independent Armenian statehood, which was achieved as a result of national awakening, popular and liberation struggle, strained inter-ethnic relations, as well as geopolitical developments in the region, sharp contradictions, the clash of military-political and economic interests, diplomatic and military confrontation in difficult conditions (Libaridian 2022; Yengoyan 2023; Aleksanyan 2016).

In 1918 after signing the Armenian-Turkish “Treaty of Peace and Friendship” in Batumi on June 4, the Armenian delegation returned to Tiflis on June 6. In fact, the Armenian National Central Council started forming the central bodies of the government of the Republic of Armenia only after signing the treaty. The issue of power was delayed not so much by internal political disputes as by external circumstances.

On June 7, the continuous sessions of the Armenian National Central Council of Tiflis began. It was chaired by Avetis Aharonian. The issues of forming the first legislative (council, parliament) and executive (government) bodies of Armenia were discussed. On the first day, as a result of long and intense discussions, the Council decided to elect Hovhannes Katchaznoui as the President (Prime Minister) of the Government of the Republic of Armenia and instruct him to form a provisional government on the basis of a coalition (treaty) principle, reserving the choice of persons to him<sup>1</sup>. It was also decided to temporarily assign the powers of the legislative body (Council of the Republic of Armenia) to the Armenian National Central Council and move it from Tiflis to Yerevan. On June 8, at the Tiflis Club of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, Alexander Khatisyan informed: “Yerevan will be the capital of the independent Republic of Armenia, where the Armenian government will soon move to.”<sup>2</sup>

It is noteworthy that on June 11, at the invitation of the Minister of Justice and Foreign Affairs of the Ottoman Empire, Halil Bey<sup>3</sup>, the chairman of the Turkish delegation in Batumi, an Armenian delegation from Tiflis visited Constantinople to participate in the conference with Turkey and its allied states (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria) to resolve all remaining issues between the newly independent republics of the Caucasus and the Ottoman Empire (Vratsyan 1928, 157). In fact, it was a continuation of Batumi’s diplomatic negotiations in Constantinople.

It should be noted that the Armenian delegation was going to Constantinople to revise the Armenian-Turkish pact, that is, to align the established borders with the conditions of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty (March 3, 1918), as well as hoping to improve the situation of hundreds of thousands of Armenian refugees (Zang 1918). Therefore, with the establishment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the newly independent

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<sup>1</sup> “The declaration of Armenia’s independence and the formation of the central bodies of power (May-July 1918).” In: *Collection of documents and materials*, edited by Amatuni Virabyan, Karen Khachatryan and Hamo Sukiasyan, 61-62. Yerevan: Publication of the National Archives of Armenia, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 8, sheet 116.

Republic of Armenia, it was necessary to legally fix the participation of the Armenian delegation at the state level in the negotiations to be held in Constantinople.

### **The difficulties of urgent protection of the state and society**

As we can see, Katchaznoui's haste had a basis under it, because with the creation of these key ministries, not only would the protection of the country from external and internal enemies be ensured, but also the main directions of the foreign policy strategy and the implementation of diplomatic negotiation processes would be developed and formed under the direct leadership of the head of the government, the prime minister.

Despite the disagreements regarding the discussed issue, the National Central Council adopted the following decision at the June 8 session: "Listening to the Prime Minister Katchaznoui's explanations about the difficulties and inexpediency of having a full-fledged government, the National Council decided to be content with the ministries of foreign affairs, military and finance (if a suitable person is found) for the time being, leaving the rest of the affairs to the relevant heads of the Council until the transfer to Yerevan"<sup>4</sup>.

Katchaznoui informed at the meeting of the Council that Khatisian was offered to take the position of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia. Thus, the beginning of the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia was set on the same day, on June 8, from the moment of appointing Khatisyan as a minister<sup>5</sup>. New trials and difficult days were expected in the whirlwind of the republic's foreign policy and diplomatic struggle.

As a rule, every newly created state strives to immediately enter the international arena, to accelerate the recognition of its independence of its own state and to establish many, multifaceted ties and diplomatic relations with other states at the level of ambassadors. However, the solution of that issue was connected with overcoming serious difficulties. Ottoman Turkey put the Republic of Armenia in a circle, allowing it to enter into relations only with its immediate neighbors and its allies, the Central Powers and its neighboring states (Petrosyan 2019, 249-298).

About a week after the establishment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, on June 13, when the Armenian delegation was on its way to Constantinople, with the signature of the chairman of the Armenian National Central Council Aharonian, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Katchaznoui and Minister of Foreign Affairs Khatisyan, as it was assumed, the first official note was sent from Tiflis to Constantinople separately to the representatives of the embassies of Iran, Sweden, Spain, Denmark, Holland, Austria-Hungary, Germany, Bulgaria, in which they were asked to inform their governments about the fact of the formation of independent Armenia<sup>6</sup>. However, it was not at all surprising or accidental that the authorities of the newly established Republic of Armenia did not send such an official

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<sup>4</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 222, list 1, file 141, sheet 252.

<sup>5</sup> We think that the Day of the Diplomat of the Republic of Armenia should be celebrated not on March 2, but on June 8, the day of the establishment of the first Republic of Armenia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>6</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 35, sheets 1a, 2a, 5a, 7a, 9a.

note to the Entente's great allies, France, England, the United States of America, and neighboring states. It could give Ottoman Turkey an opportunity to start new military operations against the Republic of Armenia.

The point was that even on the eve of the signing of the Armenian-Turkish peace treaty in Batumi, on June 3, the head of the Armenian delegation, Khatisyan, under the compulsion of Ottoman Turkey, had signed a document and assumed a certain obligation: "The Government of the Republic of Armenia undertakes not to have any diplomatic relations with the states in a state of war with the Ottoman Empire during the entire process of war (the First World War)<sup>7</sup>. It clearly follows from that document that the Republic of Armenia undertook on the one hand not to have diplomatic relations with the Entente states<sup>8</sup>, including Russia, even though the latter withdrew from the war with the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty of March 3, 1918, throughout the First World War, and on the other hand, to present that document to the public opinion meant putting the credit of the Government of the Republic of Armenia to the test, because "the Russian-Armenians," (Hairenik 1924, 78) writes A. Jamalyan, - they dreamed of the return of Russian rule. The reality was that the Armenian political and social circles did not know about the existence of that document (commitment). It was no coincidence that at the second session of the council on August 3, Kajaznuni bypassed the official position of the Republic of Armenia regarding the Entente and other neighboring states due to the Batumi Agreement after June 3 (Petrosyan 2022; Petrosyan 2023).

New obligations stemming from the logical spirit of the June 3 letter of commitment were set forth in Article 2 of the temporary additional annex to the treaty signed between the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Armenia on June 4: "The Government of the Republic of Armenia was obliged to immediately remove from its territory the officers and civilian ranks of the countries that are in a state of war with Turkey or its allies, as well as the allies and ranks of the said belligerent countries. Apart from that, during the entire period of the war, the government of the Republic of Armenia will not accept any officer or anyone in general from the aforementioned belligerent countries or their allies" (Khatisyan 1930, 72).

Thus, in the first stage of the existence of the Republic of Armenia (June-November 1918), until the final defeat of Ottoman Turkey in the First World War, both the Batumi Agreement of June 3 and the Armenian-Turkish Peace Pact of June 4 and the requirements of Article 2 of the additional annex attached to it caused serious obstacles for the country to conduct an independent and free foreign policy and to establish diplomatic relations with the Entente powers, in particular, the United States of America and other neighboring states.

This situation did not last long due to the final defeat of Ottoman Turkey and its allies in the First World War. In November, the commitment of June 3 and the famous pact lapsed, although they had been in force since they were signed. Meanwhile, they had no legal force from the point of view of international law, because they were not

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<sup>7</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 32, sheet 6.

<sup>8</sup> The United States of America not only did not oppose Ottoman Turkey in the war, but also maintained neutrality, and the diplomatic relations between the two states were broken by the Ottoman military and political leadership.



ratified by the governments of the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Armenia, moreover, they were not recognized by the Central Powers, the Entente, Soviet Russia and other countries.

### **The invisible challenges of the favorable new geopolitical situation**

According to Article 11 of the Armistice of Mudros (October 30, 1918), Turkish troops had to leave Transcaucasia by the beginning of December. In the new favorable geopolitical situation, the Republic of Armenia was now free to conduct its foreign policy and could make efforts to establish more active diplomatic relations with the Entente, the United States of America, France, England, and with more than vital and important in terms of security for the Republic of Armenia, with Soviet and non-Soviet (anti-Bolshevik) state entities of Russia and other states. But new trials and difficult days were ahead. In the new political conditions, one of the primary issues of the Republic of Armenia's foreign policy was the establishment of relations with the United States of America. That process began at the beginning of 1919, facing many and varied political, diplomatic, technical difficulties and obstacles.

It is important to note that during the implementation of its functions, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia faced many, including technical difficulties: "The main obstacle was the difficulty and even disruption of communication with the world. If other states and governments generally did not show initiative and interest in starting relations with the Republic of Armenia, there were Armenians living in those states and countries - natives or immigrants from the regions of Armenia, who had a need and demand to establish ties with their motherland, to return and or to enjoy the care and treatment of their own government. This foreign Armenians, especially in those places where they formed a small and very large community, established Armenian bodies and automatically connected them with the Republic of Armenia. In this way, they wanted and to some extent were able to satisfy a number of their demands and free themselves from several inconveniences and deprivations"<sup>9</sup>.

On February 4, 1919, the Council of Armenia passed a law on sending Minister-President Katchaznoui to Europe and the United States of America to procure bread, food and other basic necessities for the Republic of Armenia<sup>10</sup>. The delegation headed by Katchaznoui was also given the right to hold negotiations on behalf of the Armenian Council and government with various high-ranking political and state officials and other representatives of those states.

It is remarkable why in the first months of independence, in the difficult internal and external political, economic, and security conditions created in the country, the Council of Armenia, in which the majority were the representatives of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Party, adopted a law to send a delegation headed by Prime Minister Katchaznoui to Europe and the United States of America. It should be noted

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<sup>9</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 207, sheet 66.

<sup>10</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 4033, list 2, file 962, sheet 103.

that all of this was preordained and not random at all. The goal was to isolate Prime Minister Kajaznuni from the state administration process.

The point was that there was still a lack of harmonious, interconnected work of different wings of the country's state system: there were disagreements between the legislative body, the government, and the dominant political force, the "Armenian Revolutionary Federation" party.

In this regard, the Prime Minister of the Republic Katchaznoui later writes: "Practically, our party sought to subjugate, to take under its control both the legislative body and the government. We did not have the courage (nor the ability) to openly declare a party dictatorship. But we didn't want to stay within the limits of the parliamentary rules and we were trying to implement the practices of *İttihat* members in Armenia. Party dictatorship disguised under *ramkavar* guises. There was an intolerable duality of power. Frankly speaking - the parliament and its government, in the shadows: the party and its organs. It is clear that these two types of authorities, official and unofficial, could only hinder and constrain each other: the formal requirements did not allow the party to move freely and quickly, to fully express its will and the interference of the party did not allow the government to do what it knows, to follow its course and line" (Katchaznoui 1923, 23).

Apparently, such a situation was inevitable. The formation of a democratic political-state system was not an easy task. The Prime Minister correctly imagined its solution. The "Armenian Revolutionary Federation" Party that came to power should not establish a monarchy, but should leave the arena to the parliament and the government. However, Katchaznoui failed to realize his point of view and overcome the influence of the party in the political life of the country. The consequence was that he was isolated from the process of public administration. On that occasion, Ruben Ter-Minasyan writes: "The absence of Kajaznuni - in essence, his removal - meant the strengthening of the influence of the ARF" (Ruben 1982, 27).

On February 13, 1919, Katchaznoui's statement was read in the Council of Armenia that, due to his departure on a business trip, until the decision of the Council, the Minister of Internal Affairs Khatisyan will substitute him (Zang 1919). Two days later, on February 15, the official delegation headed by Katchaznoui visited Tiflis to leave for Europe and the United States of America. However, the British military command in Tiflis deliberately prevented the entry of Simon Vratsyan, a member of the delegation, party member and statesman, to Europe and the United States of America for about three months. Vratsyan had to leave Tiflis and return to Yerevan. On April 2, Katchaznoui also returned to Yerevan. Indeed, it became known to the British military command that at the end of June 1918, Vratsyan left Tiflis on a special mission to different regions of Russia and until the end of October, he carried out extensive activities to establish contact with the Volunteer Army of the South of Russia, which "... can provide direct assistance to Armenia by delivering bread, food and other necessary goods." (Vratsyan 1966, 14). He had many meetings with the command staff of the Volunteer Army of the South of Russia and received a

particularly warm welcome from the Commander-in-Chief, General M. Alekseev, whose “attitude towards the Armenians was extremely friendly”<sup>11</sup>.

### **Transcaucasia at the crossroads of strategic struggle of superpowers**

The point is that according to the secret agreement signed between Great Britain and France in Paris on December 23, 1917, Russia was divided into spheres of influence. Great Britain would manage the North Caucasus, Transcaucasia, Turkestan, Bessarabia, Ukraine, Crimea and Donbas would come under French control<sup>12</sup>. After the end of the First World War, Great Britain set out to isolate the Caucasus from Russia forever and establish its influence in Transcaucasia. Transcaucasia was of great importance to England as a region of strategic importance, which was to become a barrier preventing the advance of the Bolsheviks into the Middle East. Another interest of Great Britain was of course Baku Oil (Lloyd 1938, 274-280; Churchill 2015).

In order to establish itself in Transcaucasia and implement its strategy, Great Britain naturally had to overcome Russia’s influence in the region and achieve the point that Transcaucasia was no longer part of it. And General J. Walker’s statement is quite important here: “The British cannot allow any propaganda aimed at the reunification of Transcaucasia with Russia” (Denikin 1925, 204)<sup>13</sup>. The English general explained it in this way: “The Peace Assembly has not yet given a solution to the issue of the state structure of Transcaucasia” (Denikin 1925, 204)<sup>14</sup>. And it was not at all accidental that the desire of the Volunteer Army of the South of Russia to restore the former Russian borders, which was contrary to the interests of England, was therefore working to free Transcaucasia from Russian influence. That is why the British military command was against the relations of the Republic of Armenia with the Volunteer Army and sought to break them.

In the new political conditions, the Armenian government could not give such flexibility to its foreign policy that the republic would not suffer from the conflict of interests of Great Britain and the South of Russia. Due to the impact of the blows suffered in the First World War, the authorities of the Republic of Armenia continued to consider the South of Russia as an ally of the Entente states, their friend. They failed to make a timely and correct assessment of Britain’s covert, sometimes overt anti-Russian policy in Transcaucasia after the end of the war. Great Britain sought to push out of the region the forces controlling the South of Russia and strengthen its position

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<sup>11</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 223, list 1, file 113, sheet 21.

<sup>12</sup> Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History, fund 71, list 35, file 195, sheet 151.

<sup>13</sup> Source: *The beginning of the civil war*, compiled by S. A. Alekseev; Edited and with a foreword by N. L. Meshcheryakov. Moscow; Leningrad: State Publishing House, 1926 (Revolution and civil war in descriptions of the White Guards; Vol. 3) (Memoirs: Denikin, Krasnov, Lukomsky, Drozdovsky, Sakharov, Pokrovsky, Budberg, Gins and others) (in Russian) [*Начало гражданской войны*, составил С. А. Алексеев; Под редакцией и с предисловием Н. Л. Мещерякова. Москва; Ленинград: Государственное издательство, 1926 (Революция и гражданская война в описаниях белогвардейцев; Том 3) (Мемуары: Деникин, Краснов, Лукомский, Дроздовский, Сахаров, Покровский, Будберг, Гинс и другие)].

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

there. It was not by chance that it did not tolerate the friendly relations of the Republic of Armenia with Russia and considered it an irredeemably pro-Russian, unreliable element in Transcaucasia. As we mentioned, the Armenians did not inspire them with confidence because of the traditional pro-Russian orientation, and they used all means to fight against the pro-Russian tendencies of the Armenians. That is why official Yerevan refrained from establishing relations with Soviet Russia. If Great Britain did not tolerate the friendship of the Republic of Armenia with the south of "allied" Russia, then attempts to establish relations with its potential enemy, Soviet Russia, could have unpredictable and severe consequences for the country.

In order to neutralize the pro-Russian attitude of the Armenians, the British used all forms and means of struggle. So, for example, it got to the point where the British blocked the departure of the Armenian delegation to Paris, finding that its members had a pro-Russian orientation and were in contact with the Volunteer Army.

In the created situation Katchaznoui was forced to form a new delegation without S. Vratsyan. It is noteworthy that the British military delegation also expressed dissatisfaction with the newly formed delegation: "He came to me in this regard," writes M. Arzumanov (member of the Russian mission of the European delegation), - Walker's adjutant and said: "You Armenians are amazing people. When we were in Yerevan, Katchaznoui was asking for a pass for five people, but now he came to Tiflis and is asking for 15 people, and all of them as specialists in the field of food, finance, purchase of agricultural tools, etc. Your country is completely destroyed and there are no people, and you are sending 15 people headed by the ministers and the chairman of the government to America. You are hungry and you give them half a million for expenses. We do not understand you. What is it all for? I am afraid that General Walker will give the trip a political character. America will not give you money, because no one except Turkey has recognized your independence, and agricultural tools can be bought for you by your Parisian MPs (I informed Mr. Katchaznoui about all this and asked him to take it all into consideration)""<sup>15</sup>

Chairman of the delegation of the Republic of Armenia Aharonyan expressed his deep indignation from Paris regarding the Pan-Armenian policy of the Entente states, particularly Great Britain. On April 24, 1919, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Aharonyan in a secret letter addressed to S. Tigranyan, writes: "This article causes me great pain and great concern. I must say that the carelessness of the Allies and the unkindness of their officials regarding our relations disturb me greatly. I notice the same attitude regarding the Tiflis-based members of the delegation and Katchaznoui's trip. Both I and Poghos Pasha (chairman of the Western Armenian National Delegation in Paris) have made many oral and written requests to cancel the departure of the colleagues who are so necessary for us. From the letters of General Korganov and Papajanyan, I am familiar with the difficulties caused by the British military department against their expedition"<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 4033, list 2, file 963, sheets 86, 97; National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 158, sheet 94.

<sup>16</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 193, part II, sheet 423.

After long negotiations, the English military command allowed the new delegation, formed by Katchaznouni, to leave Tiflis for Europe on May 18<sup>17</sup>. For months, the delegation did not receive the reassuring support of official Paris and London to import flour, bread and other essential goods to the Republic of Armenia.

The delegation decided to go to New York at the beginning of October and then to Washington on behalf of the Council of Armenia to present the difficult economic, political and security situation of the Republic of Armenia to the American government, expecting their support. The delegation was joined by the representative of the Catholicos of All Armenians Gevorg V Surenyan, who was sent to the United States of America in 1917, a famous figure, former member of the Parliament of Ottoman Turkey, Garegin Maskrmachyan (Armen Garo), whose main mission was to present the demands of the Armenian National Committee (Hay Dat) to the American government and society (Hovhannisyan 2002, 146-147).

The delegation in Washington actively participated in the hearings of the United States Senate Committee, had meetings with high-ranking American administrative officials and other representatives, raising the issues of economic, political and security support of the Republic of Armenia. In the hearings under the title “Preservation of Peace in Armenia” in the sub-committee of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the United States of America Senate, the chairman of the delegation Katchaznouni made a report (Ghambarian 2021, 136).

Food aid from the United States of America to the Republic of Armenia arrived in time. However, his demands for the assumption of the Armenian mandate and military assistance were rejected and no steps were taken for the de facto recognition of the Republic of Armenia until January 19, 1920.

### **The big expectations of a small state from the Paris Peace Conference**

As mentioned above, in the new political conditions, the Republic of Armenia showed a western orientation, expecting that the states of the Entente will appreciate the contribution of the Armenian people to the victory of the First World War and, taking into consideration the great sacrifices and territorial losses they suffered, will show good will and work to solve at least the some part of the vital problems of our people. In this regard, the Republic of Armenia had great expectations from the Paris Peace Conference, to which, however, the Republic of Armenia was not officially invited. The leaders of the Entente decided that only the countries that had won the war and those that had broken relations with the Central Powers would participate in the work of the assembly. Expressing the position of the Entente on the question of the participation of Armenians, the President of the United States of America, Woodrow Wilson, noted that “I see the most sincere and direct sympathy for the Armenians everywhere among the delegates of the Peace Conference”, but, unfortunately, “technically, it is very difficult to provide political units that have not yet been accepted into the family of states with the representation (Hovannisian 1971, 280).

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<sup>17</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 2, file 59, sheet 1.

Then Wilson adds that he will take such active work for the solution of the Armenian Case, which will be equivalent to the participation of Armenian delegates in the work of the Peace Conference (Hovannisian 1971, 280).

The Paris Peace Conference opened on January 18, 1919. As we have already mentioned, Armenians had great expectations that the assembly would compensate for the huge losses they suffered during the war years and would contribute to the realization of national dreams. On February 4, 1919, the delegation of the Republic of Armenia arrived in Paris, where the Western Armenian national delegation headed by the wealthy Egyptian-Armenian Poghos Nubar Pasha had already arrived. From the beginning, efforts to create a joint delegation expressing the united will of the Armenians from the two delegations were ruled out, as serious disagreements arose on a number of key issues, which had a negative impact on the process of a positive solution to the Armenian Question.

After extensive negotiations, on February 25, 1919, the assembly was presented with the unified demand of Armenians to recognize the Armenian state, with borders including Caucasian Armenia, the seven vilayets (provinces) of Western Armenia, and the four sanjaks (districts) of Cilicia. It was proposed to place Armenia under the care of the Entente and hand over its mandate to one of the states for at least twenty years. The Armenian delegations expressed their desire to hand over the patronage (mandate) of a united, independent and free Armenia to the United States of America or to the newly formed League of Nations. Presenting these proposals to the Paris Peace Conference, the Armenians waited with great hopes for its decision, which was very late. On April 17, Poghos Nubar Pasha and Aharonyan was received by the President of the United States of America, Wilson, and said: "If America ever accepts a mandate from any country, it will be Armenia only."<sup>18</sup> In a letter-report addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia on April 24, Aharonyan requested to urgently publish the declaration of a united, independent Armenia, which will put an end to the dualism of the two delegations and create an opportunity to act in the international political arena with one front<sup>19</sup>. At the end Aharonyan considered it important to note that "soon, international assignments will have to be made, contracts signed - financial and economic, loans signed, relations with the state receiving the mandate, even the conditions of the mandate to be examined. For all of these, a united government of a united Armenia is necessary, so that it can strive to act as an organized state of all Armenians, otherwise the mandate holder can deal with us as he wants and our political freedom and independence will be threatened."<sup>20</sup> As can be seen from the letter-report, the Armenian delegation cherished real hopes for the possibility of uniting the two parts of Armenia and creating a single state. It remained to provide the legal basis for the planned and expected functions: the adoption of the declaration of a united, independent Armenia.

An important favorable opportunity was also created for the proclamation of that historical act - the territories of the republic had expanded. According to the Truce of Mudros, the Turks left the occupied territories in Transcaucasia and the borders should

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<sup>18</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 193, part II, sheets 428, 459, file 35, sheet 118.

<sup>19</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 193, part II, sheet 435.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

have been as they were in 1914, and the main obstacle to Armenia's independence, writes A. Jamalyan, disappeared (Droshak 1928, 132). Around April-May, Kars, Sarighamish, Ardahan, Surmalu, Kaghzvan, Sharur, Nakhichevan joined the Republic of Armenia, and the Armenian refugees who took refuge in different places returned<sup>21</sup>. At the session of the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia on August 5, 1919, Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Khatisyan announced that the territory of the Republic of Armenia is 40,920 square meters, except Syunik (Zangezur), which is an integral part of it, which is 6742 square meters (Worker of Armenia 1919). An Armenian administration with its military power was established in all reunified territories. Freed from the Turkish threat, the Armenian people got an opportunity to restore their destroyed economy. "... Armenia was resurrected from under the ruins and ashes like a mythical phoenix" - writes A. Gulkhandanyan" (Hairenik 1966, 74).

Great Britain responded positively to the publication of the Declaration of Independence of Transcaucasia, including Armenia. As we have already mentioned, the "United, indivisible Russia" political program of the Volunteer Army of the South of Russia and the "Special Consultation" attached to it was unacceptable for Great Britain, the goal of which was the restoration of the territories of the former Russian Empire along the 1914 borders. That is why they sought to hinder the Russians by isolating Transcaucasia from the South of Russia. It is clear why Great Britain responded positively to the publication of Armenia's declaration of independence. General A. Denikin writes that the 'voice of real politics' of Great Britain became known to them when. L. George announced in the House of Commons on November 17, 1919: "Admiral Kolchak and General A. Denikin are fighting not only for the destruction of Bolshevism, for the establishment of order and legality, but also for the creation of a united Russia... I need not say whether that slogan corresponds to British policy... One of our great politicians, Lord Beaconsfield saw the great, powerful and capable Russia rolling like a giant snowball toward Persia, Afghanistan, and India as the greatest threat to the British Empire" (Denikin 1925, 205). By the way, L. George's warning was not unfounded. General A. Denikin and Admiral A. Kolchak united their forces, forming a united front of the struggle for the creation of a united Russia, for the restoration of the 1914 borders.

Great Britain outwardly expressed its "alliance loyalty" to the South of Russia, showing support to General Denikin to overthrow the Bolsheviks. They also supported the existence of independent Transcaucasian republics, which contradicted the political goals of the Volunteer Army of South Russia. In fact, Great Britain sought to isolate the South of Russia and push it out of Transcaucasia with the independent existence of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan.

On March 28, 1919, participating in the consultation of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, General V. Thomson, referring to the relationship between the States of the Entente and the Volunteer Army, said that the South of Russia was being supported because it was being used in the struggle against Bolshevism, but they would never be allowed to interfere with the independence of the Transcaucasian republics,

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<sup>21</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 35, sheet 88.

which they were defending<sup>22</sup>. In that case, the question arises why Great Britain and the United States of America did not recognize the independence of the Transcaucasian republics. The English diplomacy was trying both ways, announcing its support for the independence of Transcaucasian republics, but at the same time, it did not want to openly violate the allied “loyalty” to General Denikin.

Regarding the positive attitude of the British towards the independence of the Transcaucasia, including Armenia, in the “political theory” of April-May 1919 of the “Special Consultation” attached to the Volunteer Army, it is said that the policy of the British is aimed at realizing the aspirations of new state formations for independence and complete separation from the South of Russia. That was manifested in the behavior of all Transcaucasian republics, including the Republic of Armenia<sup>23</sup>. General Denikin writes that the British convinced the governments of the Transcaucasian republics that sooner or later they would recognize their independence so that they would help them drive the Volunteer Army out of the region. Life in the Transcaucasia was linked to and highly dependent on English policy (Denikin 1925, 205).

In fact, England demanded from the government of the Republic of Armenia to radically change its attitude towards the Volunteer Army, with which it was in close relations until then. Moreover, England urged the Republic of Armenia not to have anything to do with the political forces in the South of Russia, which are in conflict with it. General V. Bich convinced the Armenian ministers that Russia is the enemy not only of England, but also of the Republic of Armenia. Now the moment has come when Great Britain can finally fulfill its long-standing intention and push the South of Russia out of the Caucasus<sup>24</sup>.

### **The new realities of the Bolshevik period**

Khatisyan had a meeting with V. Thomson in Tiflis (April 4-11). During this meeting the latter, while referring to the relations between the Bolsheviks and the Volunteer Army of the South of Russia, mentioned that both are evil forces for Armenia. The Bolsheviks destroy the intelligentsia, and the Volunteer Army does not accept the independence of Transcaucasia, as well as Armenia<sup>25</sup>. At the end of the conversation V. Thomson reported that the Bolsheviks were getting stronger day by day. At the Paris Peace Conference, attitudes toward the Bolsheviks had changed. On April 24, 1919, Aharonyan wrote in a letter-report addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia from Paris: “...Here these days the Russian problem had a serious crisis. The states as if wanted to recognize the Bolsheviks and enter into relations. America was the defender of this idea, in the face of President V. Wilson. England and

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<sup>22</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 223, list 1, file 76, sheet 25; National Archives of Armenia, fund 199, list 1, file 23, part I, sheet 143, 145, file 32, sheet 176; National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 243, sheet 73; National Archives of Armenia, fund 201, list 1, file 42, sheet 16; National Archives of Armenia, fund 276, list 1, file 101, sheet 16, file 120, sheet 61.

<sup>23</sup> State Archive of the RF, fund 446, list 1, file 19, sheet 28.

<sup>24</sup> State Archive of the RF, fund 446, list 1, file 39, sheet 96.

<sup>25</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 4033, list 2, file 962, sheet 47; National Archives of Armenia, fund 199, list 1, file 32, sheet 154; National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 243, sheet 75.



France immediately showed strong opposition. It is quite possible that a new attempt will be to recognize the Bolshevik government actually from now on. For now, what is certain is that the Entente states have decided not to intervene in Russia's affairs with the army and not to declare war on the Bolsheviks, and even to withdraw their troops. With this in mind, decisive statements were made in the French Parliament by Pichon and in England by Lloyd George. I must say that intervention in the affairs of Russia is not at all popular<sup>26</sup>. This information greatly worried the government of the Republic of Armenia. It seemed that a new political situation was being created in the relations with the South of Russia, which requires the government of the Republic of Armenia to adopt a new behavior. In April 1919, the Council of Armenia, based on the created political situation, decided to maintain neutrality, severing contacts with both the Bolsheviks and the non-Soviet state organizations of South Russia<sup>27</sup> (Denikin 1925, 252; Worker of Armenia 1919). The point was that the victory of any of the different political forces of Russia would lead to the unification of the territories of the former Russian Empire, as a result of which the government of the Transcaucasia, including the Republic of Armenia, would fall. Wide propaganda is being carried out among the Armenians of the North Caucasus and the Don, not to mix two to none of the political forces, because before that Armenians helped the Volunteer Army in the fight against the Bolsheviks<sup>28</sup>. In 'Political Theory' it was also stated that according to the special intelligence information of the Volunteer Army, the government of the Republic of Armenia was also dissatisfied with the behavior of the Armenians living on the shores of the Black Sea, because they support the Volunteer Army with weapons in the fight against the Georgians<sup>29</sup>. In order to push the Georgian soldiers out of the Black Sea regions by force of arms, General Denikin used the atrocities of the Georgian authorities against Armenians and Abkhazians as an occasion. Back on February 24 (March 9), 1919, the Armenian National Council of Gagra appealed to General Denikin to protect the Armenians of Sukhum region from the violence of the Georgian army<sup>30</sup>. In this regard, on February 26 (March 11), General Denikin, the English military commander, General Ch. Briggs addressed with the following statement: "Representatives of the Armenian National Council of the Sochi region asked me to protect the Armenians of the Sukhum region, particularly the village of Gudauti, from the violence of the Georgian army. The above-mentioned statement of the Armenian National Council of the Sochi region is confirmed by the reports of the commanders of the military units subordinate to me, according to which the noise of cannon and machine gun fire can be heard continuously from the enemy's rear on the other side of the Bzyb River. I ask your Excellency to inform the British High Military Command of Transcaucasia about my protest against the violence against the unarmed Armenian population, and also to put pressure on the Georgian government to stop the barbarism"<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 193, part II, sheet 430.

<sup>27</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 120, sheet 117.

<sup>28</sup> State Archive of the RF, fund 446, list 1, file 19, sheet 29.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> State Archive of the RF, fund 446, list 2, file 38, sheets 20-21.

<sup>31</sup> State Archive of the RF, fund 446, list 2, file 38, sheet 18.

## **Regional and geopolitical dimensions of the “Act of Independence of United Armenia”**

As we can see, the relations of the Republic of Armenia with its neighbors Georgia and Azerbaijan were not settled. This document also testifies to that, as well as confirms the fact that the Armenians found protection from the Russians. Despite this, in order to establish the country's independent statehood, the Council of the Republic of Armenia decided to maintain neutrality and not participate in the struggle of various Russian political forces. After long delays, on May 28, 1919, on the day of the first anniversary of independence, the Government of the Republic of Armenia (Khatisyan) finally announced the “Act of Independence of United Armenia” under solemn conditions, where it is said: *“In order to restore the integrity of Armenia and ensure the complete freedom and prosperity of the people, the Government of Armenia, in accordance with the unanimous will and desire of the entire Armenian people, declares that from today the divided parts of Armenia are permanently united as an independent state union... Thus, at present, the people of Armenia are their the supreme owner and director of the completed motherland, and the parliament and government of Armenia are the supreme legislative and executive power uniting the free people of united Armenia. The Government of Armenia publishes this act based on the special powers granted to the Government by the decision of the Parliament made on April 27, 1919 (May 28, 1919, Yerevan)”*<sup>32</sup>.

On June 4, 1919, at the meeting of the Council of Armenia, Khatisyan announced: “What was done was political necessity. The adoption of the declaration provided the legal framework by which the government got the opportunity to solve national and state problems”<sup>33</sup>.

The main point of the declaration of May 28 was that the official acceptance of independence put an end to the unfavorable opinions about the independence of Armenia created by the representatives of the Entente, their representatives in the Transcaucasia, neighbors and especially the non-Soviet state entities of the South of Russia.

The declaration of “United Independent Armenia” was positively accepted by the administration of the United States of America. On August 3, 1919, the French military delegation to the British military mission in Transcaucasia and the commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the south of Russia, General Denikin was informed by telegram that on August 13 the American colonel W. Haskell will arrive in Batumi. The telegram showed that at the session of the Inter-Allied General Council on July 5, on behalf of the governments of the United States of America, France, Great Britain and Italy, Colonel W. Haskell was appointed as the High Commissioner in the Republic of Armenia. At the same time, he was instructed to take all measures to organize the necessary assistance to the Republic of Armenia. All the representatives of the Entente governments and military commands operating in Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan were obliged to show all kinds of support to Colonel W. Haskell. At the end of the telegram it was said that Cilicia was not included in the list of territories to which

<sup>32</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 35, sheet 88.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

Colonel W. Haskell's powers<sup>34</sup>. On August 14, 1919, Colonel W. Haskell was welcomed by the General Consul of the Republic of Armenia G. Yedigaryan and the chairman of the Armenian National Council, Ashot Mndoyants. The consul, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, in welcoming remarks to Colonel W. Haskell: "... expressed a desire for drastic measures to be taken to end the threat to Armenians and Armenia" (Nor Ashkhatavor 1919a). Colonel W. Haskell replied that he will use all means to settle the difficult situation of the Republic of Armenia peacefully and will support the process of giving Armenia's mandate to America (Nor Ashkhatavor 1919a).

On August 21, Colonel W. Haskell was received with great pomp and ceremony by the members of the government of the Republic of Armenia, parliamentarians and citizens. During his first visit, he informed Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Khatisyan that the Paris Peace Conference instructed him to ensure the internal and external security of the Armenian people, food supply, safe immigration, etc. He then informs that he will stay in Yerevan for three days to thoroughly familiarize himself with the internal and external situation of the country and the demands of the government of the Republic of Armenia, then he will telegraph the collected information and conclusions to the Paris Peace Conference and hopes that he will be able to ensure the security of the Republic of Armenia until the mandate issue is resolved<sup>35</sup>. He also informed Khatisyan that American General James Harbord will come to the Republic of Armenia in ten days to study the general situation of the republic and find out how many American troops are needed to protect the entire Republic of Armenia, etc. He also reported that the issue of Armenia's mandate is being discussed in America. During the conversation Khatisyan thoroughly presented the difficult internal and external situation of the republic, documented how the Turkish invaders have been feverishly preparing for two months to cause new disasters to the Armenians of the Republic of Armenia, rousing the local Muslim elements as well. At the end of the conversation Khatisyan noted that for this reason, the Republic of Armenia made a focus on the Paris Peace Conference and, in particular, to America, whose representative is W. Haskell. On the next day, on August 22, at the 6<sup>th</sup> session of the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia, after the Chairman's welcome speech, Colonel W. Haskell made a speech. The "New Worker" newspaper, published in Tiflis, on August 27 informs that the members of the parliament and the people "gave an enthusiastic and long standing ovation to the High Commissioner" (Nor Ashkhatavor 1919b). Colonel W. Haskell spoke in the parliament in detail about his rights, powers and tasks. He also assured that he will do everything to help the Republic of Armenia and ensure its security. In his speech, he also emphasized the military assistance needed by the Republic of Armenia: "...I have asked the British forces that the British soldiers will remain temporarily until they are replaced, so that the minor conflicts between the minor nationalities will be settled. When I learned the order for their return in Poland, I asked the English command and Clemenceau to stop for the time being. Right now, that issue is probably being discussed in Paris, and I have great hope that my issue will be respected, and in case of their departure, we will have to think of some

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<sup>34</sup> State Archive of the RF, fund 446, list 2, file 39, sheet 90.

<sup>35</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 2, file 37, sheet 1.

army to replace them”. Colonel W. Haskell noted that there is no doubt that Azerbaijan violated the borders determined by the English military command (Nor Ashkhatavor. 1919b)<sup>36</sup>. He assured the parliament that he will go to Baku and put an end to their military operations, and if they try to disobey, he will take drastic measures and hold the organizers and leaders personally responsible (Nor Ashkhatavor 1919b)<sup>37</sup>.

The authorities of the Republic of Armenia were convinced that Colonel W. Haskell had broad powers, but without any leverage to stop the military operations of Azerbaijanis and Turks. Khatisyan writes: “After the departure of the British, we are under the auspices of the Americans, but this possibility has only a platonic character, because the Americans, being deprived of military power, have no possibility to force the Tatars and Turks to fulfill their orders.”<sup>38</sup> Despite this, the leadership of the Republic of Armenia received Colonel W. Haskell, pinning some hopes on him. A person in a difficult situation always clings to the smallest hope. Taking into consideration the warm reception shown to the American commissioner, the leadership of the Volunteer Army and the attached to it leadership of “Special Consultation” made a hasty conclusion: The Republic of Armenia has an American orientation.

Colonel M. Zinkevich informed D. Tchaikovsky in the end of August that it is time to cautiously bring forward the issue of pro-Russian orientation, as opposed to the American one, because it is an obstacle to the South of Russia. Colonel M. Zinkevich advises to use the mistakes of the Americans and prove to the leadership of the Republic of Armenia that the South of Russia can practically help it materially (bread, money, bullets, etc.) and put pressure on the enemies of Armenians. After some time, Colonel M. Zinkevich informs that the deep disillusionment with the American policy in the politically charged regions of the republic played a certain role in the request for the restoration of official contacts with the Armenian government in the South of Russia. Such a mood was caused by the indiscretion of Colonel W. Haskell, the High Commissioner of Armenia, who had given similar condolence speeches in the legislative bodies of Armenia and Azerbaijan<sup>39</sup>. In this regard, the “New Worker” newspaper informs that Colonel W. Haskell in Azerbaijan “... denied the opinion that he is the “advocate” of Armenians. I treat all republics in the same way” (Nor Ashkhatavor 1919c). The newspaper then reports that Colonel W. Haskell was very satisfied with the government of Azerbaijan. He denied the information that was published in the Parliament of the Republic of Armenia. According to the assessment of Grigor Chalkhushyan, Consul General of the Republic of Armenia in Rostov, Colonel W. Haskell maintains bifacial policy: “Haskell was not a political scientist. A direct speech was expected from him. And he spoke. He spoke in Tiflis, he spoke in Baku, and finally in Yerevan. His three speeches were insoluble riddles, as if made by three different persons. In one, he was pro-Georgian, in another, pro-Turkish, in the third, pro-Armenian. We were depressed. And now Colonel Haskell starts denying his speeches one after the other: he denies Baku’s speech in Yerevan, Yerevan’s in Baku, finally Colonel Haskell fell in love with Baku, where he was constantly honored with

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<sup>36</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 2, file 37, sheet 7.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Museum of Literature and Art, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) Archives. Boston, N 4063.

<sup>39</sup> State Archive of the RF, fund 446, list 2, file 39, sheet 104.

receptions, feasts and balls. Little by little, Haskell turns his face away from us, little by little praises the Musavatists and dislikes the always inadequate, always complaining Armenian”<sup>40</sup>. G. Chalkhushyan, expressing his displeasure with the representatives of the Entente in the Transcaucasia, reported that they lived in Tiflis, rich and prosperous. Their second- and third-class attaches were delegated to poor and modest Yerevan. On Sundays and holidays, they could always be seen in Yerevan Square, in the market, where they bought carpets at cheap prices from poor people and exported them without customs duty, taking advantage of their privileged representative position<sup>41</sup>.

At the end of August, Colonel M. Zinkevich informs Colonel D. Tchaikovsky that America is continuing Great Britain's policy of isolating Transcaucasia, including the Republic of Armenia, from the South of Russia. Colonel W. Haskell demanded from the government of the Republic of Armenia not to establish relations with General A. Denikin: “... When the Americans see, Armenia sympathizes with Russia, writes Colonel M. Zinkevich - Armenians are being convinced that Russia will no longer be a great power, and there is no need to rely on its help”<sup>42</sup>. Colonel W. Haskell's first steps showed that by entering the Transcaucasia, America sought to prevent the establishment of the South of Russia in the region. That traditional American policy continues to this day.

Although Colonel W. Haskell was against the government of the Republic of Armenia entering into relations with the General Command of the Volunteer Army and the “Special Consultation” attached to it, he advised Khatisyan to use the support from the South of Russia<sup>43</sup>.

### **Factors complicating the military-political situation**

At the end of August 1919, the military-political situation of the Republic of Armenia became even more complicated. On September 2, at the 11<sup>th</sup> session of the Parliament, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Khatisyan reported: “The motherland is in danger... the English soldiers have left” (Nor Ashkhatavor 1919c). On August 28, the chairmen of the delegations of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan in Paris appealed to the chairman of the Supreme Council of the Allied States Georges Clemenceau, noting that the withdrawal of the British military mission may have sad consequences for the Transcaucasian republics (Haratch 1919). This application did not have any positive results. Before the beginning of September, the British military mission left Transcaucasia. Only 10 000 English soldiers were concentrated in Batumi<sup>44</sup>.

Colonel W. Haskell's promise to postpone the withdrawal of British soldiers from Transcaucasia also had no result, which certainly created an atmosphere of mistrust in

<sup>40</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 4033, list 6, file 293, sheet 43.

<sup>41</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 4033, list 6, file 293, sheet 41.

<sup>42</sup> State Archive of the RF, fund 446, list 2, file 39, sheet 104.

<sup>43</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 276, list 1, file 101, sheet 90, file 183, sheet 39.

<sup>44</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 276, list 1, file 101, sheet 92, file 183, sheet 36.

the political circles of the Republic of Armenia<sup>45</sup>. Yes, he had great powers, but he did not have the power to stop the Tatars and Turks.

The delay in accepting the Armenian mandate by America also played a certain role in the regulation of official relations with the South of Russia, which caused greater disappointment towards America in the political circles of Armenia. General Denikin informs: “Armenians are massacred throughout Transcaucasia, Anatolia and Cilicia, and the supreme commander, Colonel W. Haskell answers the Armenians who addressed him that “the issue of Armenia’s mandate has not been resolved yet” (Denikin 1925, 251)<sup>46</sup>.

According to the decision of the Paris Peace Conference on March 20, 1919, the new American delegation led by General J. Harbord, which included 50 people, traveled along the Diyarbakir-Erzurum-Mush-Kars-Yerevan-Tiflis route to study the Armenian Question from ethnic, economic, financial, military and other aspects. On September 25, General J. Harbord arrived in Yerevan. In this regard, G. Chalkhushyan writes that America sent General J. Harbord to the Republic of Armenia to make researches and assessments in order to decide the issue of the mandate. That question “... was already decided negatively by America. The commander’s assignment was a game, a fake, completely dishonorable for a great state. In three or four weeks, the general went through all of Anatolia like an arrow, and the issue of the mandate was forgotten. In this way, official America only harmed the case. It gave us hope. It would have been more useful for us if we had not been swayed by vain hopes”<sup>47</sup>. After all this, within the framework of the government of the Republic of Armenia, the desire to restore official relations with the South of Russia naturally strengthened.

On September 17, 1919, the representative of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the South of Russia attached to the Allied High Command of the Transcaucasia reported in a top-secret letter-report to the head of the Volunteer Army Department that the strengthening of the pro-Russian orientation was observed in the Republic of Armenia. The political circles of the Republic of Armenia are aware of the difficulty and complexity of the implementation of the country's security and independence establishment process, and they forcibly turn to one or another powerful European power, America, expecting their support. However, the authorities of the Republic of Armenia clearly expressed their disappointment towards them and tended to “... the most loyal patron and protector<sup>48</sup> (Russia). The moment has come to win the sympathy of Armenians. It should be used to make them understand that Russia has always been the only disinterested defender of Armenians and will continue to be so in the future.”<sup>49</sup>

In August 1919, Colonel M. Zinkevich informed the General Command of the Armed Forces of the South of Russia and the “Special Consultation” on the issue of regulating relations with the Government of the Republic of Armenia<sup>50</sup>. As it is known,

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<sup>45</sup> State Archive of the RF, fund 446, list 2, file 34, sheet 79.

<sup>46</sup> SA of the RF, fund 446, inv. 2, file 39, sheet 104.

<sup>47</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 4033, list 6, file 293, sheets 43-44.

<sup>48</sup> State Archive of the RF, fund 446, list 2, file 34, sheets 96-98.

<sup>49</sup> State Archive of the RF, fund 446, list 2, file 34, sheet 96.

<sup>50</sup> Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History, fund 71, list 35, file 195, sheets 205-206.

Colonel M. Zinkevich was a high-ranking Russian officer who became the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia. The leadership of the republic resorted to that diplomatic step. They sent him considering that the colonel had great experience and rich knowledge that could be useful to the Armenian army. In addition, this step strengthened the ties with the main command of the armed forces of the South of Russia and the "Special Consultation" attached to it. Actually, Colonel M. Zinkevich acted as an unofficial representative of the Denikin Army in the Republic of Armenia.

In the new political conditions, taking advantage of the favorable situation in the Republic of Armenia, the Russian side appointed the colonel as its official representative attached to the government of the Republic.

On August 28, 1919, with General A. Lukomsky's signature Colonel M. Zinkevich was given the certificate N 3703, in which it was said that he is being sent to Yerevan as a military representative of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the South of Russia attached to the Government of the Republic of Armenia. He is authorized to conduct negotiations with the government of the Republic of Armenia on all issues<sup>51</sup>.

While discussing the issue of relations with Russia, the general meeting of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Party (September 27 - November 2) highlighted the importance of maintaining friendly relations with Russia. In October 1919, Colonel M. Zinkevich, in his report to the representative of the Commander-in-Chief in Transcaucasia, informs that two months ago, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation was almost unanimous in accepting America's patronage, but now it is disappointed, and this promises great prospects for Russia<sup>52</sup>. The meeting decided: "While being completely benevolent towards the Russian people and Russia's political revival, our diplomacy must resist the attempts of the existing governments in Russia to extend Russian power over the former Russian Armenia, and thus make the work of the integration of Armenia impossible"<sup>53</sup>.

The restoration of official relations with the south of Russia gave a new impetus to the organization of Armenian emigration, the repatriation of Armenian soldiers serving in the Military Army, the supply of weapons and ammunition to the Armenian army, as well as the establishment of trade and economic relations.

After restoring official relations with the volunteer army and the "Special Consultation" attached to it, the government of the Republic of Armenia again adopted a very cautious policy towards it. It tried to use diplomatic tricks to avoid political confrontations with the Volunteer Army and ensure the country's security with the latter's support. The point was that General Denikin, faithful to his political program of "United, indivisible Russia", fought to restore the territories of the former Russian Empire with the borders of 1914, and the Republic of Armenia was adamant about preserving its independence.

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<sup>51</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 164, sheet 54; National Archives of Armenia, fund 276, list 1 file 188, sheets 1, 3.

<sup>52</sup> State Archive of the RF, fund 446, list 2, file 39, sheet 95.

<sup>53</sup> Excerpts from the decisions of the 9<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF). Yerevan, 1920.

There were disagreements on the issue in Russian political circles. On December 13, 1919, B. Savinkov, a member of the Russian Embassy Council from Paris, wrote in a letter addressed to General Denikin that "... the importance is clear to us, it is especially great while we are in the struggle with the Bolsheviks, and the Volunteer Army needs to provide the rear. We still have loyal friends in the Caucasus, the Armenians, whom, however, we could not take advantage of, and whom we are gradually losing. It is necessary to enter into negotiations with Armenia (supported by America) and reach an agreement, promising broad autonomy. An agreement with Armenia will lead to an agreement with Azerbaijan, and Georgia, which plays the same role as Estonia in the North, cannot face us alone, like the latter"<sup>54</sup>.

Thus, we come to the conviction that both the government of the Republic of Armenia and the south of Russia, pursuing different goals, nevertheless sought to restore official relations. The government of the Republic of Armenia, for the sake of the security of the country in the "iron ring" and due to other reasons, in August 1919 restored the official relations with the main command of the armed forces of the South of Russia and the "Special consultation" attached to it.

The South of Russia, pursuing long-term goals of creating a "United, indivisible Russia", sought to restore official relations with the Republic of Armenia in order to realize the reunification of Transcaucasia with the South of Russia.

## Conclusion and discussion

The military successes of the Soviet Army changed the political situation in Transcaucasia. Soviet Russia was probably entering here. This circumstance caused great fear in the governments of the states of the Entente, the United States of America, England and France.

In January 1920, the Supreme Council of the Entente States together with the representatives of the military headquarters discussed the measures to provide assistance to the Transcaucasian republics. The English memorandum says: the current reality is the result of Admiral A. Kolchak's, as well as General A. Denikin's defeat. As a result of the inevitable attack of the Soviet army on the Caucasus, the situation especially in Georgia became complicated. Without serious help, Georgia, which is experiencing an economic crisis, will not be able to resist the simultaneous attack of the north and the south, and Georgia's failure will have serious consequences for the allies (Stein 1949, 348).

As an urgent measure, the British side proposed the following:

"1. Allies recognize Georgia and Azerbaijan...

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<sup>54</sup> State Archive of the RF, fund 5827, list 1, file 160, sheets 1-2; *Anti-Bolshevik Russia: from the White Guard and emigrant archives (Collection of documents)*, managing editor G. A. Trukan, compilers L. I. Petrusheva and E. F. Teplova. Moscow: Institute of Russian History RAS, SA of the RF, 1995, p. 353 (in Russian). [*Россия антибольшевистская: из белогвардейских и эмигрантских архивов (Сборник документов)*], ответственный редактор Г. А. Трукан, составители Л. И. Петрушева, Е. Ф. Теплова. Москва: Институт российской истории РАН, ГА РФ, 1995].



2. For Denikin, all the supplies sent as aid, which are on the way, should be directed to those republics.

3. Additional aid from allies to Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia.

4. To allocate large amounts of aid to defend Baku and Batumi.

5. To prevent the Bolsheviks from entering the Caspian Sea” (Stein 1949, 348-349).

The joint report of Marshal Foch, Field Marshal Woodrow Wilson, Winston Churchill, Admiral Beatty and others to the Supreme Council of the Allied Powers states: “If it is not possible to defeat Bolshevism on its own territory, then it is necessary to do everything possible to stop it on some dangerous roads, for example, in the Caucasus. For this purpose, the issue of creating military blockades in the Caucasus should be considered. Taking into consideration the unstable situation of the local governments, the weakness of their military forces, these obstructions should be removed first of all with the help of European troops” (Stein 1949, 350).

As it can be seen, analyzing the upcoming danger, the governments of the Entente states suddenly “remembered” that the Transcaucasian republics have been asking them for official recognition for a long time. Diplomatic efforts of the Armenian delegations in the United States of America and Western Europe in this matter did not yield any results for about a year. It is a fact that the governments of the Entente states feared that the Transcaucasia was subject to the danger of a Bolshevik invasion, which could pave the way for the broad spread of Bolshevism to Persia and the countries of Central Asia. That is why the de facto recognition of the Transcaucasian republics became an urgent issue for the states of the Entente, which could create a diplomatic precedent against Soviet Russia. The act of officially recognizing and announcing them was just a political game, with the aim of “taking into circle the Bolshevism movement”<sup>55</sup>. By recognizing the Transcaucasian republics, the Supreme Council of the Entente states actually created an opportunity to protect itself from the Bolshevik threat. The fact that Georgia and Azerbaijan had an anti-Russian position, they quickly appeared in the center of attention.

On January 12, 1920, the Supreme Council of the Commonwealth of Nations de facto recognized the governments of Georgia and Azerbaijan<sup>56</sup> (Boryan 1929, 65), “not remembering” the Republic of Armenia. Naturally, this caused deep indignation and dissatisfaction in the political, diplomatic circles of the Armenian people of the republic, why “allies... at the same time did not announce the de facto recognition of Armenia” (Hairenik 1926, 92). Khatisyan expressed his indignation in a letter to the High Commissioner of England M. Wardrop and asked to inform the Supreme Council about it (Ashkhatavor 1920)<sup>57</sup>. On January 15, M. Wardrop in the reply letter addressed to Khatisyan, writes: “I was very concerned when I heard from you that your compatriots are currently de facto worried only about the recognition of Georgia and Azerbaijan. According to me, that news should have created the opposite impression. The Armenian Question is related to the Turkish issue and will soon be resolved by the reconciliation agreement to be concluded with Tachkastan, and until then I am not authorized to make any official statement about the issue of Armenia’s recognition.

<sup>55</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 278, list 1, file 10, sheet 36.

<sup>56</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 43, list 1, file 124, sheet 19.

<sup>57</sup> National Archives of Armenia, fund 200, list 1, file 555, part I, sheets 40, 56.

And the fact that Georgia and Azerbaijan have been de facto officially recognized seems to me to be a convincing proof that the Armenian people have no reason to worry. The case can be left to the decision of the allies, fully believing that they will be fair to the Armenian people” (Khatisyan 1930, 196).

At first glance, the reasoning seems well founded. Indeed, the Armenian Question was being discussed at the Paris Peace Conference, and the treaty to be concluded with Turkey was being prepared, which was supposed to solve the problem of Western Armenia. However, this did not prevent the Supreme Council from recognizing the already established Republic of Eastern Armenia. The latter’s friendly relations with the South of Russia played a role simply. The governments of the states of the Entente were sure that the Republic of Armenia would not act against Russia, no matter how it acts, white or red, but since the attitude of the Supreme Council towards the Republic of Armenia was openly unfriendly, the latter hastened to correct the mistake made. A few days later, on January 19, the Republic of Armenia was de facto recognized (Haratch 1920)<sup>58</sup>. It was assumed that this international-legal recognition of the governments of the three Transcaucasian republics was intended to create a diplomatic and international legal basis for uniting their forces against Soviet Russia. Officially, in Washington, Garegin Kastarmachyan (Armen Garo) was appointed as the diplomatic representative of the Republic of Armenia.

### **Supplementary material**

The supplementary material for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.46991/JOPS/2023.2.5.076>

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The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

### **Ethical standards**

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

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<sup>58</sup> State Archive of the RF, fund 446, list 2, file 36, sheet 98; *Armenia and Soviet-Turkish relations in diplomatic documents of 1945-1946*, edited by Arman Kirakosyan. Yerevan: Tigran Mets, 2010, p.18 (in Russian) [*Армения и советско-турецкие отношения в дипломатических документах 1945-1946 гг.*, под редакцией Армана Киракосяна. Ереван: Тигран Мец, 2010].

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## THE SMART POWER OF ABENOMICS: SHADOWS OF JAPANIZATION AND LONG-TERM CHALLENGES

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### Abstract

This article discusses the main tasks of the smart power of Abenomics as the basis of the anti-crisis economic policy of modern Japan. The idea is argued that the Abe government proposed a program known as the “Three Arrows of Abenomics”, the implementation of which helped Japan get out of deflation, but the economic growth potential remained extremely low.

This economic policy was unique in that the whole range of its measures was adapted to the specifics of the Japanese economy or Japanization.

The experience of modern Japan in the fight against economic stagnation is undoubtedly very valuable for many countries. Having studied the main stages of economic policy, as well as the difficulties faced by Japan during its implementation, each country will develop its own strategy to combat the economic crisis and stagnation, adapted to the characteristics of each of the states.

This article analyzes key aspects of the Abenomics economic reform package. In addition to characterizing individual measures, it focuses on the analysis of outcomes such as deflation, weak economic growth or labor market rigidity.

The characteristic features of the so-called new arrows of Abenomics are identified and

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described, which respond to the successes achieved, as well as to the new challenges of the Japanese economy.

**Keywords:** Japan, Japanization, Abenomics, reforms, spatial concertation, cluster analysis, savings, Abe Doctrine.

## Introduction

The term Abenomics was first used by the media in 2006, when Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe became the prime minister of Japan for the first time. However, we can only talk about the actual implementation of the program since 2012, when Abe was re-elected again. This year, the series of measures will celebrate the eighth year in operation. When Abe as PM announced his program, he attracted the attention of foreign media and investors alike. The reform agenda was so comprehensive that it raised expectations in several ways that Japan would miraculously resolve the years of its withdrawal, which many now call not only the Lost Decade, but the Two Lost Decades. But did Abenomics meet this expectation?

In this paper we analyze the individual measures of this economic package of reforms in connection with the most pressing problems that Japan has been facing since the lost decade. The aim is to identify the extent to which these measures have been successful in resolving the most crucial problems of Japanese economy. Today, several studies, but especially macroeconomic data, show that Abenomics has to some extent been successful<sup>1</sup>. Respectively, it is necessary to ask the question the other way around. What would happen if Abe did not take major reform measures? Where would Japan be today? Although Abenomics has not yet produced amazing results, it is constantly being reformed, as evidenced by a set of new revised measures, also called new arrows.

Besides the focus on labor market, especially in terms of flexibility, it also covers more measures related to research, innovation and intelligent information technologies, such as big data, AI, robotics, smart cities initiatives. It also focuses on new sectors of the economy especially services, e.g. in the field of social care, and continues in areas such as greater involvement in regional free trade agreements and the support of SMEs<sup>2</sup>.

In addition to the analysis of the original and new measures, the article will also address the spatial concentration of the propensity to save in individual prefectures in order to determine how homogeneous the population is in their consumer behavior. Abe's tax increases to raise the amount of money for the health and social care system support have been met with rather strong protests from the working population. In the older population, on the other hand, it further supported savings.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: The Government of Japan. 2023. "Abenomics: For future growth, for future generations, and for a future Japan." *JapanGov*, Accessed August 30, 2023. <https://www.japan.go.jp/abenomics/index.html>.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*.

## The bubble economy: what goes around comes around

Before we can characterize Abenomics, it is necessary to understand what happened in Japan more than a decade before its adoption. The lost decade that Japan began to face in the early 1990s was caused by two bubbles - one on the stock market and the other on the real estate market. The bubble economy was characterized by rapid acceleration of asset prices and overheated economic activity, as well as an uncontrolled money supply.

There are several causes of crisis. One of them is the Plaza Agreement, after which Japan undertook to appreciate the yen, with the increase representing more than 100% of its value against the dollar in two years (Grabowiecki 2019). The second cause is monetary policy, especially the money growth that was out of control. The growth of the economy was associated with the drop-in short-term interest rates and aggressive monetary easing (OECD 2014). And we can name many others – liberalization and the aggressive bank behavior (Okina, Shirakawa and Shiratsuka 2001), or the Japanese land lease law. The consequences of the crisis have been devastating for Japan. Nikkei lost more than 50 percentage points of its value, banks had a lot of bad loans, an output gap arose, total factor productivity more than doubled, GDP growth since 2000 averaged less than 1% per year (Grabowiecki 2019). Figure 1 and Table 1 show the fluctuations of the Nikkei 225 as well as stock prices from 1980 to 2020.

Figure 1. The bubble of Nikkei 225 and stock prices in Japan



Source: <https://www.macrotrends.net/2593/nikkei-225-index-historical-chart-data>

Table 1. Nikkei 225 - Historical Annual Data

<b>Year</b>	<b>Average Closing Price</b>	<b>Year Open</b>	<b>Year High</b>	<b>Year Low</b>	<b>Year Close</b>	<b>Annual % Change</b>
<b>2020</b>	22,705.02	23,204.86	27,568.15	16,552.83	27,444.17	16.01%
<b>2019</b>	21,697.23	19,561.96	24,066.12	19,561.96	23,656.62	18.20%
<b>2018</b>	22,310.73	23,506.33	24,270.62	19,155.74	20,014.77	-12.08%
<b>2017</b>	20,209.03	19,594.16	22,939.18	18,335.63	22,764.94	19.10%
<b>2016</b>	16,920.48	18,450.98	19,494.53	14,952.02	19,114.37	0.42%
<b>2015</b>	19,203.77	17,408.71	20,868.03	16,795.96	19,033.71	9.07%
<b>2014</b>	15,460.43	15,908.88	17,935.64	13,910.16	17,450.77	7.12%
<b>2013</b>	13,577.87	10,688.11	16,291.31	10,486.99	16,291.31	56.72%
<b>2012</b>	9,102.56	8,560.11	10,395.18	8,295.63	10,395.18	22.94%
<b>2011</b>	9,425.42	10,398.10	10,857.53	8,160.01	8,455.35	-17.34%
<b>2010</b>	10,006.49	10,654.79	11,339.30	8,824.06	10,228.92	-3.01%
<b>2009</b>	9,346.11	9,043.12	10,639.71	7,054.98	10,546.44	19.04%
<b>2008</b>	12,165.35	14,691.41	14,691.41	7,162.90	8,859.56	-42.12%
<b>2007</b>	17,002.24	17,353.67	18,261.98	14,837.66	15,307.78	-11.13%
<b>2006</b>	16,110.38	16,361.54	17,563.37	14,218.60	17,225.83	6.92%
<b>2005</b>	12,422.58	11,517.75	16,344.20	10,825.39	16,111.43	40.24%
<b>2004</b>	11,179.25	10,825.17	12,163.89	10,365.40	11,488.76	7.61%
<b>2003</b>	9,311.42	8,713.33	11,161.71	7,607.88	10,676.64	24.45%
<b>2002</b>	10,123.14	10,871.49	11,979.85	8,303.39	8,578.95	-18.63%
<b>2001</b>	12,093.56	13,691.49	14,529.41	9,504.41	10,542.62	-23.52%
<b>2000</b>	17,145.01	19,002.86	20,833.21	13,423.21	13,785.69	-27.19%
<b>1999</b>	16,823.41	13,415.89	18,934.34	13,232.74	18,934.34	36.79%
<b>1998</b>	15,355.99	14,956.84	17,264.34	12,879.97	13,842.17	-9.28%
<b>1997</b>	18,397.52	19,446.00	20,681.07	14,775.22	15,258.74	-21.19%
<b>1996</b>	21,094.61	20,618.00	22,666.80	19,161.71	19,361.35	-2.55%
<b>1995</b>	17,329.70	19,684.04	20,011.76	14,485.41	19,868.15	0.74%
<b>1994</b>	19,935.83	17,369.74	21,552.81	17,369.74	19,723.06	13.24%
<b>1993</b>	19,100.00	16,994.08	21,148.11	16,078.71	17,417.24	2.91%



<b>1992</b>	18,109.08	23,801.18	23,801.18	14,309.41	16,924.95	-26.36%
<b>1991</b>	24,295.57	24,069.18	27,146.91	21,456.76	22,983.77	-3.63%
<b>1990</b>	29,437.18	38,712.88	38,712.88	20,221.86	23,848.71	-38.72%
<b>1989</b>	34,050.78	30,243.66	38,915.87	30,183.79	38,915.87	29.04%
<b>1988</b>	27,048.26	21,217.04	30,159.00	21,217.04	30,159.00	39.86%
<b>1987</b>	23,232.14	18,820.50	26,646.43	18,544.00	21,564.00	14.58%
<b>1986</b>	16,392.74	13,083.18	18,936.19	12,881.50	18,820.64	43.85%
<b>1985</b>	12,557.45	11,542.60	13,128.90	11,542.60	13,083.18	13.35%
<b>1984</b>	10,567.53	9,893.82	11,577.40	9,703.35	11,542.60	16.66%
<b>1983</b>	8,816.24	8,016.67	9,893.82	7,803.18	9,893.82	23.42%
<b>1982</b>	7,397.27	7,681.84	8,026.99	6,849.78	8,016.67	4.36%
<b>1981</b>	7,518.55	7,150.95	8,019.14	6,956.52	7,681.84	8.76%
<b>1980</b>	6,867.86	6,560.16	7,188.28	6,475.93	7,063.13	7.51%

Source: <https://www.macrotrends.net/2593/nikkei-225-index-historical-chart-data>

Reinhart and Rogoff (2009) claim that Japanese bubble in the turn of 80's and 90's was one of the Big 5 crisis in the world. Shibata (2017), on the other hand, says the bubble has completely changed Japan's political economy. However, in addition to this crisis, Japan has had to face another serious negative factor in the coming years. Whether it was the Global Financial and Economic Crisis in 2008 or the devastating earthquake in 2011 associated with the tsunami that hit the Fukushima nuclear power plant and caused considerable damage. All this had an impact on the decline in industrial production and manufacturing. In addition, another, very serious problem has been added today, and that is the aging of the population. At the time of the economic miracle, the Japanese population was still relatively young (Grabowiecki 2019). Nowadays, Japan is aging faster than other industrialized nations (Okma and Gusmano 2019). All of these accumulated shortcomings of the Japanese economy are addresses by Abenomics (Bobowski and Drelich-Skulska 2016).

The smart power of Abenomics is that Shinzo Abe's rise to power in 2012 and his early initiatives fundamentally changed Japan's foreign policy and defense policies through the 'Abe Doctrine' (Hughes 2015a; Hughes 2015b). It consists of building up its own defense capabilities and removing restrictions in the military sphere, strengthening and achieving greater integration within the alliance with the United States, as well as implementing the diplomacy of values, on the basis of which Japan pursues the goals of achieving leadership in East Asia and containing China (Dobson 2017, 201-204).

Strengthening the Japan-US security alliance remains Abe's top foreign policy goal. Japan's desire to find an answer to the challenge from China dictates, on the one hand, the strengthening of the alliance with the United States and the revision of certain aspects of defense policy, on the other hand, leads to the intensification of a diplomatic

strategy aimed at forming an anti-Chinese front. The intensification of the struggle for leadership in the region, which culminated in the confrontation between the two countries regarding the ownership of the disputed islands, is largely shaping Japan's new approach to China's offensive policy. Japan also sees a challenge to its national interests in China's actions in the South China Sea, where the main trade communications take place, including the transportation of most of the hydrocarbon resources it imports.

### **Success and challenges three arrows**

Grabowiecki (2019) claims that Abenomics has two faces – political and economic. We agree that the political strength of the measures lies mainly in their engineer itself - Prime Minister Abe. But it is the economic level that is key to restarting Japan. Abenomics consist of three key areas, also called three arrows. The first arrow represents aggressive monetary policy. The second arrow is flexible fiscal policy. The third arrow represents a growth strategy, or otherwise structural reforms (Shibata 2017). The main goal of Abenomics was and still is to escape deflation caused by long-term quantitative easing, to increase demand and consumption and to stimulate investment. (Grabowiecki 2019). Now, let's take a closer look at the individual arrows.

The base of the aggressive monetary policy measure was the inflation targeting (set to 2% at first) and the purchase of government bonds. (Grabowiecki 2019; Shibata 2017; Jones 2013). In the initial phase of Abenomics, the Bank of Japan, led by the new Governor Haruhik Kuroda, launched an unprecedented quantitative and qualitative easing. The volume of asset purchases led to a strong correction of the Japanese yen (Hausmman and Wieland 2015; Fukuda 2012; Fukuda 2015; Grabowiecki 2019; Ito 2021a; Ito 2021b) which allowed the growth of Japanese companies' profits and asset prices in the financial markets. Positive inflation has been reached, but not targeted goal achieved.

Second arrow, flexible fiscal policy actually means the public spending on roads, bridges, infrastructure. The main package initially consisted of 220 billion dollars intended for the infrastructure recovery destroyed by the massive earthquake in 2011. Another 180 billion has been allocated for so called virtuous cycle. Abenomics' flexible approach to fiscal stimulus has enabled the government to implement and enforce several policies (Hoshi and Lipsy 2021). For example, in the area of increasing social security, education, public transport and other areas important for future growth (Hayashida, Yasuoka, Nanba and Ohno 2018; Adachi 2018, 9-11; Pu 2019).

The first and second arrows served for the development of the third arrow, i.e. structural changes and growth strategies. This is called Japan Revitalization Strategy. The basis of this strategy is the support of SMEs, science and research and labour market reform. Measures on the labour market include, for example, an increase in the number of facilities providing day care for children, or the promotion of flexible working hours (Song 2015). The involvement of women in the work process has

increased significantly as a result of these measures. The number of employees visiting through various student and work exchange programs has also rising tendency.

In 2013, OECD published report evaluating the appropriateness of the measures of the individual arrows, where it just emphasized the importance of their interconnection, especially the importance of structural changes (Jones 2013; OECD 2014). Without structural reforms, the effects of the first two arrows would only have a short-term duration. However, Jones (2013) pointed out the need for the fourth pillar, namely fiscal consolidation. It also emphasizes the need to reform the agricultural sector, which, however, has already found its application in the new arrows introduced in 2015. We summarise the original three arrows measures in the Table 2:

*Table 2. Three arrows of Abenomics*

<b>Arrow</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Goal</b>
<b>Aggressive monetary policy</b>	Q&Q easing Inflation targeting 2 %	Reduction of real interest r. Elimination of deflation
<b>Flexible fiscal policy</b>	Stimulus package: Recovery \$ 220 bill. Virtuous cycle \$ 180 bill.	Economic growth
<b>Structural reforms</b>	Japan Revitalisation Strategy	Rise of competitiveness and FDI

*Source: author's own processing*

### **New arrows and old target**

In September 2015, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced New Arrows of Abenomics under the slogan of a society promoting dynamic engagement of all citizens (Chiavacci and Lechevalier 2017; Armstrong 2021; Armstrong and Urata 2023). New arrows are sometimes referred to as Abenomics 2.0. The three new arrows are already focusing on new areas, namely strong economy, support for families with children and social security. In 2018, Japan introduced new social model Society 5.0<sup>3</sup>. The model has two primary goals – to achieve sustainable growth and to solve social problems by using intelligent technologies (Wakatabe 2015a; Wakatabe 2015b).

It can be said that the new Abenomics approaches the measures more complex, which can certainly be attributed to the initial success of the first arrows. The aging population is now seen as an opportunity for new markets - especially in the field of care or even wellness. Modern technologies such as big data, drones, electronic systems, electric cars or smart solutions should become an integral part of all areas of life - healthcare, infrastructure, tourism, business<sup>4</sup>. (JapanGov 2018). In the labour market, women (especially via childcare assistance, education, reduction of any forms

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

of violence or despot for single parents) and expatriates will be supported. Emphasis is placed on tourism, with technologies such as Wi-Fi networks to be used for marketing purposes as well as better experiences for tourists. To fully unleash the potential of business, the new Abenomics will focus on SMEs and the reduction of corporate tax below 30%.

In the area of international relations, Japan will strive to bring free trade agreements into force and avoid the impending trade wars such as in 80's with the USA (Lipková and Brocková, 2018; Lipková, Brocková and Baleha 2020). Japan commitment is to be the leader of the free trade. Last but not least, the stronger support for FDI should be secured by the reduction of administrative cost and welcoming the investment outside the major cities and industrial areas (see Table 3).

*Table 3. New arrows of Abenomics*

<b>Arrow</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Goal</b>
<b>Strong economy</b>	SMEs IT Free Trade	Sustainable growth
<b>Support for families with children</b>	Childcare, education for women, support for single parents	Reduction of shrinking of population
<b>Social security</b>	Healthcare, Social services	Solving the aging of population

*Source: author's own processing*

### **Consume or save?**

One of the goals of Abenomics is to stimulate demand and consumption. The high propensity to save is a traditional problem of Japan, which rather stems from its culture characteristics. Therefore, we make a simple analysis where we will look at how the tendency to save space is distributed in individual prefectures and where there is a higher possibility that people will be willing to spend more. New Abenomics 2.0 has a very specific innovation – some measure will be applied in particular places and then, if successful, will be applied across the country.

To examine the spatial concentration of the propensity to save in individual prefectures, we used cluster analysis, a method that aims to decompose a set of objects into several relatively homogeneous subsets (clusters) so that objects belonging to the same cluster are most similar, while objects from different clusters would be they should be as different as possible (Kushida 2018).

We chose hierarchical cluster analysis, specifically hierarchical agglomeration clustering. The hierarchical system of clusters is characterized in that it creates such a decomposition of the original set of objects, in which each of the partial decompositions is a refinement of the next (so-called agglomerative clustering) or the

previous (so-called divisional clustering) decomposition. In addition, agglomerative clustering is a bottom-up approach. Thus, in this approach, the individual clusters are iteratively joined into larger units.

The set of input data consisted of variables monitored by the Ministry of International Affairs and Communication Japan in 47 prefectures in Japan in 6 years, namely data for household saving as well as the unemployment rate. For the cluster analysis, we chose the Euclidean distance, which is given as:

$$\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - y_i)^2}$$

$x_i$  - value of the variable  $x$  for the  $i$ -th object

$y_i$  - value of the variable  $y$  in the  $i$ -th object

$n$  - number of attributes

Ward's minimal variance method was used. In this method, the similarity of objects or clusters is measured as the sum of squares between objects from two clusters, summed over all attributes of the given objects. The results are shown in the Table 4.

Table 4. Results of the cluster analysis of prefectures

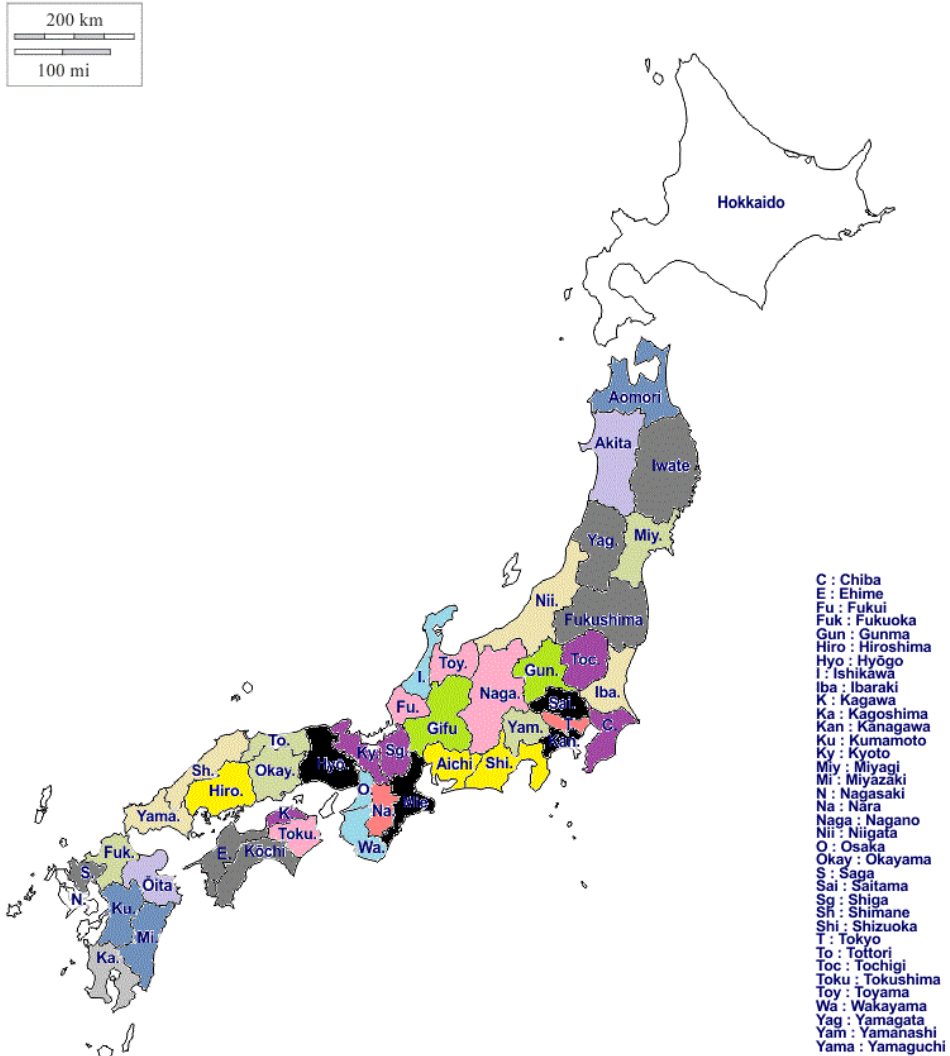
Cluster	Prefectures					
1	Nara	Tokyo				
2	Aichi	Shizuoka	Hiroshima			
3	Gunma	Gifu				
4	Ishikawa	Osaka	Wakayama			
5	Tokushima	Fukui	Toyama	Nagano		
6	Niigata	Ibaraki	Yamaguchi	Shimane		
7	Akita	Kagoshima	Oita			
8	Kumamoto	Miyazaki				
9	Aomori	Okinawa				
10	Kyoto	Kagawa	Chiba	Tochigi	Shiga	
11	Yamanashi	Tottori	Okayama	Miyagi	Fukuoka	
12	Kochi	Fukushima	Saga	Iwate	Ehime	Yamagata
13	Hyogo	Kanagawa	Saitama	Mie		

Source: author's own processing

The result of the analysis is the creation of 13 clusters. These clusters do not tell us about the order of a prefecture, but only about the similarity of the data. However, we could simply say that according to the results, the clusters are arranged from 1 to 13 according to the correlation of the propensity to save and unemployment in the prefecture, where cluster 2 has the most unfavourable results. That means, households in prefectures in cluster 1 are saving the most and vice versa, the prefectures in cluster

13 the least. The results are quite surprising for the author, because we expected the least tendency to save from Tokyo, for example. Following Figure 2 show the map of cluster of prefectures according to the cluster analysis.

Figure 2. Clusters of prefectures



Source: author's own processing

The analysis showed us in which prefectures household consumption is the most difficult to stimulate. On the other hand, it must be said that the differences between the individual prefectures are not too visible. At the same time, these are prefectures, where the unemployment rate is also higher, which is why Abenomics's labour market measures can be applied here.

## Conclusion and discussion

The successes of Abenomics tend to be evaluated contradictory. There is a group of economists who praise it, then a group that considers some measures to be positive, and finally a group of negativists who are critical of Abenomics. Usually the truth is somewhere in the middle. That means, Abenomics achieves moderate results.

The measures have weakened yen rapidly and raised up stock prices. The positive inflation was achieved, however, the targeted goal not (Hausman and Wieland 2015). Inflation expectations remains around 1% (Shibata 2017). The aggressive monetary policy only had a limited effect on investment stimulation. What actually was achieved, was the rise of Nikkei 225, the GDP growth and the reduction of the output gap (Grabowiecki 2019). Several countries in the Asian region responded to the depreciation of yen by devaluing their currencies as the so-called beggar-thy-neighbour effect.

Kondo, Nakazono, Ota and Sui (2020) analysed the demand of Japanese stocks. They claim, that the only way to stimulate the aggregate demand in the situation known as liquidity trap, where Japan has been really trapped for a long period, is to drastically changes the expectation of the markets. In the analysis, they found that investors' expectations had indeed changed and thus that they had responded to the measures. However, the difference was in what type of investors. In the case of Abenomics, this is also very important information. Foreign investors reacted immediately, but not domestic ones. It is the stimulation of domestic investment that is one of Japan's biggest problems. Domestic companies have somehow lost the desire to invest.

Hausman and Wieland (2015) clarify that the growth of nominal wages, in the context of rising inflation, should be a critical factor in describing Abenomics' successes. Aoyagi and Ganelli (2015) found out an obvious increase in real wages, mainly due to the share of lower-paid-time employment. The female employment-to population-ratio has also increased. However, they also agreed on that inflation expectation remains only moderate.

Shibata (2017) criticizes the success of the second arrow, expansionary fiscal policy. It emphasizes that the implementation of the stimulus packages has rather exacerbated the already poor state of public finances. Abe also increased his consumption tax, which he resented as consumption began to sag. However, the amount of funds under this Abenomics pillar has declined significantly.

However, there have been positive results in the area of international trade TPP agreement opens up the robust market access and boost competition (Watanabe 2018; Solís and Urata 2018). With the new arrow support for FDI, SMEs and IT this could really mean a positive change for the recovery of the Japanese economy. However, only time will tell how the new arrows can be implemented. In the following Table 4, we summarize the crucial macroeconomic data of Japanese economy.

Table 4. Macroeconomic data of Japanese economy

<i>Period</i>	<i>Real GDP Growth</i>	<i>CPI inflation</i>	<i>Interest rate</i>
1974–92	4.0	4.8	6.8
1993–2007	1.1	0.1	0.6
2008–12	-0.2	-0.2	0.2
2019	0.7	0.3-0.5	0,01

*Source: Hausman and Wieland 2015, Bank of Japan*

As seen from the Table 4, Abenomics measures improved Japan's macroeconomic indicators, keeping growth and inflation in positive numbers. However, in the context of the current global COVID-19 pandemic, the situation may change rapidly. And it turns out that change has already begun to the detriment of Japan has begun.

Reports from March show that the Japanese economy is entering a recession again. Although it has recovered moderately, the March figures show the opposite trend, and it is not expected to improve until at least the end of June, according to the Chief Economist of the Daichi Research Institute (Hirano 2020). Inflation weakened in February and March, which was also due to falling oil prices and a stagnant economy. This raises fears that Japan will enter a deflationary spiral (Ruan and Leung 2021; Tashiro 2022). In March, there was also a significant decline in tourism in the country, by as much as 93%. Estimates of the decline in tourism for the whole year predict a decline of up to 80% (Sugiura 2020).

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has already released a financial package to support during the pandemic, but many are still calling for more money to be released (Aramaki 2018a; Aramaki 2018b). These measures will have a significant impact on public finances. Unfortunately, as a result of the pandemic, the long-awaited Olympic Games were also postponed although Japan has long sought to prevent this (Glawe and Wagner 2021; Yoda 2023).

Japan, like the rest of the world, will have to find its way to overcome the pandemic and deal with its consequences. All that remains is to hope that the situation will develop positively and contribute to harmonious and long-term growth. The measures contained in Abenomics have been on this path.

The increasing importance of the factor of power and the intensification of geopolitical rivalry with China under the slogan of protecting the status quo in the region and in the world determine the emergence of realism in Japan's foreign policy at the current stage. At the same time, focusing on 'hard power' does not mean abandoning 'soft power,' which is based on attraction rather than coercion. On the contrary, 'soft power' during Abe's period in power acquires special significance in Japanese foreign policy tools.

### Supplementary material

The supplementary material for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.46991/JOPS/2023.2.5.100>



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### Conflict of interests

The authors declare no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

### Ethical standards

The authors affirm this research did not involve human subjects.

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## RECONSTRUCTING THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF ARMENIA: OVERCOMING CONTEMPORARY TURBULENCE THROUGH ROLE MODELS

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### Abstract

This article deals with the problem of reconstructing the political future of post-war Armenia and overcoming modern turbulence in the context of regional instability. Characteristic features of overcoming widespread anxiety in the Armenian society, which manifested itself on the political stage in different ways, from popular protests and early elections to heated debates about the political future in recent years, are highlighted and described. The most important condition for the development of post-war Armenia is the extent to which Armenian society is able to form a concept for its future. Ideas about the future were of particular importance in critical epochs, when the traditional picture of the world was destroyed and new opportunities for social development opened up. But for many centuries, these ideas did not go beyond prophecies, predictions and various kinds of hoaxes, which essentially became the first attempts to predict the future.

This article attempts to uncover the main causes of modern instability in Armenia, thereby contributing to the Armenian society to deconstruct and reconstruct the political future. In this context, it also means that even the scientific methodology for knowing the future has not yet been developed, since most scientific methods remain imperfect and do not give the researcher confidence in the accuracy of the forecast.

**Keywords:** political future, contemporary turbulence, Republic of Armenia, South Korea, development models, human fellowship.

### Introduction

The relevance of the task of systematizing various ideas about the concept of the future of post-war Armenia is not least dictated by the fact that the modern period of history is deeply contradictory and in many ways crisis-ridden. The post-war Armenia has

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been facing an uphill battle. The difficulty of overcoming widespread anxiety has unfolded itself on the political scene in multiple ways, from popular protests and snap elections to heated debates over the political future in recent years. Coupled with regional and global volatility, economic challenges, the increasing precariousness of human security at local and global levels, social scientists have come under growing pressure to find solutions to most pressing issues, such as the political future of the Republic of Armenia, political turbulence and uncertainty. In this context, we have synthesized the experiences of various plausible models of development to address the contemporary turbulence in Armenia. This way, we have made an attempt to come up with a formula that is potentially capable of helping the Republic of Armenia, and the Armenian public, to deconstruct and reconstruct a political future built on specific models, i.e. other countries' success stories, rather than general theories or guidelines. Briefly, against the backdrop of the discussion offered in this paper, we have examined the plausibility of Greek, Israeli, Iranian, Chilean, South Korean, East European models laying the groundwork for separate case studies.

The discussion of political future can be both intimidating and challenging. At various levels and across the spectrum, questions arise related to the political future of nations stemming from both contemporary issues of transition and societal polarization and the ever-changing geopolitical contours and rivalry. We agree with A. Aleksanyan in his interpretation of human progress and civiliarchy, which has national, regional and global dimensions (Alexanyan 2005b, 135-137; Aleksanyan 2011, 119-120). According to the political scientist, "there are many universal patterns of the progress and regress of society which establish a base to create internal as well as international models of cooperation and conflict" (Alexanyan 2005a). In this context, M. Margaryan has made a bold attempt to establish a link between the spatiotemporal and sociocultural values on the one hand and the political conceptualization of human life on the other hand through the study of the legacy of medieval Armenian clergyman and philosopher, St. Gregor Narekatsi (Margaryan 2023). Expanding the spatiotemporal context of the subject matter, M. Margaryan problematizes the sociocultural profile of the contemporary man, who has relinquished his mindset and value system in order to meet his material expectations serving anyone (Margaryan 2023, 65). In order to overcome this anxiety of existence, Margaryan suggests, deriving the guiding principles from the spiritual legacy of Grigor Narekatsi, adopting moral intentions of action. In this case, it becomes possible for a creative person, who forms part of the public network and is thus 'publicized', to self-govern, which implies responsibility (Margaryan 2023, 162). This interpretation of civic responsibility resembles the Korean attitudinal mindset. According to Hong Nack Kim, "under the Confucian system, the fundamental goal of government was to create harmony and unity among men and between man and the universe" (Kim 1998, 101). It is perhaps this formulation of the Korean worldview that led us to the ensuing research and discoveries. Further, the author depicted Korean political leaders as "corrupt, incompetent, authoritarian, and accustomed to exercising nepotism and favoritism, self-righteousness {toksonjui}" (Kim 1998, 104) before the advent of liberal democracy heralded by Americans in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

This dichotomy between harmonious cultural underpinnings and self-righteous inclinations of traditional political leaders made the South Korean experience a particularly well-suited model for the Republic of Armenia. Having struggled for centuries to gain independence and having succeeded periodically with long hiatuses in between, Armenia has faced the post-soviet legacy of weak institutional democracy, corruption, incompetence and self-righteousness on the part of the governing elite. Further, dealing with its historical scars of territorial loss, humiliation and externally imposed systems of governance and ideology, Armenia is positioned well to benefit from the model of South Korea, which seems to offer an authentic guide through post-colonial independence, harmonious culture, successful liberalization and economic prosperity coupled with a flexible foreign policy and security reliance on an external ally, the latter two being especially relevant for Armenia (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung 2017; UN Trust Fund for Human Security 2016).

In this context, it has become crucial to dissect the internal dynamics of political undercurrents in an attempt to comprehend the intricate interplay between global and local issues. Endeavoring to extend the notion of T. Parsons that, “illness is not merely a state of the organism and/ or personality, but comes to be an institutionalized role” (Parsons 1978, 21), we have applied it to a variety of political dimensions incorporating it in a body of social, historical and political phenomena. As a result, we deem it necessary to investigate the urgency of the proposed research topic in a way that addresses both the “institutionalized” and “role” aspects of the matter, something that comes up, albeit obliquely, in this article now and again (Ayhan and Jang 2023; Buzo 2002).

As both local and global issues arguably tend to crisscross at local, regional and universal levels as well as across a wide array of institutions, the significance of political future has come to the fore. In putting forward our arguments and assumptions we assume A. Ferguson’s conception of human progress to be our guiding principle and analytical basis: “The progress of mankind from a supposed state of animal sensibility, to the attainment of reason, to the use of language, and to the habit of society, has been accordingly painted with a force of imagination, and its steps have been marked with a boldness of invention” (Ferguson 1996). Thus, it is through imagination and inventiveness that we have compared and contrasted urgent issues of local and global significance to elaborately construct the domain of the postulates of this article.

First, we look into political and socio-political phenomena of change and continuity to try and understand the concept of political future arriving at the necessity of, what we call, human fellowship. Then, we develop a brief discussion of possible models of future development and orientation for the Republic of Armenia. Through a succinct process of elimination, we arrive at the conclusion that the South Korean experience is possibly an ideal model for the Republic of Armenia to look up to. Nevertheless, the advantages of other models (Greek, Israeli, Chilean, East European, Iranian) are also highlighted as our research is analytical in nature and comparative in outlook. We do not aim to offer an exhaustive analysis of either contemporary turbulence, political future or a thorough investigation of possible role models. What we do hope to achieve, arguably for the first time in the history of social science, is the comparison of

two strange bedfellows-Armenia and South Korea<sup>1</sup>-something that paves the way for further cross-country comparative studies, case studies at local, regional and global levels (Public Intelligence 2015).

Choosing a role model can be tough. To make matters, worse, there are hardly any two countries in the world with identical strategic experiences. Hence, whatever our choices are, we are bound to come up against the necessity to measure our choices against a certain set of criteria. In other words, what is it that we attach importance to, weigh up, look up to, compare with? The umbrella term here is 'strategic', which requires some explanation. In no particular order, we will look at the following dimensions (or criteria for that matter) in a nutshell.

First, to what extent is the country's history dramatic and how much drama is reflected in foreign and domestic policy? Has the country had a frozen conflict in its recent history? Is the country located in a geopolitically volatile region with intense great power competition? Has the country had a thorough transition to democracy? Is it, in general terms, economically, educationally, technologically, culturally competitive? Is its foreign policy flexible with a multiplicity of bi-, tri- and multilateral cooperative schemes and partnerships? Does it firmly and unequivocally belong to a bloc or is it more reliant on an external security guarantor (via foreign military presence, for example)? The examples of South Korea, Israel, Greece, Iran, Eastern Europe and Chile have been selected thanks to a perceived approximation of their histories, vision and certain capabilities with those of Armenia based on the mentioned criteria.

The preceding questions are derived from Armenia's historical and recent sociopolitical experience. To be precise, the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire (European Parliament 2015; the White House 2023), when 1.5 million Armenians perished in horrific crimes against humanity, has scarred the Armenian psyche for decades. Further, the country is reeling from the 2020 war over Nagorno-Karabakh<sup>2</sup>-an Armenian-populated enclave in the former Soviet Azerbaijan that had forcibly been incorporated into the entity by the Soviets (Libaridian 2023; Poghosyan 2022; Kocharyan 2015), and is fighting for self-determination. Moreover, Armenia, with the help of the international community, is struggling to return the prisoners of war (European Parliament 2021) from Azerbaijan, open the Lachin (the Armenian name Berdzor) corridor to terminate the on-going humanitarian catastrophe<sup>3</sup> in the region of the conflict. Furthermore, the country's strong national identity, commitment to civilization, unique cultural identity and a prolonged post-Soviet democratic and economic transition, marred by pervasive corruption, require being on the lookout for

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<sup>1</sup>Source: Bertelsmann Stiftung (BTI). 2022. Country Report - South Korea. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung. Accessed July 16, 2023. [https://bti-project.org/fileadmin/api/content/en/downloads/reports/country\\_report\\_2022\\_KOR.pdf](https://bti-project.org/fileadmin/api/content/en/downloads/reports/country_report_2022_KOR.pdf).

<sup>2</sup>Source: International Crisis Group. 2021. "Post-war Prospects for Nagorno-Karabakh." Report N°264, Europe & Central Asia June 9, 2021. Accessed July 16, 2023. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/caucasus/nagorno-karabakh-conflict/264-post-war-prospects-nagorno-karabakh>.

<sup>3</sup>Source: International Court of Justice. 2023. "Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Armenia v. Azerbaijan): Request for the modification of the Court's Order indicating a provisional measure." *No.2023/40*, 14 July 2023. Accessed August 16, 2023. <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/180/180-20230714-pre-01-00-en.pdf>.



similar role models (Long 1997; Aleksanyan and Aleksanyan 2022, 80-91). In addition, the country is at a crossroads of civilizations, hosts a foreign military base<sup>4</sup> and is wedged between North and South, East and West. All these factors complicate its situation and warrant scholarly research in search of answers comparing various models.

### **An attempt to identify a new framework for constructing, reconstructing and deconstructing the political future**

The changing facet and landscape of external as well as internal political dynamics in various geographic areas demonstrates the need to address seemingly unrelated issues in the wider context of current turbulence and political future. This way, it is possible to extract both learnable lessons and feasible formulae for the political future of a specific country or region with the possibility of a universal conceptual extension. Instead of extrapolating a theory or testing a hypothesis, we have set ourselves an analytical goal: to conduct a critical discussion aimed at identifying new frameworks for constructing, reconstructing and deconstructing the political future.

Thus and thus, the scholarly objectives of this article are threefold. First, we have aimed at rediscovering and reconstructing the interplay of the multitude of factors underlying the internal and external dimensions of political realities (Ostermann and Person 2011). Second, we have made an attempt to comparatively forecast the strategic developmental and foreign policy options of the Republic of Armenia derived from the de-contextualization of foreign experiences, contemporary political issues and conceptual transformation across the political spectrum linking choices to possibilities. In this sense, we have looked into the rationale behind various national and international ambitions and aspirations being unfolded on the international stage. Third, we have analyzed the sub-contexts of the mentioned analytical frameworks drawing conclusions with regard to the comparative-normative values of our critical assessments. Therefore, this article adopts a comparative and critical approach to the subject under investigation. Synthesis, deduction, induction, compare and contrast, the process of elimination is used throughout.

### **Theoretical framework**

How would the Republic of Armenia respond to external, as well as internal, challenges if it had to rely on certain developmental and foreign policy models (e.g. Greece, Eastern Europe, Israel, Iran, South Korea, Chile)? In what ways would projecting the trajectories of other countries with similar geostrategic orientations assist in dissolving the fears of Armenia's strategic incompetence (assuming such fears exist)? Seemingly vague and lacking in conceptual orientation, these questions are key to understanding the political foundations of discussing the future at a political level.

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<sup>4</sup>Foreign Ministry of the RA. 2023. "Russia: Bilateral relations." Accessed August 27, 2023. <https://www.mfa.am/en/bilateral-relations/ru>.

With this in mind, we have proceeded to investigating tools and options to address the current turbulence within a broader, concept-driven and politics-oriented investigation of the future and its characteristics. If J. S. Nye, describes the soft-power approach to behavior construction in terms of the “observable but intangible” (Nye 2004, 7) features of attraction, then how would an amalgamation of a multitude of factors display themselves on the political stage without an underlying principle to govern the forces of concentration and dispersal? Obviously, geopolitical rivalry, transition to democracy, economic and political causes demonstrate an inherent vulnerability: we argue that cause-and-effect relations behind political and socio-political tendencies are reliant on an intricate network of interdependencies. In this sense, hardly anyone would expect contrasting results in similar applications of political paraphernalia.

In choosing models of development, we have made an attempt to distinguish categories and criteria that can become a theoretical bedrock for further studies. As it becomes obvious from the reading of this paper, there are certain approaches and guidelines that are almost taken for granted throughout. One conspicuous example is the notion of civil society.

It is true that in choosing models to follow essential civilizational differences remain. For instance, M. Margaryan aptly distinguishes between a dynamic and technological West and a nature-oriented, socially constant East clamoring the need for a universal civilization (Margaryan 2004; Margaryan 2021). However, the political forces and factors that shape political realities pierce socio-cultural and spatiotemporal boundaries in the porousness and dynamics of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This arguably holds true for a number of context-determined situations. First, progress and regress in democratic terms carries the weight of experiential knowledge rather than purely geographic or cultural relevance (Kwang-Bae 1997; Deacon 2021).

To be precise, “scholars examining the changes in all Freedom House scores between 1972 and 2012 concluded that the trend of democratic recession was marginal since it mainly occurred in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, regions where backsliding democracies already tended to be frail even before they began actually regressing toward authoritarianism (Chu et al. 2020, 169).” Consequently, even though backsliding in largely confined to certain regions, it is mainly because of lack of democratic experience rather than existing geopolitical realities. Shaped by a mixture of history and geography, transitions to democracy are, when it comes to theoretical generalizations, probably expandable, hence universal.

Interestingly enough, the extension of spatiotemporal characteristics of political issues applies not only to democratic experiences but great power ambitions as well. As the great power rivalry intensifies over the fate of the Arctic region, it has been argued that, “having placed its first Arctic research station, Yellow River Station, on Svalbard in 2004. China is keen to ensure that Arctic issues are not simply decided by the five Arctic coastal states or the eight nations and indigenous participants of the Arctic Council” (Conley 2018, 3). Admittedly, the spatiotemporal dimension of international relations lacks a clear-cut structure but, at the same time leads to a more structural understanding of issues of strategic relevance.

To avoid the trap of overgeneralization and dogmatic assumptions, let us, at this point, refer to Ch. Fucks: “Structures are routinized and regularized social relations between humans that are relatively constant in space-time. They do not occur spontaneously once, but are repeated forms of action that repeatedly take place in specific spaces at specific times. Structures are created and re-created by human practices that in turn are conditioned by existing and emerging structures” (Fucks 2015, 69). Therefore, what has been discussed so far should be analyzed and interpreted in the light of existing and emerging recreations, structures and routines capable of breaking down even the most rigid one-dimensional theoretical edifice.

As the crisscrossing patterns of our investigation suggest, each and every one of the conclusions goes back and forth between the basic postulates and generalizations made as the arguments unfold themselves. In this case, it is appropriate to hark back to a similar deduction with regard to democratic principles. J. Muller claims that, “there is no single, fully agreed-upon model of European liberal democracy that could serve as a guideline or checklist for determining whether a country is departing from shared “European standards”” (Muller 2013, 138).

Within the broader concept of security, something that refers both to external realities, borders, security apparatuses and societal, international levels, humans are seen as objects of security perceptions. In other words, while democracy-related issues and the aspirations of great powers have overcome the previously acknowledged spatial limits and boundaries, so has the concept of security due to its novel depth and breadth. According to J. Large and T. D. Sisk, “human security emphasizes the protection of people from grave threats to their lives, their safety from harm and violent conflict, and their empowerment against such social threats as disease or crime” (Large and Sisk 2006, 14). This implies that whatever risks and dangers occur in different corners of the world, there is now a globalized understanding of those interrelated issues.

To be specific, human security become and addition to the family of notions that reconstruct our understanding of the fine demarcation between local and global. These common threats include, according to the 1994 UNDP report, freedom from hunger, health security: access to prevention and treatment of infectious diseases, protection from pollution and the depletion of nonrenewable resources, freedom from fear for communities, such as protection of traditional cultures and vulnerable groups, to name but a few (UNDP 1994).

These notions of the almost infinite extension of human-related risks and fears arrived with the advent of the era of new technologies. Currently, as humans are leading increasingly more virtual space-oriented lives, information and communication tools have become both risks and opportunities. These potential risks have transformed the political landscape as well leading to a number of controversial topics and practices to mark and mar the international political scene. S. E. Spaulding and E. Goldstein explain that, “Even as bot-driven disinformation or manipulation campaigns had perhaps inestimable impacts on the 2016 election, the Experts Group observed that advances in computational power will likely make this challenge more significant in the immediate future. Of note, improvements in artificial intelligence (AI) and human emulation will allow malicious actors to share (dis)information with increasing speed

and scope while raising the difficulty of distinguishing bots from real people unless countervailing technologies are developed” (Spaulding and Goldstein 2018, 7). In what ways will these technology-led conversion affect the universal concepts of democracy and security is unknown but the fact that information technology has already become a double-edged sword and requires a renewed, locally-driven but globally-acknowledged understanding is amply patent.

As we have already seen from the preceding discussion, democratic ideals, great power designs and ambitions, information and technology can all potentially lead to the blurring of previously visible boundaries between geographic areas and regions when it comes to a universal bargain associated with political concepts and perceptual margins. The harsh realities of fast-paced changes in conceivably all domains of human activity point in the direction of psychosocial transformations as well. For example, O. Feldman and S. Zmerli argue that media are capable of framing specific aspects of perceived reality as they choose and freely exclude what to report on, including gender-biased news and femininity (Feldman and Zmerli 2019; Feldman and Kinoshita 2019).

Thus, what has been framed by media is in fact an either randomly designed or strategically framed mindset or attitude that pervades the perceptions of the audience as they are exposed to the selection outcome of decision-makers in the area of media and news. Communication technologies, as a consequence, become an invisible hand to lead, manipulate and even downright cheat human audiences potentially determining what is right and what is wrong in their view. A threatening combination of media and information technologies is thus dangling in front of universal audiences blurring national distinctions and exposing commonalities and vulnerabilities.

However, the belief in the universality of means and choices should be exercised with great caution. It is still widely accepted that “many—if not most— of the practical actions that advance human security is within the purview of national and subnational governments, including local governments. And civil society has a key role at the local level, including in violent conflict settings” (UNDP 2022). These local manifestations of importance include, but are not limited to, people-centered concept of security, access to personal healthcare, safety from natural disasters, environmental degradation, domestic violence, crime and human rights. These inherently global characteristics of local issues are an indication that the merger of local and global issues and civilizations is a reality requiring a revision of conceptually isolationist views and theories (Snyder, Lee, Kim and Kim 2018).

As global issues form both practical and conceptual constellations, not only cyber issues, human security and democratization but also political economy poses formidable challenges to the construction of the future: “Broadly speaking, the political economy refers to the social, economic, cultural and political factors that structure, sustain and transform constellations of public and private actors, and their interests and relations, over time”<sup>5</sup>. The structure-oriented definition of political economy is alarmingly important for the state of economic affairs both within individual countries

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<sup>5</sup> Source: FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2022. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022. Repurposing food and agricultural policies to make healthy diets more affordable. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0639en>.

and beyond as “in the mid-2000s, it was estimated that four large companies dominated 70 to 90 percent of the global grain trade”<sup>6</sup>.

It follows that whether or not the compatibility of distinct approaches and methods to the analysis of political future are agreed upon, political future is fundamentally a human security-oriented analytical framework as the latter encompasses the sheer amplitude of contemporary human experiences. Not surprisingly, it has been argued that “human security addresses the full range of human insecurities faced by communities including, but not limited to, violent conflicts, extreme impoverishment, natural disasters, health pandemics, etc., as well as their interdependencies, both across human securities and geographically” (Human Security Handbook 2006).

In order to distinctly problematize the political future of the Republic of Armenia, we shall look into and spotlight a number of characteristic features of political futurology. First, on a democratic plane, it should be noted that “in Free countries in particular, declining satisfaction with democracy is driving down support for democracy. This is the case in Benin, Brazil, Cape Verde, Chile, South Africa, and Uruguay. There are a few exceptions showing distinctive local dynamics. In Mongolia and Peru, support for democracy had already fallen below 50 percent before the drop in satisfaction with democracy became manifest” (Chu et al. 2020, 173). Consequently, a future that is associated with democracy and a successful and complete democratic transition would require the establishment of sufficiently developed sociocultural links between public attitudes, the role of the civil society and the institutionalized forms of democracy that lead as back to the fundamental pillars of this article: roles and institutionalization (Clark 2000; Kagotani, Kimura and Weber 2014; Jochheim 2022).

Furthermore, as the country delves into choosing models of development and political value systems, it should heed attention to the availability of the readily identifiable reproductions that have already proved perceptibly admirable in historical transitions. In this sense, Nye was right in claiming that “the idea that war is now unthinkable among countries that fought bitterly for centuries, and that Europe has become an island of peace and prosperity creates a positive image in much of the world. In the late 1980s, when Eastern Europeans were asked which countries would serve as models for their future in terms of economic growth, equality, democracy, and individual freedoms, Western Europe outranked the United States” (Nye 2004, 77). A finely picked distinctiveness based on a positive image and success in the fields of economy, democracy and freedom, as well as a more security-oriented, conflict-driven, dramatically historicized, pragmatically and geopolitically molded national model, such as South Korea’s, would arguably be ideal for the purpose of serving as a replica for the political future of Armenia. Gordon G. Ghang states that “Kim family has never abandoned its overarching goal of ruling the entire peninsula. Therefore, the North continually attempts to subvert, coerce, and extort South Korea” (Ghang 2022, 50). Time and again, the complicated geopolitical situation of South Korea highlight its strategic similarity to the Republic of Armenia, which faces the dual challenge of confronting the ambitions of Azerbaijan bolstered by a growing Turkish aggrandizement in the region. However, unlike the Turkish denial of the Armenian

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

Genocide and the Azerbaijani aggression against Armenia, South Korea has managed to overcome the resistance with regard to the recognition of crimes against humanity carried out against the Korean people. To be precise, Japan was held accountable for crimes against humanity by Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery in Tokyo in December, 2000 (Kim and Motaghi 2017; Wiegand 2015), something that Armenia has not achieved against the backdrop of widespread international recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

This turning point highlights the importance of devising tools to enter into multifaceted cooperative schemes with regional as well as global powers. As the numerous challenges and fears coalesce into an evolving magnet of political issues on societal, national, regional and global levels, understanding the value of human-to-human, society-to-society dialogue develops into a structural ability to resolve nascent conflicts, cultural misunderstandings, perceived insecurities and the general climate of international relations. T. M. Nichols (2017) exposes the deep-running and far-reaching effects of relegating knowledge and expertise to the nonchalant presumptuousness of masses on the American society. As cultural degradation and educational decadence are becoming more and more salient issues across regions and societies, an authentic search for developmental, social and political models considers not only the geographic, human security, ideological dimensions but also the spatiotemporal convulsions of sociocultural dynamics peculiar to contemporary human societies (Yim 2002; Kalyvas and Katznelson 2008; Le 2019).

Moreover, given that borders and boundaries are deconstructed and then reconstructed politically, human experiences involve unprecedented tosses and turns due to ideologically-motivated policies and revisions, something to be considered seriously given the volatility of the nature of the political future of any country, let alone the Republic of Armenia. Human experiences have manifold political manifestations running the gamut from violent conflicts and migration policies to the political economy, democratization and sustainable development and the never-ending search for a genuine collective, as well as individual, Self (Levin and Han 2002).

How would an isolationism be reflected in the political future of the Republic of Armenia? We are convinced that a sociopolitical solitary confinement might, in combination with other fractious realities, spell the end of the Armenian civilization and statehood as it would deprive the country from the opportunity to contribute to, and benefit from, the free flow of human fellowship. Therefore, one of the central pillars of a viable Armenian state and civilization in the future is going to be its ability to capitalize on and augment human fellowship. As forced displacement, hunger, intellectual debasement and ideology-inspired international turbulence, violation of human rights plague nations and civilizations, it has become urgent to find alternatives ways of dealing with the concept of human fellowship. To do so, Armenia needs viable models of development to look up to deconstructing and reconstructing its political future.

### **South Korea as a unique authentic model for Armenia**

There are a number of reasons why South Korea stand out as a uniquely authentic model for the Republic of Armenia. First, the dramatic setting in which South Korea survived and developed through wars and division in the 20<sup>th</sup> century sets it apart as an example for the post-war Armenia that is struggling to overcome its recent, as well as previous, traumas and build a sustainable, reliable future, including for the people in Nagorno-Karabakh. Second, US-South-Korean alliance and the military presence of the United States on the Korean peninsula resembles the Russian military presence in Armenia. Hence, South Korea's ability and experience building overlapping bi- and multilateral partnerships and alliances is an indication whether being reliant on an ally in security terms constrains foreign policy dexterity or not (O 2022). Third, as a homogenous society wedged between East-West. North-South ambitions and power clusters, South Korea remains an actively engaged, sovereign and deft political actor, a status that the Republic of Armenia should constantly aspire to.

Even though an Iranian search for alternatives world orders, a Greek transition to democracy and Europeanization, an East European narrative of post-Cold War reconstruction and non-alignment (or realignment) are also viable models of the future for Armenia to look up to and synthesize with its own vision for the political future, in this article we argue that that best developmental and foreign policy model for the Republic of Armenia in current times of turbulent transition and post-war shock is that of South Korea. V. D. Cha and M. Dumond (2017) from CSIS have compiled multilayered essays on the distinction of South Korea and its politics of the future in a tridimensional spatiotemporal domain.

The geostrategic importance of South Korea for Armenia is well-grounded. First, due to its middle-power status in international relations, South Korea offers flexible, learnable roles that would provide a dominant role for the Republic of Armenia in cumbersome regional affairs. To be precise, “depending on a host of factors—including the regional and global balance of power, its geographic location, the ideological nature of its regime, and the political fears and ambitions of its leaders—a middle power can position itself within its region as either a: balancer, stabilizing the regional system when it is in disequilibrium; kingmaker, tipping the scales in favor of one of the regional major powers or coalitions; or tertius gaudens, playing one side off of the other to its own advantage” (Cha and Dumond 2017). Further, South Korea's network capabilities, economic attractiveness as well as the vitality of civil society make it an even more attractive example: “its corporate networks are global in scope; openness to inward foreign direct investment has grown in recent years, further expanding the economic networks of which it is part. South Korea, like other middle powers, also has a vibrant civil society sector” (Cha and Dumond 2017).

As Armenia has been seeking multiple bilateral and multilateral partnerships to enhance its international profile as well as negotiating capabilities vis-à-vis its regional rivals, the lesson the South-Korean experience teaches is also about effective multilateralism (Noland 2012). To be specific, “Korea sets a high standard in terms of provision of public goods for regional security, with activities ranging from participation in UN peacekeeping operations to counter-piracy and active diplomacy in

the Six Party Talks on North Korea's nuclear program. Indeed, as a peninsular power wedged between China and Japan, Korea's choices on regional architecture and community-building could determine the region breaks down along continental-versus-maritime divides or integrates continental China with the democratic maritime states like Japan and the Philippines. For these reasons, Korea's role in both regional and international institution-building merits further examination" (Noland 2012, 20).

However, caught between eastern and western political, economic, ideological and cultural currents, what the future holds for the Republic of Armenia is firmly mired down in its ability to interact with regional powers, reconstruct its national Self vis-à-vis other regional players and deconstruct any global futures that do not fit in with its own idea of the future. Pragmatically workable and conceptually rigorous, such an attitude can give rise to a new conception of not only political future but also political culture, in which the global and local dimensions of political phenomena are interwoven with local notions and preferences being of paramount importance (Ha 2023; Heo, Jeon, Kim and Kim 2008).

On the one hand, cultural and geographic proximity lays the foundation for the creation of close partnerships and mutually beneficial alliances. On the other hand, grasping regional dynamics involves a renewed understanding of others' cultural Self in order to try and inject an acceleration of partnership-building. To illustrate the mentioned tactic, A. Vatanka dissects the ideological facet of Iranian foreign policy with regard to democracy: "While Khamenei considers the issue of human rights to be a tool that mighty states use to pressure weaker ones, he nonetheless seems to recognize that the issue does carry weight. But he has yet to devise a convincing alternative to the accepted conventions. Back in 1987, before becoming supreme leader, he explained: "We do not believe that Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin and their like had the smallest consideration for human rights in the true sense of the word," adding that the Allied leaders were insincere "in forming the United Nations and drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (Vatanka 2015, 63).

This reference to Khamenei's words leads to a preliminary assessment of what might an attempt to understand Iranian ideological-political realities entail. First, the perceived hypocrisy of all major powers. Second, the acknowledgment of human rights as a universal phenomenon. Third, condemnation of the existing world order based on rational considerations of power-realpolitik. Fourth, an obvious search for an alternative, just and egalitarian world order (perhaps an Islamic one). Challenging some aspects of the existing world order might be desirable for Armenia.

However, due to sheer size, resources and ambition, the Republic of Armenia is no match for Iran, hence an alternative world order, let alone a theist one, is out of reach. Moreover, the Iranian nuclear program and the associated partial political isolation imposed by the West are a scenario Armenia is not capable of sustaining in neither political and ideological, nor economic and foreign policy terms due to its limited dexterity and scarce resources. The Armenian-Iranian ties hark back to millennia. The two neighbors share a lot in common and have witnessed each other's civilizational contributions to humankind. At this stage, the two appear to be perfect allies for the purpose of maintaining regional stability and a humanistic streak in the cruel politics of the Middle East. However, due to some aspects of vision and sheer capabilities, these



circumstances convert the nature of Armenian-Iranian partnership into a potential alliance rather than make either country a role model for the other.

Another possible model is the Greek one. Even though the geographic, civilizational proximity and historical, political ties suggest Greek transition to democracy and modernization through European integration is a coveted model for the Republic of Armenia, it is partly true due to two powerful reasons. First, during the Cold War Greece received substantial American aid (Bechmann 2012) to become firmly embedded in the Western bloc within a wider US effort to contain the spread of communism. This also led to NATO membership for Greece, something that Armenia cannot consider in the foreseeable future due to its own membership in the Russia-led CSTO. An unexpected turnaround could lead to unpredictable consequences given the country's security dependence on Russia. Another reason is that Greek democracy is still plagued by clientelism as well as populism (Sotiropoulos 2018), things that are arguably one of the defining features of post-Soviet Armenia. Admittedly, Greece is a valuable regional partner, a possible future ally and investor. However, the above-mentioned constraints do not seem to qualify it as a near-perfect model of development for Armenia to follow reconstructing its political future.

By contrast, South Korea appears to be an ideal model for democratic transition through turbulent times. The Korea Foundation Korea Fellow and Senior Research Fellow for Northeast Asia with the Asia-Pacific Programme at Chatham House, Dr. John Nilsson-Wright confirms that: "Rapid post-war economic development fostered a process of modernization, including mass education, social awareness and the development of a prosperous middle class, that arguably contributed to the emergence of South Korea as one of contemporary Asia's most successful democracies" (Nilsson-Wright 2022, 2). Moreover, even though it is true that, "Japan in 1965 provided South Korea with much-needed economic resources, in the form of some \$800 million worth of direct financial assistance to fuel what came to be known as the 'Miracle on the Han River'" (Dae-jung), it was not delivered in a Cold War mentality and did not lead to any foreign or security policy choices on the part of South Korea. This assistance is what marks the difference between the type of US assistance Greece received in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the Japanese assistance delivered to South Korea. This is why we place the assistance Armenia has received from its donor countries<sup>7</sup> as well as from its relatively huge, prosperous and pro-Armenia diaspora (Minoian and Freinkman 2005) since it gained independence in 1991 within the cooperative scheme that South Korea has had with its foreign partners rather than within a broader East-West Cold War.

Furthermore, Israel—a country with a dramatic history and an on-going conflict coupled with successful economic development and democratization—might seem a perfect model for Armenia. On the surface, both peoples suffered from genocide, gained independence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and have a frozen conflict. Therefore, the Israeli success story should be exemplary for Armenia. What this argument misses are the widening gap between the foreign and security policies between the two countries. While Armenia has been trying to address the grievances of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, fight for their right of self-determination, Israel has been described through

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<sup>7</sup> Source: Global Economy. 2021. Foreign aid and official developmental assistance received. Accessed July 16, 2023. [https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Armenia/foreign\\_aid/](https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Armenia/foreign_aid/).

the lens of oppressiveness against the Palestinian people<sup>8</sup>, including their right of self-determination. Meanwhile Armenia, much like South Korea coveting an orderly reunification, has never seen either the recreation of Armenia by the American President Woodrow Wilson's justice-based and rights-oriented Sevres Agreement (Therault 2020) or the decolonization of Nagorno-Karabakh after the Soviet rule. Moreover, by becoming a military ally (Murinson 2014) of an unfree by the standards of Freedom House country<sup>9</sup>, Azerbaijan, Israel has intensified the bloodletting in the region and played a divisive role, something that further alienates Armenia.

These dramatic episodes knit Armenia and South Korea together in terms of their historical grievances, the injustice and losses they have confronted. Eun A. Jo refers recounts a profoundly dramatic historical injustice the Korean people encountered. To be specific, "Dozens of "comfort women" statues, commemorating victims of Japanese sexual slavery during World War II, have been erected in South Korea in the last decade. Since the 1990s, survivors of forced labor have also steadily challenged Japanese companies in court. Tensions finally came to a boiling point in October 2018, when, in a controversial verdict, South Korea's top court ordered Japan's Mitsubishi steel company to compensate the claimants" (Jo 2022, 467). Not only is this similar to the humiliation the Armenian people went through because of the Genocide in 1915 and lost control over Nagorno-Karabakh in 2020 but also, against the backdrop of Turkish and Azeri policy of denial, highlights the importance of the Korean struggle for recognition and compensation. In either case, whether Koreans or Armenians succeed in redressing their historical grievances, the success would set a precedent for the other because of similar historical-political circumstances (trauma-struggle for recognition-denial).

As well as this, as Armenia makes an attempt to connect more extensively to its Diaspora communities, the South Korean experience illustrates the significance of having a coherent strategy to enhance soft power and reach foreign policy objectives. Kwang-jin Choi mentions, among other things, the goal "to proliferate current knowledge and understanding of Korea by rectifying factual errors in foreign textbooks and promoting Korean studies and Korean-language courses overseas" (Choi 2019, 19). The historical wounds of the Armenian people with regard to a long-lost homeland and a desperate struggle for self-determination in Nagorno-Karabakh would resonate well with the Korean public as historically the Korean press, "emphasized Korea's ancient consciousness of national unity by clearly declaring that at the heart of such nationalism and rhetoric was a strong identification of Dokdo and Ulleungdo as Korea's historic territories" (Jo, 111). The astonishing congruence of historical resentment among the Armenians and Koreans highlights the importance of drama and trauma in choosing a model for development. This suggests that the Armenian public

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<sup>8</sup>Source: Amnesty International. 2022. "Israel's apartheid against Palestinians: Cruel system of domination and crime against humanity." February 1, 2022. Accessed July 16, 2023. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde15/5141/2022/en/>; The Occupied Palestinian Territory: An Employment Diagnostic Study / International Labour Organization, Regional Office for Arab States. Beirut: ILO, 2018. [https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ILOSTUDY\\_040418.pdf](https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/ILOSTUDY_040418.pdf).

<sup>9</sup>Source: Freedom House. 2023. "Freedom in the world: Azerbaijan." Accessed July 25, 2023. <https://freedomhouse.org/country/azerbaijan/freedom-world/2023>.

would in all probability welcome the idea of living up to a success story that went through the same historical ordeal and has a similar, deep-seated anxiety over past losses.

Two other competitors for Armenia would be Chile—a story of successful democratization and economic growth—and Eastern Europe—the small states of the former Socialist bloc, such as Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Lithuania, Hungary, Slovakia or the Czech Republic. Both, however, have shortcomings, in the context of the political future of Armenia, compared with the South Korean model. First, Chile is an example of incomplete democratization (Garreton 1999). Although it is striking that both Chile and Armenia began their post-totalitarian democratization at roughly the same time (early 90's), an incomplete democratization is what Armenia itself has achieved, hence Chile becomes an incompetent model to follow at least in terms of successful democratization. Furthermore, even though the economic growth in Chile is enviable, the structural composition of the country's economy, particularly its dependence on mining (Ffrench-Davis 2016; OECD/UN 2018), raises questions about its suitability as a model of development for Armenia since the latter has long been struck between the need to develop mining and the legitimate concerns of its increasingly eco-conscious public.

Last but not least, even though the East European model might be coveted in Armenia, it might not be the best model of development for the country. While it is true that East European countries have made a significant post-Cold War economic breakthrough and a successful transition to democracy, replicating their model would be unrealistic for the Republic of Armenia<sup>10</sup>. First, Eastern Europeans had ideological motives striving for forming part of the liberal world. Meanwhile, the Armenians led a national independence struggle, the Eastern Europeans, who lived in independent countries, strove to overcome the Iron Curtain and become full-fledged members of the free world. The Romanian-American political scientist Vladimir Tismaneanu aptly describes the East European experience: “Through the 1960s, 70s and 80s, the intellectuals in Eastern Europe gradually abandoned Marxism and eventually arrived at diverse but unified theories of human rights. Once this happened, within a few years the populations of the region lost their faith in Marxism and then their fear of the regimes. Coming onto the streets as individuals – in the tens, hundreds, thousands and by 1989 the millions – they presented a challenge to the system that it could not really face” (Tismaneanu 2019, 113). In line with this argumentation, the eminent Armenian political scientist M. Margaryan explains that the rationale behind East European Velvet Revolutions was the self-identification of East Europeans with Europe (Margaryan 2023). As these nations were aspiring to reunite with the rest of the continent to form a civilizational-political whole, the Armenians coveted an independent nation and the implementation of the right of self-determination of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. Further, most countries of Eastern Europe became NATO members. This too limits the plausibility of replicating the East European model in Armenia as a NATO membership is controversial in the case of Armenia as it

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<sup>10</sup> Republic of Armenia in the Eurasian Economic Union. First Results. 2018. Eurasian Economic Commission and Interstate Bank. Accessed July 29, 2023. [https://eec.eaeunion.org/upload/files/paos/library/Armenia\\_eng.pdf](https://eec.eaeunion.org/upload/files/paos/library/Armenia_eng.pdf).

still does not have diplomatic relations with two of its neighbors, namely Azerbaijan and Turkey—a NATO member and a staunch supporter of Azerbaijan, whose large-scale aggression against Armenia since May, 2021 has been condemned by the European Parliament (Sanders and Salameh 2020; European Parliament 2021). Thus, what Armenia needs as a model is a country with a rather flexible foreign and security policy in bi- and multi-lateral formats. The presence of US troops on Korean soil and the dependence of South Korea on continued US security assistance closely resemble the Russian military presence in Armenia and the dependence (or vulnerability for that matter) of the latter vis-à-vis the Russian Federation.

### **Conclusion and discussion**

This paper is possibly the first attempt to eradicate stereotypical boundaries that might crop up in choosing successful models of development for a certain nation, in this case Armenia. While the majority of countries in the region have closer historical and cultural ties with Armenia due to geography, common civilizational roots or historical legacies, the possibility to replicate other countries' models of development should be based on strategic rather than narrowly-defined, culture-oriented, geographically determined criteria, especially in the context of a more globalized world with porous borders and accelerated communication. It is tempting to choose a model of development on an isolated small set of criteria that seem to be essential, such as geographic proximity and historical ties (Iran, Greece), a successful combination of post-totalitarian democratization and economic growth (Chile), dramatic history (Israel) or a coveted developmental and foreign policy trajectory, something that is ideationally preferred rather than geopolitically feasible (Eastern Europe). However, a closer look reveals their inherent inconsistencies and controversies that warrant a wider search for solutions across countries and systems.

Possibly, our research has laid the groundwork for further comparative studies between Armenia and South Korea in order to extract workable, area-specific formulae (Kim 2007). Moreover, differentiating between an ideal role model and other successful models of development also suggests being able to concentrate on more tangible, area-specific cooperation in bilateral formats. In other words, knowing what to learn and from whom might generate more fragmented, yet more productive cooperation and cross-cultural exchange. South Korea's diplomatic capability to play with but not against any great power engaged in the international affairs of the Asia-Pacific is of particular interest to Armenia, a country that also hosts a foreign military base and is tasked with achieving a balanced foreign policy. However, recently the presence of US troops on Korean soil has paved the way for some regional speculations (Smith 2022).

With human fellowship being one of our chief objectives, South Korea, too, offers a multi-layered and astonishingly identical to Armenia base of experiences. From Japanese colonial rule (Kim 2009) and the US-South Korea Mutual Defense Treaty of 1953 (Congressional Research Service 2023a, 2023b) to the “economic growth and urbanization, improvement of education levels, and development of the media resulting

from economic growth, citizens' political expectations and desire for political participation" (Academy of Korean Studies 2017, 44). Convinced in the righteousness of this approach, we have discussed the geopolitical context of the South Korean strategic—mainly developmental and foreign policy—experience against the backdrop of the political future of the Republic of Armenia. First, "the Republic of Korea overcame the calamities of colonization and war to enter the ranks of developed countries in a remarkably short period of time" (Academy of Korean Studies 2017, 40). This is a promising start for a post-war Armenia still in post-soviet transition to full-fledged political independence and democratization. Second, "transitions from despotic regimes to democratic societies, and from conflict to peace, necessitate reworking collective memory: adopting post-heroic narratives that recognize past abuses and introducing necessary legal-political measures, such as trials or truth commissions, that embed the mnemonic shifts in emergent political institutions" (Jo 2022, 770).

The above-mentioned example obviously comes to bolster Armenia's own reconciliation with its own history-memory of the Armenian Genocide, loss of independence and territory under Soviet rule and the painful, on-going struggle to ensure the realization of the right of self-determination for the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. Even though the cultural and geographic latitudes place the two countries within an unbelievably unattractive distance from each other, the political profiles of their strategic similarities make them strange bedfellows from a scholarly perspective. Our chief argument is that the South Korean model is preferable for Armenia vis-à-vis Greek, Israeli, Iranian, East European and Chilean based on the strategic criteria exposed in the article.

### **Supplementary material**

The supplementary material for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.46991/JOPS/2023.2.5.116>

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### **Conflict of interests**

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

### **Ethical standards**

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

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### Abstract

The book comparatively analyzes the features of liberal hegemony, when the liberal international order strengthened after the collapse of the Soviet Union, when the United States and Western European countries took the position of hegemony in world politics. While the economic dimensions of the liberal world order may be acceptable to all, its political component, as an instrument of the democratic world, is trying to serve the purpose of consolidating the world. It is important that the discourse about the liberal world order takes place during times of conflict, crisis and war, influencing the transformation of the modern world order.

The political elites of the liberal world order in the era of liberal hegemony must keep in mind that for the diverse authoritarian and democratic blocs of countries, it is necessary to protect the resilience of the international order and law. In accordance with the author's concept of political liberalism, it is interpreted broadly and as a unity of the spiritual, social and political forms of its being. Therefore, its essence unfolds through a consistent analysis of the ideological, social and political space, which makes it possible to form an adequate idea of the role of liberal ideology and liberal international politics in the social and political process.

**Keywords:** John J. Mearsheimer, international realities, great delusion, impossible dream, liberal edifice, political liberalism, liberal dreams, human nature, peace, restraint.

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The book examines the characteristic features of liberalism and provides a strategic forecast about the research task of liberalism. In this context, by defining scenarios for the relationship between liberalism and non-liberalism or anti-liberalism, as well as scenarios for the relationship of Western civilization with other civilizations, it is possible to construct three stages of liberalism corresponding to different periods: the present, the period up to 2030 and the period after 2030. In recent years, in this destructive environment of conflict and war, there has been a sharp increase in the amount of scientific work and research on liberalism regarding the future format of the international system. These works can be roughly divided into two groups: liberal pessimists and liberal optimists.

After the collapse of the USSR and the transition from bipolarity to a unipolar system of international relations, the world never came close to the expected liberal dream, and the unipolar system of global governance itself proved unable to effectively counter the global challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Against the background of the 44-day Second Karabakh War in 2020, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict since 2014 and the war since the beginning of 2022, the rapid growth of China, the rise of India and the emergence of new players, the need to review the international imbalance of power that has existed in recent years caused by liberal hegemony.

Against the backdrop of a crisis in international relations, a cycle of global disagreements in politics has begun. The reserve of agreement in relations between Russia and the United States has approached exhaustion. The United States and Western European countries are not ideal actors in world politics. But the diplomacy of the liberal hegemony was flexible in everything related to mutual understanding with China, India, Iran, and even Russia. In the conditions of modern wars, interest in the theme of the liberal international order has increased. The main driving force behind this general trend seems to be the inevitable rise of China and India and the military activity of Russia and Iran.

The rise of China's influence represents a long-term foreign policy towards the liberal international order. According to this argument, since the Chinese factor becomes one of the dominant on the world stage, then the liberal order must be resilient to competitive goals.

According to the author, liberal hegemony is an ambitious strategy in which a liberal hegemon seeks to turn as many countries as possible into liberal democracies like itself, as well as to promote an open international economy and build international institutions (Mearsheimer 2018, vii-xiv, 1-13). In this context, the liberal state seeks to spread its values everywhere, but there are many strong states that follow their illiberal strategy through the policy of balance of power (Mearsheimer 2018, 1-13). Western foreign policy elites consider liberal hegemony to be a smart policy that states should axiomatically pursue. This gives them the power to actively spread liberal democracy around the world.

The debate about liberal hegemony has become particularly heated amid the election of Joe Biden as President of the United States, Brexit, mass migration to Europe from the Middle East, and the rise of right-wing populism and nationalism in parts of Western Europe.

The book reveals the content of such a new understanding of the essence of the liberal international order and liberal hegemony, as well as their significance for the world community. After all, it is no coincidence that a new rise of interest in the topic of the liberal international order is again visible, but it has re-emerged in the context of Russia's special military operation in Ukraine, launched on February 24, 2022. Once again, the geopolitical discourse on the liberal order has pitted democracies against autocracies, since the liberal order is associated with Western values and democratic transformations, and the threat to them comes from authoritarian countries. In this context, the book touches on the theme of human nature, which is key to liberalism. Therefore, the author of the book examines the key stages of liberalism through the characteristic features of human nature (Mearsheimer 2018, 14-44).

Modern competing doctrines of international relations stem mainly from the current unsettled ideological space of human rights and liberal individualism. The deep layers of consciousness that predetermine the stereotypes of social behavior turned out to be more inert than it could be expected. The world community is not faced with a shortage of social doctrines, but rather with their abundance in the absence of generally accepted criteria for the rational choice of an ideological position. At the same time, ideological systems function as mythological ones and are selected according to the political situation or emotional state. Finally, there is no culture of ideological communication in the global world. Various ideological complexes are immune to each other and, if they enter into a dialogue, then not in the language of arguments, but in the language of accusations according to all the rules of an ideological war. Today, perhaps, we need not so much a new ideology as a new understanding of the ideological process, which would establish a code of civilized ideological behavior. In this, and not in the reconciliation of mutually exclusive ideologies, an ideological consensus is achievable. The formation of a civilized ideological environment as a prerequisite for a global consensus is in the interests of all actors, regardless of their ideological expectations.

The book notes two variants of political liberalism: *modus vivendi* liberalism and progressive liberalism (Mearsheimer 2018, 45-81). As a research task, the author defined an attempt to evaluate political liberalism as well from the point of view of the content of individual rights and the role of the state. According to the author, they have a general view of human nature, emphasizing individualism and the limitations of our critical abilities. In this sense, inalienable rights, tolerance and the need for the state to maintain public order are important to them. However, political liberalism has two significant flaws regarding the prominence of individualism and inalienable rights (Mearsheimer 2018, 82-119). It is around the contemporary liberal tendencies of recent years that the ideological controversy is mainly concentrated, which is far from accidental. The condition from which the reforms started was such that any change, if it was not clearly reactionary, looked like a liberal one. At the same time, liberalization turned out to be an extremely contradictory process, which caused both positive and negative effects, which stimulated professional and public interest in the problem of Western liberalism and, accordingly, heated controversy. Therefore, it is necessary to formulate and clarify a number of questions that are essential for understanding the phenomenon under study: what is the essence of the liberal paradigm and to what extent the scientific understanding of this phenomenon is distorted by interpretations,

and also what is the relationship between Western and non-Western trends of liberal thought. This, in my opinion, minimally sufficient, although not exhaustive list of issues, ultimately comes down to the problem of systemic and, therefore, constructive understanding of the phenomenon of global and national liberalism in a broad social and historical context.

The author takes into account the fact that contemporary liberalism is largely synonymous with progressive liberalism, although *modus vivendi* liberalism still affects the contours of political life (Mearsheimer 2018, 82-119). Reflecting on the results of the past decade, we have to state that the fruits of the reforms did not justify progressive expectations and significantly devalued the values of democracy and the free market in public opinion. At the same time, the accumulated, albeit largely negative, experience actualizes the problem of scientific understanding of the ways and means of moving towards more humane, stable and effective forms of social organization. If we are talking about a spiritual crisis, then it is more likely not about the crisis of the liberal concept of development, but about the crisis of its simplified interpretations.

The history of Western civilization testifies that the values of liberalism, balanced by conservatism and democracy, have been largely realized. However, the civilizational and progressive paradigm of development does not find its convincing confirmation in the theory and practice of liberalism. The liberal choice of the West is the choice of the West, made in a socially and historically determined situation of place and time. The result of this choice confirms only the circumstance that liberal principles and values are universal, but not absolute. They are universal as a normative system and a moral imperative. They are relative because the forms and means of their implementation are given historically and situationally, and the search for the optimal balance between freedom and justice, individual and collective, political and social is a process whose results are not predetermined. Therefore, for transitional societies, the liberal experience of the West is valuable not as a utilitarian recipe guide, but rather as a guideline and methodology for resolving urgent contradictions.

Moving from the analysis of domestic political liberalism to foreign policy liberalism, the author asks the following question: what happens when a powerful state adopts a liberal foreign policy? (Mearsheimer 2018, 120). This question is given a controversial answer, as liberal hegemony and highly interventionist foreign policy, that is, even war and social engineering, appear in countries around the world. All this is due to the fact that liberal hegemony spreads liberal democracy in every possible way and overthrows authoritarian regimes, with the ultimate goal of creating a world of liberal democracy (Mearsheimer 2018, 120). But unfortunately, liberal hegemony begins with wars in which the liberal state fights to protect human rights and spread liberal democracy around the world (Mearsheimer 2018, 152-154). To cite Mearsheimer: *'This militarism arises from five factors. First, democratizing the globe is a vast mission that provides abundant opportunities to fight. Second, liberal policymakers believe they have the right, the responsibility, and the knowhow to use military force to achieve their goals. Third, they often approach their task with missionary zeal. Fourth, pursuing liberal hegemony undercuts diplomacy, making it harder to settle disputes with other countries peacefully. Fifth, that ambitious strategy*

*also undermines the notion of sovereignty, a core norm of international politics that is intended to limit interstate war'* (Mearsheimer 2018, 152).

One of the conditions and a prerequisite for such a turn is the transformation of liberalism in the environment of ideological interaction. The analysis shows that there are two forms of ideological coexistence: differentiation and convergence, each of which is due to a certain political trend. The former is characterized by the dominance of one of the ideologies, while the latter is characterized by the formation of ideological hybrids.

The book notes that liberal hegemony is built around the following three missions: 'increasing the number of liberal democracies in the world, facilitating an open economic order, and building international institutions' (Mearsheimer 2018, 188).

Real public policy is based solely on compromises and ideological hybrids. The most successful for the West was a hybrid of liberalism and renewed conservatism, supplemented by real socialist and democratic elements. In the public policy of Western countries, liberalism and conservatism have been rooted in ideology from time immemorial. Democratic and liberal views remained on the sidelines and could not become an obstacle to socialism. However, over time, socialism turned into an official ideological shell, under which a special ideological hybrid of socialism and conservatism arose.

The first wave of rejection of the conservative and socialist hybrid took place under the sign of democracy. Then liberal economists seized the initiative. But not for long. The conservative trend is already clearly marked, foreshadowing stabilization anti-reforms. Liberals and democrats will go into opposition, and the main ideological struggle will be waged between socialist, patriotic and other forms of conservatism itself. This forecast receives its social and political justification. From the perspective of historical analysis, the true nature and specificity of modern society and the state, the essence of power and property relations are revealed, the logic of the behavior of the ruling elite becomes more understandable (Mearsheimer 2018, 217-234). Upon closer examination, it turns out that the political history of the world is rather rigidly determined by the laws of cyclical development and the paradigm properties of the Eurasian civilization, which undoubtedly include authoritarianism, imperialism, unitarism, isolationism, state capitalism, and, undoubtedly, political clientelism and paternalism.

### **Supplementary material**

The supplementary material for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.46991/JOPS/2023.2.5.139>

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**Conflict of interests**

The authors declare no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

**Ethical standards**


The authors affirm this research did not involve human subjects.

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POLITICAL POPULISM: HANDBOOK OF CONCEPTS, QUESTIONS AND STRATEGIES OF RESEARCH, EDITED BY REINHARD HEINISCH, CHRISTINA HOLTZ-BACHA, AND OSCAR MAZZOLENI. BADEN-BADEN: NOMOS VERLAGSGESELLSCHAFT, 2021, 595 PP.

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**Abstract**

This handbook is divided into three parts, the first of which includes theories, approaches, conceptualizations and dimensions of political populism. The second part analyzes populist manifestations in Europe and America, while the third part focuses on new phenomena and new research programs of political populism. In this context, the interdisciplinary nature of research is considered, taking into account the peculiarities of political populism in Europe and America. This handbook offers a comprehensive theoretical and empirical introduction to the manifestations, causes, and consequences of political populism and the political dimensions of various populist phenomena, especially in the democracies of Europe and the Americas. The main focus of this handbook is on explaining the phenomenon as a result of the crisis of legitimation of the representative system, as well as contradictions and limitations in the current political science debate. The phenomenon of political populism is considered primarily from the standpoint of political science and communication studies. This handbook also offers a comprehensive analysis of the impact of political populism on various policy areas such as the environment, health or economic policy.

**Keywords:** radical right, social movements, populist parties, nationalism, new populism, Trumpism, U.S. populism, Latin American populism, islamophobia, neo-populist media, rightwing ideology, Euroscepticism, digital populism.

This handbook is devoted to the study of political populism, thereby separating the field of political populism from other manifestations of populism. The handbook analyzes various concepts, issues, and empirical cases of political populism, as well as populism's relationship to both politicians and political institutions, as well as their

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political discourse and style (Heinisch, Holtz-Bacha and Mazzoleni 2021, 19-37; Skenderovic 2021, 41-58). After the numerous electoral successes of right-wing populist parties, we see that the influence of right-wing populism on European politics cannot be underestimated. This is especially evident in the context of the migrant crisis, which continues to irritate right-wing populist voters, the wave of terrorist attacks in Western Europe, the problems of the functioning of the EU political system, also exploited by populists, and the Brexit referendum.

This handbook addresses the problem of political populism, which has been a political problem for Western democracies and non-Western autocracies since World War II. The purpose of the handbook is a comparative analysis of political populism and the electoral successes of populist parties and actors. The salient features of Brexit, the presidency of Donald Trump or campaigns against measures to contain the pandemic are highlighted and described. Therefore, there is an urgent need to improve the theoretical and empirical base for research on political populism and fill in the existing gaps in the study of this phenomenon, which is so important for understanding the functioning of modern European polities (Heinisch, Holtz-Bacha and Mazzoleni 2021, 19-37).

An analysis of the contradictory processes of democratization taking place in modern Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America and the United States leads to the conclusion that it is necessary to include effective mechanisms for controlling the use of democratic institutions for selfish purposes in the legal system (Vergari 2021; Ruth and Hawkins 2021). In everyday reality, the spread of the values of freedom and democracy often gives rise to the abuse of information channels for influencing public opinion, leads to political and legal demagogy, which has replaced effective mechanisms for ensuring the rule of law, law and order and legal regulation in general. The emergence of democratic institutions and mechanisms designed to implement the people's will makes it possible for individual participants in the political process, using modern technologies for manipulating consciousness, to realize their selfish interests without formally violating the law (Lanzone 2021; Loch 2021). As a result, the goals of economic growth, improvement of the welfare of citizens, and the fight against corruption, proclaimed at the beginning of the reforms, did not bring any positive changes to life. Appealing to the mistakes of the modernization reforms, the leaders of the opposition movements in Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America, under the slogans of the struggle for the rights of the people, transformed political systems (Mastropaolo 2021; Pauwels 2021; Roncarolo 2021; Ruzza 2021).

Recently, along with the persistence of a number of crisis phenomena in Central and Eastern Europe, there has been a positive nature of transformations, largely due to the implementation of the national interests of sustainable development (Akkerman 2021). The accumulated problems in healthcare, education, agriculture and housing cannot be solved quickly. However, a significant leap, designed to improve the quality of life of the citizens of Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, can be made if the steps being developed by the legislative and executive authorities do not carry the features of populism, despite the fact that a certain negative experience of confronting this phenomenon is available. Legal demagogy and populism hinder the fulfillment of the tasks of realizing the national interests of sustainable development.

The study of these phenomena will make it possible to determine ways to optimize the legal policy of the state and the current legislation in order to increase the effectiveness of legal regulation, as well as to consolidate the efforts of the state and society in achieving the goals of priority national projects, building a strong state. In this sense, the purpose of the handbook is to provide a theoretical and legal analysis of populist political activity that affects the dynamics of law and the legal consciousness of society in the United States, Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, as well as to develop proposals for preventing and eliminating the negative consequences of this phenomenon (Mastropaolo 2021, 59-72, Heinisch and Mazzoleni 2021, 105-122; Pauwels 2021, 123-136.).

Based on the goal, the following tasks were solved in the handbook: 1) the definition of the concept and signs of political populism were formulated, proposing a methodology for its study; 2) the manifestations of populism in the political and legal life of society are considered; 3) analyze the correlation of political and legal populism, as well as political and legal demagoguery; 4) the forms of manifestation of constitutional populism are established, revealing the shortcomings of the current constitutional model that contribute to legal populism; 5) researched legal populism in the modern political process; 6) analyze the forms of expression of political populism in the law-making and law enforcement process, developing recommendations to eliminate the negative consequences of its manifestation; 7) the main directions of modern legal policy in the field of combating political populism are determined, proposing a set of measures aimed at rationalizing the current legislation.

In the handbook, in a comparative analysis of the crisis in political and legal development, modern concepts of the social and cultural identity of Latin American and Western European civilizations, their history, identity, state and legal continuity were used. Studies of the legal policy of these states and modern political processes were carried out using the methods of political science, conflictology, sociology, communication, and psychology (Roncarolo 2021; Ruzza 2021).

Political populism is a kind of manipulation of public consciousness with the help of political tactics and strategy, as well as a set of special psychological techniques commonly used in public discourse, associated with an appeal to the ordinary sense of justice of the masses, in an attempt to adapt to the right of the majority of the population, using the following features: ordinary legal consciousness, as a simplification of ideas about the legal regulation of social relations, the immediacy of the perception of legal phenomena, moral and legal maximalism and a tendency to simple and unambiguous political decisions (Aschauer 2021).

Political populism should also be understood as the proclamation and consolidation by legal acts of such political provisions that in reality do not ensure the achievement of socially and politically useful results, but, on the contrary, contribute to the satisfaction of the interests of individual citizens or their collective formations.

Political populism is closely related to legal demagoguery, including intentional, deceitful, outwardly effective influence on legal consciousness, hidden under the guise of benefiting the people and the state, an individual or all kinds of associations of citizens and carried out through various forms of false one-sided or grossly distorted representation of political reality to satisfy one's own or collective vested interests.

Political populism accompanies liberal and democratic regimes, where the masses act as voters as participants in the political process. Political populism manifests itself especially clearly in the course of the election campaign, legislative lobbying, and state management of information resources of civil society. In the political life of society throughout human history, many of the public politicians were forced to use certain populist methods, since their complete disregard in most cases leads to defeat in the elections.

Political populism reaches its maximum potential in the conditions of a low level of political and legal culture of society, the absence of a legal mechanism for public influence on the legislature, and the integration of business structures with the media.

Political populism intensifies during a period of radical transformation of legislation in connection with a change in the social and economic situation in the state, as well as in case of instability, when most people experience worsening living conditions and lose confidence in the future.

The weak public legal awareness of the prerequisites for the effective functioning of the international and European legal institutions of liberal democracy imposed by the authorities contributes to the development of political populism. Legal passivity, collectivism and gullibility of the citizens of these countries help populists achieve their political goals and manipulate public opinion.

During discussions and debates about the rise of right-wing populist parties, the phenomenon has not only been characterized as born out of historical fascism or as a reaction to contemporary concerns about culture, insecurity and social precariousness generated by global neoliberal agendas. This rise is also seen as a systemic correction of politics that has become very far removed from the people, or as an illiberal democratic response to undemocratic liberalism. Given these conflicting interpretations, it is not surprising that anti-establishment populism is sometimes described as having both hostile and friendly relations with democracy. Exclusivist opinions and ideas about what constitutes a demos are juxtaposed with opinions and ideas that emphasize the salvific potential of democracy, on the basis of which the 'people' should decide about their future by direct expression of their sovereign will. The association of right-wing parties with populism, which has its own distinct left-wing historical lines, is another complicating factor. Some scholars argue that political populism is a so-called 'subtle ideology' (Dan and Arendt 2021) and it joins the 'mainstream ideology', which can be either on the left wing or on the right. Such a flexible definition, which implies an organized, albeit fleeting and fleeting response to various political conditions, runs the risk of erasing the concept of historical scope, as well as the origin, succession and relationship of concepts.

Since left-wing and right-wing forms of political populism are often diametrically opposed, their merging or unification does not include crucial ideological differences. The criticism by radical left parties of social inequality and the identification of liberalism with democracy is clearly based on anti-elite discourses. But the extreme right's criticism of the elites on behalf of the people and in the name of the people can partly be seen as a reaction to the anti-democratic technocracy, it is rather an anti-politics based on ethno-nationalism and socio-cultural conservatism. For this reason,

some scholars are sometimes reluctant to use the label of political populism on the grounds that it merges the left's critical appraisals of neoliberalism with the racist traditions of the right. In this sense, the moralistic condemnation of political populism in all its manifestations comes down to the attempts of the representatives of the elite to reduce the expression of the democratic will of the people. At the same time, the absence of a clear definition of political populism, which would not only take into account the ambivalent history of populism as a political concept, but also how it has been used and continues to be used in practice, constantly reminds of itself.

In this handbook, the authors explore American and European political populism as an ideology and the basis for the formation of parties, but from the point of view of going beyond the borders of one state and compare its various manifestations. Historically, right-wing political populism must be seen as part of a tradition that goes back to two world wars and the Cold War period. It has its roots in various political environments, and it can be part of the heritage of neo-radicalism, neo-liberalism, and anti-tax increases, that is, it exists in several forms. And there are undoubtedly functional links between modern right-wing parties and right-wing parties that existed between the two world wars. Despite their different positions in relation to liberal democracy, nevertheless, they have common interests and programs of action in relation to the representatives of the elite, on the ethno-national issue, traditional social and cultural issues. More important, however, is their behavior within political systems. While political populists do not use violence, they are willing to enter into alliances with conservative elites in order to achieve their goals in terms of gaining power and seats in government.

The party platforms of Latin American and European right-wing parties, with the exception of those clearly associated with radical roots or ideology, have common features that not only emphasize their transnational character, but also show their belonging to the same group of parties (Casullo and Freidenberg 2021a, 2021b). This is reflected in particular in their ideological emphasis on the ethnic issue, where they demand the exclusion of certain elements, welfare chauvinism and cultural conservatism. Finally, the struggle for votes with right-wing populists, conservative parties from Northern and Western Europe, with a small but important exception in Germany, France and Sweden in particular, has accelerated the acceptance of right-wing parties into the political mainstream, and this has become part of the governance strategy (Havlík and Mareš 2021). However, it must be emphasized that this cooperation does not follow a single pattern. Some conservative parties, especially in the Nordic countries, are not willing to go as far as others in neutralizing populist right-wing parties or through semi-authoritarian rule, as in the case of Hungary and Poland, as in Austria, on issues such as immigration and Islam (Betz 2021). While populist theorists define the concept in a variety of ways, they usually describe it in terms of the antagonistic relationship between the people and the elites. Like other ideologies such as liberalism, nationalism, or socialism, populism can produce positive or negative results: as a potential adjustment or a threat to democracy, depending on the political context. As a democratizing force, liberalism advocates the principle of popular sovereignty in order to empower groups that feel that the political establishment does not represent their interests. On the other hand, it can also lead to authoritarian change

and conflict with liberal democracy over the rejection of pluralism, including minority rights (Heinisch and Mazzoleni 2021; Heinisch and Saxonberg 2021). Thus, the definition of political populism is too broad and flexible, since the opposition to populism is not only elitism, but also pluralism, which includes diverse, overlapping social groups with different ideas and interests (Diehl 2021). The focus here is primarily on right-wing populism, which dismisses its salvific possibilities and sees it as fundamentally incompatible with democracy. Right-wing populists want to identify with the people in an attempt to represent them in an exclusive way. They equate liberal democracy with democracy and emphasize that liberals and decocrats can never improve a political system that has become elite-led. Thus, the populist distinction between 'pure people' and 'corrupt elite' involves a specific moralistic political strategy.

In the context of political populism, it is 'pure people' that appears as an imaginary construct created for anti-democratic purposes. While the practices of liberal democracy leave much to be desired in a number of countries, it must be defended against populist false promises of democratic renewal. Taking such a moralizing and defensive position, a number of authors argue what the theorists criticizing democracy claim, since they take into account that in an age of increasing social inequality and technocracy, most of the political elite are to blame for the separation of liberalism from democracy and usually create the conditions for the current rise populist right-wing parties (Dingler, Lefkofridi and Marent 2021). Indeed, the failure of political elites before and after the 2008 financial crisis may, at least in part, explain the decline in confidence in liberal democratic institutions. However, a number of scholars warn of the destructive tendency of populism (whether right or left) to make democracy more majoritarian or less liberal. In their opinion, populism distorts democratic institutions in a destructive way, because it makes it difficult to manage the polemic between the minority and the majority who express their opinions. They argue that a strategy involving hegemonic politics would run the risk of becoming a means to an end for reactionary autocracy using populism to win. If successful, this could lead to a move away from representative and constitutional democracy (Huber and Schimpf 2021; Ivaldi 2021). Instead, one can emphasize the key role of intermediary institutions in liberal democracies, which are able to convey political demands from the party base to the elite without the direct association offered by populist demagogues. All of these views emphasize that populists want to circumvent representative institutional arrangements, including parliamentary procedures, reduce the distance between the people and their representatives, such as through plebiscites, and weaken the separation of powers. However, the dominant trend in academia is to define populism solely in terms of discourse, ideology, or worldview, but this is erroneous because it does not pay enough attention to the practice of political populism (Gherghina, Miscoiu and Soare 2021).

The emphasis on populism's radical anti-elite stance not only tends to obscure its collaboration with conservative elites, but also its functional roles within liberal and democratic systems. Regardless of the definition of right-wing parties, they have benefited in Europe from the de-regulation of liberal and democratic systems, or from breaking the link between self-determination of the individual and joining a political

party. After the severe decline of the social democratic and some centre-right parties that allowed for great diversity (a trend accompanied by the weakening of liberal parties), far-right parties in many countries have become the second or third largest political force. And if the weakening of the moderate left parties has opened up space for radical left and some 'green' parties, the overall result of this political restructuring has been the strengthening of right-wing parties. Several explanations for the shrinking and weakening of leftist parties have been proposed, such as the adoption of a globalist neoliberal agenda in the decade leading up to the 2008 financial crisis, typified by the 'Third Way' ideology (Bastow, Martin and Pels 2002), and the growing disconnect from the trade union movement. This has allowed populist right-wing parties to forge trails in territories where the left has traditionally voted, as well as win over labor force voters, especially after shifting the emphasis, as has been done on many occasions, from neo-liberal policies to the welfare state and the portrayal of foreign workers as competitors in the labor market. In addition, right-wing populists have combined a pro-social stance with anti-elite and anti-immigration rhetoric.

It appears that a populist moment has arrived, signaling a crisis in the neoliberal hegemony established in the 1980s. Moreover, the central axis of political conflict in the near future will be between right-wing populism and left-wing populism. In order to counter the surge of right-wing parties, in line with the theory of political populism, a left-wing populist strategy was developed to establish a more democratic hegemonic formation. The experience of Thatcherism in Great Britain shows that it is possible in European societies to bring about a transformation of the existing order without destroying liberal and democratic institutions. Given the left's current weakness, it's hard to see how a populist strategy will provide them with the weapons they need to counter right-wing parties (Sorensen 2021; Krämer 2021). But there is no doubt that the electoral success of right-wing populists in Europe must be seen in the context of broader social trends, such as the rise in social inequality stemming from neoliberal globalization agendas, symbolized by the severe economic downturn dubbed the 'Great Recession' and backlash such as 'identitarianism' against the background of multiculturalism launched by the recent influx of immigrants.

Despite the revival of right-wing parties in Latin American countries, the United States and Europe, where populist parties are fighting for a monopoly of power or form their own government (Casullo and Freidenberg 2021). While the populist parties have needed to dilute their radical agenda somewhat in exchange for government commitments, either directly or indirectly, they have been able to play a leading and guiding role in setting the political agenda on issues such as immigration. The desire and willingness to form coalitions with other political forces undermines the erroneous but oft-repeated claim that populists consider all political competitors and elites to be illegitimate. Here you can clearly see the relationship between the present and the past. The claim that fascist regimes were elitist rather than populist due to the ideological emphasis on the cult of the leader and racial politics seems to be incorrect. Like the populists, the fascists adopted a program of action directed against members of the elite, even though it was compromised by their cooperation with the elites (Saxonberg and Heinisch 2022). After they came to power in Germany and Italy, there was a fierce competition between the party and the state, echoing the tension that is an integral part



of the relationship between old and new forces. This helps explain why conservatives tend to collaborate with far-right parties; they do so out of necessity, not out of close political, cultural, or social kinship. From a regional European perspective, this alliance is currently most visible in Scandinavia, but is also present in other countries, such as Austria. Right wing populism is not a resurgence of historical fascism. But it cannot be defined as an exclusively new phenomenon, associated with the emergence of a specifically formed party in the 1970s, rooted in anti-tax campaigns and neoliberal economic programs. The rejection of multiculturalism by the populist parties, their desire for purity, their nostalgia for the mythical world of racial homogeneity, as well as clearly defined boundaries between different cultures and their use of history, is a reframed version of the same basic myth. Thus, the current populist moment that challenges the liberal order is evocative, points to a historical footprint, and not only in relation to past right-wing ideologies, but more importantly, their practices. And again, some conservative parties have adopted key anti-liberal ideological elements in the agendas of radical right parties as a way of responding to political competition. It remains an open question who exactly, populists or conservatives, will eventually win the political struggle.

The attempt by many populist parties to soften their message of ethnic exclusivity has opened up opportunities for collaboration with other parties. Since then, accommodation has become the predominant form of relationship between European conservative and populist parties, and it has been practiced through coalition agreements in the formation of government or ideological kinship. However, in some cases, centre-right parties, for ideological reasons, refrain from any kind of cooperation with radical right parties. In other cases, conservatives may govern on their own or in collaboration with other centrists or, in some cases, with social democratic parties. Scandinavian populist parties have been the most successful in Europe in terms of recognition by other parties and integration into the political system. Moreover, they became the ruling partners of the conservative parties in Denmark, Norway and Finland. This means that liberal and centrist parties play a less important role as influential political forces than in the past.

In some countries, historical or ideological factors prevent any collaboration between conservatives and populists. In Germany, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Social Democratic Party (SPD) are forced to renew their coalition governments, precisely in order to counter the populist activities and anti-immigrant rhetoric of the Alternative for Germany (AfD). There is a similar situation in France, when French President Emmanuel Macron, who won the presidential election of Marine Le Pen, continues the policy of his predecessors, right-wing conservatives and left-wing socialists, refusing any cooperation with the far-right National Rally.

Other conservative parties, notably in countries such as Hungary and Poland, have transformed into semi-authoritarian right-wing parties that are good at fighting populist parties as ideological rivals.

Thus the success of populist right-wing parties in many Latin American and European countries, whether as part of coalition governments or parties supporting the conservative government, has allowed them to act both as a systemic destabilizer and stabilizer, paradoxically. On the one hand, it is a destructive force against the elites,

trying to change the main political line on issues of immigration, welfare, multiculturalism and European integration. On the other hand, it is an opportunistic political force, ready for political alliances based on nationalist and traditionalist programs of action.

### Supplementary material

The supplementary material for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.46991/JOPS/2023.2.5.145>

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### Ethical standards

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

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### Abstract

The international handbook is devoted to a detailed analysis of Caucasian Albania, focusing on an intricate analysis of Caucasian Albania. The investigation is particularly attuned to the extent of activation of Azerbaijani revisionist tendencies subsequent to the Second Karabakh War in 2020 concerning the historical narrative, cultural nuances, and cultural heritage of the Caucasus region.

Within the expanse of this handbook's discourse, a meticulous examination is undertaken of the various pivotal junctures characterizing the phenomenon of historical revisionism surrounding the relatively lesser known "Caucasian Albania" and its populace, the "Caucasian Albanians," both within the purview of academic scholarship and public discourse. Comprising sixteen in-depth chapters, this scholarly compendium rigorously scrutinizes and elucidates the primary factors underpinning the process of "Albanianization" as espoused by the Azerbaijani government and affiliated scholars, particularly regarding the Armenian civilizational heritage entrenched within Nagorno-Karabakh.

The conceptual underpinnings of historical revisionism are methodically substantiated within this handbook. The post-Second Karabakh War landscape is delineated as a fertile ground where the Azerbaijani state apparatus and associated intellectual circles fervently advocated the "Albanianization" theory. This theory seeks to interconnect the historical trajectories of Azerbaijanis and Albanians, thereby positioning the Azerbaijani nation-state upon a shared historical bedrock alongside Armenia and Georgia. Against this backdrop, the conceptual framework of "Albanization" or the so-called "Albanian myth" emerges as a salient paradigm

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during and subsequent to the First and Second Karabakh Wars. This paradigm functions as a strategic instrument for discrediting the Armenian historical lineage vis-à-vis the disputed Karabakh territory.

**Keywords:** First Karabakh War, Second Karabakh War, post-Soviet ethnogenesis, Azerbaijanian revisionism, historical revisionism, Albanianising theory, Caucasian Albania, Caucasian Albanians, nationalist attitudes, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia.

The pivotal book that carried substantial influence within Azerbaijan and solidified a prevailing stance was Ziya Bunyatov's work titled "Azerbaijan in the 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> Centuries," published in Baku in 1965. This book explored the historical events of the Arab period in Caucasian Albania, which Bunyatov directly linked to Azerbaijan. Within this work, Bunyatov referred to "authors who used Armenian," indicating early medieval figures from Caucasian Albania who wrote in the Armenian language. However, Armenians consider these cultural figures as significant contributors to the Armenian literary tradition. Bunyatov's interpretations were contentious to Armenians, as they viewed them as encroachments on their cultural heritage.

Scientific discourse in Armenia also highlighted Bunyatov's omission of crucial historical facts. Specifically, while he portrayed a narrative of the Armenian-driven destruction of Albanian literature, he neglected to mention the actual events of the destruction of Armenian cultural heritage and manuscripts by the Seljuk Turks. Caucasian Albania is a modern exonym for a former state in ancient times in the Caucasus, mainly in what is now Azerbaijan. The modern endonyms for the area are Aghwank and Aluank, among the Udi people, who regard themselves as descended from the inhabitants of Caucasian Albania (Hewsen 1982, 27-40). The name "Caucasian" is used solely to avoid confusion with modern Albania of the Balkans, which has no known geographical or historical connections to Caucasian Albania. The name "Albania" is derived from the Ancient Greek name "Ἀλβανία" and Latin "Albania". Caucasian Albania acknowledged the Sasanian Empire's dominance in 252, and Shapur I listed it among the empire's provinces in his inscription at the Ka'ba-ye Zartosht. The kingdom would support the realm to its demise. The Greek and Latin authors began to deal with Albania when the territories of the South Caucasus became the theatre of the Mithridatic Wars, shortly before the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE, thus marking the entry of Albania into Rome's geographical and political horizon; from that moment on and for several centuries to follow, the narration of the military operations carried out by Lucullus and Pompey in the Caucasus (75-63 BCE) and the campaigns of the first Roman emperors to the eastern borders of the empire were the contexts in which a series of quick references to Albania and the Albanians found their place (Bais 2023, 3).

The Christianisation of the South Caucasus in the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century brought the three neighbouring kingdoms of Armenia, Iberia (East Georgia), and Albania strategically and culturally closer and thus also determined their common history in the following centuries (Dum-Tragut and Gippert 2023, 53). For Albania and Armenia, and to some extent also for Iberia, that was the beginning of a long epoch of

the shared history of foreign domination, of constant struggles for liberation from the mostly non-Christian foreign rulers (Dum-Tragut and Gippert 2023, 53).

Commencing from the latter half of the 1950s, Azerbaijani historians engaged in a concerted endeavor to dissociate the early medieval population of Karabakh from Armenian origins. Their efforts extended beyond highlighting the linguistic affinity shared by the original inhabitants with the highland populace of Dagestan, a claim largely substantiated. Additionally, they sought to establish the notion that the Christian Albanians either employed Turkic languages or formulated the Syunik language, positing it as a distinct Syunik dialect of the Albanian linguistic framework. In response, Armenian scholars countered this by underscoring that the peripheral dialects in Syunik and Artsakh were essentially variations of the Armenian language.

A divergent approach was adopted by Bunyatov, who, firstly, considerably reprojected the process of Armenization of Nagorno-Karabakh, attributing it to as far back as the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Secondly, following a trajectory already established within Azerbaijan, he shifted the focus from linguistic discourse to cultural traditions. Bunyatov contended that Artsakh never held status as a hub of Armenian cultural vitality. Some of his contemporaries advanced this notion even further, accentuating that until the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, local denizens maintained a distinctive identity detached from the broader Armenian national identity. Subsequently, Bunyatov deliberately undertook efforts to expunge Armenian historical presence from other territories encompassed by contemporary Azerbaijan. In essence, historical Azerbaijan was portrayed as an exclusively Islamic realm, systematically erasing recollections of Armenian and Christian influence, despite the protracted endeavours of Azerbaijani scholars, often termed “Albanists,” who have sought to affiliate ancestral Albanian Christians with the Azerbaijani lineage.

The resurgence of independent Armenian statehood in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was met with threats posed by the Turkish-Azerbaijani coalition, becoming the focal point of their hostile actions. Both the dawn and dusk of the 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed Armenia subjected to unwarranted aggression by the Republic of Azerbaijan, escalating into a latent conflict. Within this protracted confrontation, the fundamental matters of autonomy, sovereignty, and the very survival of Nagorno-Karabakh and the Republic of Armenia hung in the balance, bearing pivotal significance.

Interest in the subject of Caucasian Albania underwent a resurgence subsequent to the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War in 2020, a development extensively discussed by Bais (2023, 3). During this juncture, Azerbaijan asserted itself as the exclusive inheritor of the heritage of Caucasian Albania. However, discerning a legitimate kinship between the Turkic-speaking Azerbaijani populace, primarily composed of Oghuz Turks, and the historical Caucasian Albanians proves elusive. This contention rests on the absence of substantiating historical evidence and is based solely on coincidental name resemblances. Furthermore, the establishment of a nation-state named Azerbaijan in 1918 conveniently aligns with the geographical terrain historically occupied by the ancient Caucasian Albanians. Nevertheless, a significant portion of these ancestral Albanians endured large-scale casualties and displacement, instigated by the advent of Islam and subsequently exacerbated by the influx of nomadic Turkic tribes.



Russian historian and anthropologist Victor Shnirelman write in his article “The Albanian Myth” that Azerbaijani academics have been “renaming prominent medieval Armenian political leaders, historians, and writers, who lived in Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia into ‘Albanians’. According to Schnirelmann, these initiatives were originally started in the 1950s with the intention of “cleansing Azerbaijan of Armenian history” and “ripping the population of early medieval Nagorno Karabakh off from their Armenian heritage”. By unilaterally claiming “Caucasian Albanians” to be the progenitors of contemporary Azerbaijanis, Azerbaijan made a move in the 1970s from disregarding, dismissing, or hiding Armenian historical legacy in Soviet Azerbaijan to misattributing and mischaracterizing it as instances of Azerbaijani culture (Shnirelman 2003). Regarding the political setting of Azerbaijan’s historical revisionism, Thomas de Waal, a researcher at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, writes: “This rather bizarre argument has the strong political subtext that Nagorno Karabakh had been Caucasian Albanian, and that Armenians had no claim to it” (de Waal 2010, 107). According to Schnirelmann, one notable revisionist technique employed by Azerbaijani academics was the “re-publishing of ancient and medieval sources, where the term “Armenian state” was routinely and systematically removed and replaced with “Albanian state” was frequently and methodically eliminated and replaced with “Albanian state” (Shnirelman 2003). Buniyatov, who went by the moniker “Azerbaijan’s foremost Armenophobe,” is cited by American author George Bournoutian as an example of how this was accomplished (Jalaeants 2009, 9-21).

According to de Waal, “Buniatov’s scholarly credentials were dubious. It later transpired that the two articles he published in 1960 and 1965 on Caucasian Albania were direct plagiarism. Under his name, he had published, unattributed, translations of two articles, originally written in English by Western scholars C.F.J. Dowsett and Robert Hewsen” (de Waal 2004, 152). According to Hewsen, a historian from Rowan College and the acknowledged authority in this field, wrote in his volume *Armenia: A Historical Atlas*, published by the University of Chicago Press, “Scholars should be on guard when using Soviet and post-Soviet Azeri editions of Azeri, Persian, and even Russian and Western European sources printed in Baku. These have been edited to remove references to Armenians and have been distributed in large numbers in recent years. When utilizing such sources, the researchers should seek out pre-Soviet editions wherever possible” (Hewsen 2001, 291).

De Waal continues that a disciple of Buniatov, Farida Mammadova, has “taken the Albanian theory and used it to push Armenians out of the Caucasus altogether. She had relocated Caucasian Albania into what is now the Republic of Armenia. All those lands, churches, and monasteries in the Republic of Armenia had been Albanian. No sacred Armenian fact was left un-attacked.” De Waal describes the whole thing as a sophisticated end to what “in Azerbaijan has become a very blunt instrument indeed” as both Buniatov and Mammadova are known for their anti-Armenian public statements and pamphlets. In this context, this study traces the chronology of Azerbaijani distortions of the history of Armenia, fixes the methods and techniques, as well as the process of their implementation in practice, thematic coverage, historical and cultural scope, etc. The issues considered and analyzed by the authors of this book are the product of the implementation of the Azerbaijani programs of distortion of the

history of Armenia and Azerbaijan (Bais 2023, 1-32; Dum-Tragut and Gippert 2023, 33-92; Gippert 2023a, 95-166; Gippert and Schulze 2023, 167-230; Schulze and Gippert 2023, 231-260; Dorfmann-Lazarev 2023a, 261-264; Renoux 2023, 267-284; Dum-Tragut 2023, 285-332; Drost-Abgaryan 2023, 333-336).

The prevailing indicators strongly suggest that the official stance adopted by Baku is one characterized by a deliberate course of action aimed at eroding or effecting the “Albanization” of Armenian religious landmarks and cultural legacy within the regions under their control. As observed by Thomas de Waal, Azerbaijani propagandist efforts have adeptly appropriated the Albanian historical narrative to further the agenda of displacing Armenians from the entirety of the Caucasus (de Waal 2004, 153).

Historical revisionism within Azerbaijan has lent support to a range of policies, encompassing a particularly disconcerting aspect of cultural desecration directed towards Armenian architectural legacies situated in both Soviet and post-Soviet Azerbaijani territories (Shnirelman 2003). This unsettling trend becomes particularly evident in the case of Armenian memorial stone crosses, commonly referred to as “khachkars,” existing on Azerbaijani soil. These sacred artifacts were consistently misattributed as representatives of “Caucasian Albanian” heritage both prior to and subsequent to Azerbaijan’s attainment of independence (Karny 2001, 376).

Furthermore, the mischaracterization of Armenian khachkars as ostensibly non-Armenian emblems of Caucasian Albania corresponded with instances of cultural despoliation inflicted upon Armenian historical monuments located within the region of Nakhichevan. The incident involving the destruction of khachkars in Nakhchivan pertains to a methodical campaign orchestrated by the Azerbaijani government aimed at the obliteration of the Armenian cemetery near the locale of Julfa (known as Jugha in Armenian) in Nakhchivan. The campaign witnessed thousands of Armenian khachkars being subjected to demolition. Initial claims asserting that Azerbaijan was engaged in a systematic endeavour to dismantle and erase these monuments surfaced towards the end of 1998. These allegations were subsequently renewed in 2002 and 2005 (Pickman 2007).

Adam T. Smith, an anthropologist and associate professor of anthropology at the University of Chicago, called the removal of the khachkars “a shameful episode in humanity’s relation to its past, a deplorable act on the part of the government of Azerbaijan which requires both explanation and repair” (Smith et al. 2006). Smith, other scholars, and several United States Senators signed a letter to UNESCO and other organizations condemning Azerbaijan’s government (Smith et al. 2006). Azerbaijan instead contends that the monuments were not of Armenian but of Caucasian Albanian origin, which, per Thomas de Waal, did not protect “the graveyard from an act in the history wars” (de Waal 2010, 107-108).

The editors and authors of this handbook, with the help of facts, refute and reveal parts of the Azerbaijani unscientific and anti-scientific historical concept, demonstrating its scientific inconsistency and thereby helping objective historical science to cleanse itself of the damage caused to it (Tchekhanovets 2023, 337-350; Kazaryan 2023, 353-386; Donabédian 2023, 387-432; Petrosyan 2023, 433-472; Hakobyan 2023, 475-488; Vacca 2023, 489-514; La Porta 2023, 515-536; Dorfmann-Lazarev 2023b, 537-570; Gippert 2023b, 571-580; Tchilingirian 2023, 581-610).

This handbook argues that certain postulates of Azerbaijani historiography in general and in the field of Armenian studies and Albanian studies are considered and criticized from the point of view of objective historical science; however, far from everything has been said and written (Dum-Tragut and Gippert 2023, 33-92; Dum-Tragut 2023, 285-332; Drost-Abgaryan 2023, 333-336). Insufficient knowledge of them in the proposed broad context, as well as the relationship of these processes with each other, makes their further development still a very urgent task (Petrosyan 2023, 433-472; Hakobyan 2023, 475-488; Gippert 2023b, 571-580; Tchilingirian 2023, 581-610).

The dispersion of answers and solutions across various works, coupled with inaccurate and obsolete interpretations, underscores the need for a comprehensive synthesis of these matters. The creation of a consolidated work is necessary to gather the advancements in addressing these crucial concerns. It can shed fresh perspectives, propose innovative resolutions, and simultaneously expose the shortcomings inherent in the Azerbaijani historiographical approach, which diverges from scholarly standards.

The primary objective of this handbook resides in conducting a comparative investigation, scholarly analysis, and critical assessment of predominant tendencies within Azerbaijani historiography, where key elements of Armenia and Azerbaijan's historical narratives are subject to distortion. This inquiry chiefly pertains to issues such as the origin and formative history of the Azerbaijani populace as well as the inception of its statehood. Across various chapters, this publication undertakes the following academic problems were addressed:

- Identification, categorization, and comparative evaluation of the principal distortions concerning key historical aspects of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan within Azerbaijani historiography. This assessment is juxtaposed against factual accounts, thereby unveiling the contours of objective historical actuality.
- Articulation of the scholarly incongruities inherent in both the "classical" and "new" conceptual frameworks encompassing the origins and early history of the Azerbaijani people and its establishing statehood.
- Compilation of pertinent achievements that contribute to the exploration of this pertinent subject matter while exposing distortions within Azerbaijani narratives concerning the history of Caucasus ethnic groups and nations.
- Proposition of overarching principles to counter the challenges posed by Azerbaijani historiography and its propagandistic tendencies. This includes neutralizing their detrimental impact and subsequently fostering the advancement of Azerbaijani studies.

In sum, this compendium strives to engender a rigorous academic discourse that not only highlights the distortions embedded within Azerbaijani historiography but also offers a scholarly framework to counter such distortions, fostering the advancement of knowledge within Azerbaijani studies.

The scholarly and academic importance of this handbook stems from its capacity to address a notable gap in understanding within a comprehensive framework of the subject matter. The issues under consideration, which hold international significance, have thus far eluded specialized investigation within both Armenian and Albanian

academic domains. Throughout the diverse chapters of the manuscript, a series of pivotal theses and theoretical propositions are advanced and substantiated. These constructs not only enrich the depth of comprehension concerning the matters at hand but also serve to broaden the scope of knowledge pertinent to these subjects.

This handbook undertakes an examination of the predominant patterns characterizing the misrepresentation of pivotal aspects across ancient, medieval, and modern and recent eras within the historical narratives of Armenia and Azerbaijan, as adopted by Azerbaijani historiography. Simultaneously, it examines the prevalent methodologies consistently employed by Azerbaijani historians. An argument is advanced that the dominant trends of distortion, observable within the historical portrayal of Armenia and Azerbaijan within Azerbaijani historiography, are intricately intertwined. These trends comprise integral elements of a multifaceted and interconnected process, characterized by its systemic nature. Its overarching objective is to ideologically and propagandistically lay the groundwork for the future evolution of Armenia's ethnocultural realm and historical narrative.

A comprehensive evaluation reveals that the purported notion of "Albanianization" as applied to the origins and foundational history of the Azerbaijani public and their emergent statehood stands on frail scientific grounds. This research effectively demonstrates that the trajectory of Azerbaijani studies in the immediate future holds substantial potential to serve as an efficacious pipe for effectively addressing the primary research question around which the handbook is centered.

The distortions present within Azerbaijani historiography pertaining to the history of Armenia have resulted in a notable erasure of Armenian identity, designating them as "Albanized" Armenians or "Armenized" Albanians. This phenomenon effectively questions the authenticity of the Armenian population in Soviet Armenia and various regions of Soviet Azerbaijan. This development is a consequence of unscrupulous inclinations within historiographical endeavours.

In terms of scholarly merit, this work makes a substantial contribution to both Armenian studies and Albanian studies. Moreover, the findings and insights presented here hold relevance for social and humanitarian studies, as well as researchers engaged in the historical examination of Caucasian peoples, their nation-building and state-building processes, historical geography, ethnography, and the intricate concerns surrounding historical distortion.

The applied value of this handbook is rooted in the methodological implications of its conclusions, especially concerning the critical analysis of purportedly scientific Azerbaijani publications and literature pertaining to the histories of Armenia and Azerbaijan. Additionally, the intent of this research extends to fostering a positive influence on European integration and enhancing awareness levels within international organizations, political factions, civil society, the media, and other entities. These efforts aim to underscore the pertinence of the discussed matters. To address the question of characterizing the erroneous historical concepts concerning Armenia, a preliminary observation is pertinent: these concepts lack any semblance of scholarly rigor. The primary contention remains that these concepts are devoid of scientific foundation. It is our firm conviction that readers engaging with this volume will discern the distressing implications of historical distortions within Azerbaijani

historiography. These distortions not only affront the Armenian and Albanian communities but also cast a shadow upon the neighboring Azerbaijani population.

The scholars engaged in this compendium underscore a discernible inclination among certain Azerbaijani scholars to Azerbaijaniize Armenian personal names, a phenomenon that serves to substantiate Azerbaijan's assertions concerning Nagorno-Karabakh.

### **Supplementary material**

The supplementary material for this article can be found at <https://doi.org/10.46991/JOPS/2023.2.5.157>

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The authors declare no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

### **Ethical standards**

The authors affirm this research did not involve human subjects.

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