BRILL | SCHÖNINGH

CAUCASUS SURVEY (2024) 1–12

CAUCASUS SURVEY
brill.com/casu

Capricious States and Betwixt Citizens across the Caucasus

Mathijs Pelkmans | ORCID: 0000-0001-5188-3470
Professor, Department of Anthropology, London School of Economics, London, UK
m.e.pelkmans@lse.ac.uk

Received 27 November 2023 | Accepted 18 January 2024 | Published online 13 May 2024

Aivazishvili-Gehne, Nino. 2022. *Staatsbürgerschaft an der Grenze: Die Georgischsprachigen Ingiloer in Aserbaidschan*. Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag.

Kaliszewska, Iwona. 2023. *For Putin and for Sharia: Dagestani Muslims and the Islamic State*. Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press.

Shesterinina, Anastasia. 2021. *Mobilizing in uncertainty: collective identities and war in Abkhazia*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

1 Introduction

Questions of governance and citizenship are relevant across our contemporary world. They are especially pertinent on the margins of political formations, and become imminent at times of uncertainty, crisis, and state collapse. While these questions can be approached by focusing on political centres of gravity, deeper insight into their complexities and contingencies, and into how political subjectivity is linked to (collective) action, requires in-depth qualitative fieldwork of the everyday. That, at least, is the message of three recently published monographs, each of which deploys an ethnographic approach to illuminate the complex relationships between citizens and their states across the Caucasus. Placing lived experience at the heart of analysis, these books show how political subjectivity is shaped and how in times of crisis citizens rely on personalised networks to survive difficult situations and to shape their lives.

Published with license by Brill Schöningh | DOI:10.30965/23761202-BJA10030
© MATHIJS PELKMANS, 2024 | ISSN: 2376-1199 (print) 2376-1202 (online)
This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the CC BY 4.0 license.
Downloaded from Brill.com 05/29/2024 07:53:32AM
via Open Access. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the CC BY 4.0 license.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

The similarities in subject matter and approach allow me to discuss these books in a single review article, but the juxtaposition is insightful especially because the authors study very different state-society configurations. Aivazishvili-Gehne covers how the Azerbaijani state at first retreated in the post-Soviet period but continued to be a central reference point for its Ingiloy minority. Kaliszewska describes how the Russian state became more menacing and controlling in Dagestan during the Putin years. Shesterinina meanwhile, shows how political structures in Abkhazia collapsed at the onset of the 1992 Georgian–Abkhaz conflict and were stitched back together in the months and years after. Brief sketches of these different configurations will reveal what is at stake in each.

2 States on Edge

The term 'edge' may refer to the margins of a surface or alternatively to the sharp side of a cutting tool; it can also refer to a nervous or capricious condition, as in 'to be on edge'. These different yet related meanings usefully index some of the opposing tendencies that characterise how states operate at their margins in times of uncertainty. While the state's governing capacity may wane at its territorial fringes, this vulnerability may also trigger the state to intensify its presence. In doing so it is likely to integrate some of its residents while also inscribing lines of exclusion.

•••

In *Staatsbürgerschaft an der Grenze* ('Citizenship at the border'), Nino Aivazishvili-Gehne presents her account of the Ingiloy, a Georgian-speaking minority living in the western periphery of Azerbaijan close to the border with Georgia, counting around 15,000 members. As with so many Soviet people who were affiliated with the titular nation of a neighbouring Socialist Republic, many Ingiloy maintained relations with Georgia. With Tbilisi being also geographically closer than Baku, it was a common destination for medical treatment, for higher education, and for trading opportunities. But while the Christian Ingiloy maintained a straightforward orientation towards Georgia, things were knottier for the Muslim Ingiloy amongst whom the author conducted most of her fieldwork. For them, linguistic and religious markers pointed in contrasting directions.

Set against this background, the book explores what happened in the post-Soviet period, when the internal administrative boundary morphed

Downloaded from Brill.com 05/29/2024 07:53:32AM
via Open Access. This is an open access article distributed under the terms
of the CC BY 4.0 license.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

into an international border, when conflicting national religious ideologies took centre stage, and the socialist welfare state came undone. Villagers nostalgically reminisced about Soviet times when work was available and prices were low, and when they 'could move freely' because 'the border did not exist' (Aivazishvili-Gehne 2022, 62). These Ingiloy did not deny that the new border situation had initially offered lucrative new economic opportunities, but for ordinary villagers these had disappeared after Georgia tightened up its regulations of cross-border movement in the post-2004 period. In fact, many Ingiloy were resentful that they no longer received preferential treatment by Georgia, as had previously been the case. In relation to these changes, Aivazishvili-Gehne aptly writes that 'any change at the border is reflected in village life' (p. 75), which among villagers added to a sense of vulnerability and dependence.

Notwithstanding the significant post-socialist changes in everyday life, continuities with Soviet times were also evident, especially in the realm of politics. As before, connections with the political establishment were vital, as seen in the value attached to membership of the ruling party, and the unquestioned need to attend political rallies. Throughout, Aivazishvili-Gehne identifies parallels with the Soviet period, such as through Dragadze's (1988) description of Georgian villagers' passive participation in the Soviet system as based on a feeling of 'their own helplessness' (cited on p. 163) and Kotkin's (1995) depiction of Soviet citizens' participation in political rituals in which 'It was *not* necessary to believe [but] to participate *as if* one believed …' (cited on p. 158). Aivazishvili-Gehne vividly conveys this reserved dependence on the state through an interlocutor's joke about President Aliyev: 'Our president is always there. We may try to forget him for a moment, but it won't work. For example, you might be cooking something, lift the top of the pan to check, and you'll have the president stare at you even there' (p. 157). As a reader one imagines that similar jokes had previously been made about Soviet leaders. And, while such jokes conveyed frustration, their very existence contrast with the situation in Dagestan, to which we now turn.

• • •

As her book title *For Putin and for Sharia* suggests, Iwona Kaliszewska is interested in the relationship between two ideological positions, at a time when both religion and the secular state asserted themselves in Dagestani society. She sees the 'for Putin' and 'for sharia' positions as similar, in that they are both animated by a desire for a safe and just society. These positions also seemed to provoke each other, with the Russian state legitimizing its heavy-handed

Downloaded from Brill.com 05/29/2024 07:53:32AM
via Open Access. This is an open access article distributed under the terms
of the CC BY 4.0 license.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

surveillance with reference to Islamic terrorism, and Islamic activism being energized by the excesses of police actions.

Though Kaliszewska focuses on the period from 2007 to 2019, she situates this era in a broader historical context of social and political instability. Throughout the 2000s, there was spill-over from the wars in neighbouring Chechnya, which boosted the popularity of Vladimir Putin as a guarantor of law and order. But even if the emphasis on security initially produced some legitimacy, the state's surveillance measures came to be seen by many as external impositions. Important here is that the deployed mechanisms of control, the funding channels, and the power arrangements fashioned a narrow local elite that was loyal to the Kremlin but disconnected from most of Dagestani society – its citizens were needed neither as recruits, nor as taxpayers or constituents (Kaliszewska 2023, 25). The incessant 'special operations' ostensibly aimed at capturing 'terrorists' ultimately resulted in the state being seen 'itself as the source of unwarranted violence' (p. 29).

For many, the state began 'to lose its magic', and the once revered Putin was 'no longer seen as a hero who will save Dagestanis from the army of corrupt officials but rather as a corrupt leader of his fiefdom' (p. 52). What the nervous state had produced in Dagestan was an unproductive social contract that fostered feelings of insecurity and anxiety among many of its citizens. Given this unravelling of the social contract, Kaliszewska rightly suggests that 'We might therefore inquire not just how the state is culturally constructed but also how it is deconstructed and what types of power relations are involved in that process' (p. 115). Even if she does not answer this specific question, the book pays valuable attention to how people who had grown accustomed to state violence (p. 44) reoriented their lives, increasingly relying on local moral networks while reaching out to transcendental religious truths.

In *Mobilizing in Uncertainty*, Anastasia Shesterinina zooms in on the 1992–1993 Abkhaz–Georgian conflict. The outbreak of war had come as a complete surprise to most civilians, who reacted with 'confusion, shock, and disbelief' (Shesterinina 2021, 127). The tensions underlying the conflict, though, did not come out of the blue. In two informative chapters Shesterinina outlines the sociohistorical processes that preceded them, detailing the effects of the USSR's ethno-federal hierarchy. As an autonomous region, the Abkhazian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) had some administrative autonomy, but because it was officially part of the Georgian Soviet Socialist republic (SSR), the Abkhaz government reported to Tbilisi instead of directly to

Downloaded from Brill.com 05/29/2024 07:53:32AM
via Open Access. This is an open access article distributed under the terms
of the CC BY 4.0 license.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

Moscow. Demographic features further complicated this picture. Whereas in the nineteenth century the Abkhaz had been the largest ethnic group in the area, they formed a minority in the territory of Abkhazian ASSR even when it was created. Significantly they numbered fewer than Georgians, whose ranks were further boosted by post-WWII resettlement programmes. The result was an ongoing process of Georgianization, especially in the fields of education, officialdom, and historiography (p. 80). Shesterinina discusses relevant fluctuations and variations to this general picture, but the key point is that tensions were baked into the ethno-federal model, which were exacerbated by the disintegration of the USSR.

In her analysis, Shesterinina focuses on the first days of the war when most mobilization decisions were made. In those first days, the Abkhaz government was pushed out of Sukhumi and almost disintegrated. However, in that very moment, grassroot mobilisation offered a lifeline to the fragile regional government. Speeches from political leaders found resonance in localities where men and women congregated to decide how to respond to perceived threats. Mobilization occurred within 'small groups bound by quotidian ties' and was aimed at defending 'families and localities' (p. 150). In this process of clustering and mobilising, informal groupings were being relinked to political leadership, contributing to the reordering of the Abkhaz polity, built on the ruins of the previous one.

• • •

Clearly, the state manifests itself differently in these monographs: a menacing force in Dagestan; a distant yet inescapable presence for the Ingiloy; and a fragile work-in-progress in Abkhazia. But if we are looking for a constant across the three books then it is the removal of the 'mask which prevents our seeing political practice as it is' (Abrams 1988, 58). In these precarious contexts, the image of the state as an impersonal and benevolent behemoth lay shattered, revealing the biases of its representatives and the fragility of its paternalist connections. Obviously, how the state is experienced depends on positionality. Shesterinina's Abkhaz interlocutors were actively integrated into the structures of the polity, with lives and minds that became invested in a nationalist project. This is very different from Kaliszewska's Muslim interlocutors, who felt excluded by an increasingly violent state, and sought recourse in new religious directions. The Ingiloy interlocutors of Aivazishvili-Gehne, finally, remained frustratingly stuck between the border and the state, being marginalised while remaining dependent. With the mask of impartiality removed, what is revealed is how lines of inclusion and exclusion are being drawn in the pursuit of political projects. Exclusion is of course a necessary constitutive aspect of politics

Downloaded from Brill.com 05/29/2024 07:53:32AM
via Open Access. This is an open access article distributed under the terms
of the CC BY 4.0 license.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

itself (Das and Poole 2004, Mouffe 2005), and is especially visible on the state's sharp edge (in its multiple meanings). This brings us to the question of political subjectivity, and associated forms of belonging and collective action.

3 Betwixt Citizens and Their Complex Loyalties

The archaic term 'betwixt' may lexically be a mere synonym of 'between', but it better captures the spatial entangling and temporal transitioning of in-between-ness. As deployed by anthropologist Victor Turner (1964), the term does not point to a fixed in-between position, but to relational changes at moments when societal structures are being reassembled. The ordinary people who feature in the three monographs were 'betwixt' in the sense that they tried to shape their lives in situations of crisis and uncertainty, while being dependent on larger, capricious forces. The books show how in such situations local and intimate networks grow in significance and moreover, that this intimate 'betwixt-ness' has generative potential in shaping not just personal but collective projects. Indeed, the central arguments of these books are about the political decisions and aspirations of ordinary citizens amidst uncertainty, as will be explored in more detail now.

Shesterinina's main question is why the numerically weak Abkhaz (who even within Abkhazia constituted a minority) decided to mobilize. It is a good question because minorities tend to avoid direct confrontation, given the risks involved and the low chances of success. She solves the puzzle by distinguishing between risk, threat, and uncertainty. In the confusing first days there was no privileged position from which to assess risks. Rather, people tried to establish the nature of the threat by relying on familiar networks of relatives and friends. And it was in those settings bound by quotidian ties that 'collective threat framing' developed, and that people made their mobilization decisions (Shesterinina 2021, 62–63, 128). These decisions were initially focused on 'the needs of local defence' (140), but they also fed into a broader mobilization in defence of the Abkhaz polity.

Shesterinina's attention to local networks offers significant additional insights into the nature of conflict. For example, she finds that while 'quotidian ties did not preclude intergroup violence in the war, mobilization decisions were most commonly taken in the quotidian setting' (Shesterinina 2021, 152). In fact, people's immersion in tight-knit quotidian networks turned out to be the key determinant for mobilization trajectories, with other factors such as pre-war activism or socio-economic position playing much smaller roles (204–10). What unfolded was a reconfiguration of the social field: the contraction of

Downloaded from Brill.com 05/29/2024 07:53:32AM
via Open Access. This is an open access article distributed under the terms
of the CC BY 4.0 license.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

ethno-linguistic groups and a widening chasm between these groups, a process further solidified by subsequent violence between Abkhaz and Georgians. Precisely because the effects were so consequential, it is regrettable that the book remains relatively silent on experiences of and decision-making processes among Georgians in Abkhazia during the conflict. This would not only have strengthened the analysis, but also would have avoided the impression that the book sides rather heavily with the Abkhaz version of this complex and tragic story.

•••

For Kaliszewska, the central question is how 'Dagestani Muslims experienced both the '"impositions of sharia" and the "fight against terrorism"' (Kaliszewska 2023, 3). The word 'impositions' is unfortunate, given that her analysis reveals sharia to have gained relevance through resonance with local desires and ambitions, showing that many (of her male interlocutors) were *drawn* to a sharia-based society. This attractiveness makes sense against the background of a corrupt and violent state, because of which urbanites came to 'inhabit two worlds: one safe, the other gripped by violence' (p. 10). Dagestani residents did 'get used to violence', but also gradually gave up hope for a just republic based on secular principles. They redirected their hope to alternative horizons, which translated for some into a desire for emigration, and for others into the adoption of religious principles.

This reorientation to Islam had already started in the immediate post-Soviet period, at the time characterized by renewed interest in Islamic practices and celebrations. What was different in the 2010s was the desire to live more fully 'according to sharia' (Kaliszewska 2023, 88). In line with Islamic piety movements elsewhere, these self-styled 'new Muslims' would downplay the relevance of religious or ethnic labels and emphasise the need for a clean path forward (see for example Roy 2006). Interestingly, these 'new Muslims' presented their aims as closely aligned with those of the state, motivated as they were by a longing for order in their own life, in their communities, and in Dagestan as a whole. Specifically, they argued that a turn to Islam would assist the state in getting rid of its imperfections: corruption, poverty, red tape, and lack of security (p. 85).

These findings are very interesting (and they resonate with my work on the Tablighi Jamaat in Kyrgyzstan (see Pelkmans 2021)), but Kaliszewska may have been too quick in lending her interlocutors' views analytic credence when concluding that 'popular support for Islamic law and so-called radical slogans … are not manifestations of resistance against the state, but paradoxically, actions undertaken out of concern for that very state' (Kaliszewska 2023,

Downloaded from Brill.com 05/29/2024 07:53:32AM
via Open Access. This is an open access article distributed under the terms
of the CC BY 4.0 license.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

86). I am sceptical about this argument, because one could just as easily argue that while Islamic activists want to retain the state as a form of political organisation, they are resisting concrete manifestations thereof. In fact, several of Kaliszewska's more radical interlocutors envision a complete overhaul of the state: to rebuild the state on Islamic fundaments and thereby construct a utopian society 'where people can live and work in peace, where their basic … needs are taken care of, and where they do not feel threatened' (p. 107). Unfortunately, the book does not reflect on how such a utopia might end up producing new lines of exclusion. This may have to do with the fact that female voices are largely absent in the final chapters (as acknowledged by the author), and that there is little attention to how more 'secular' Dagestani citizens respond to the promotion of new religious-political arrangements.

•••

Aivazishvili-Gehne's main interest is in the workings of Azerbaijani citizenship and its entanglement with ethnic and social belonging among the small Georgian-speaking minority living on the state's margins. While previous research had suggested a strong collective identity among the Ingiloy, reality proved less straightforward. Not only did the Christian Ingiloy (who mostly identify as Georgians) and Muslim Ingiloy see each other as very different, issues of belonging were especially complex among the latter. Aivazishvili-Gehne retraces the genealogy of collective identity through various relevant stories, including about passports. Intriguingly, although religion was not a legitimate category in Soviet society, the Muslim Ingiloy ended up as 'passport Azeris' and the Christian Ingiloy as 'passport Georgians'. Inadvertently, the Soviet nationality policy ended up hardening a religious boundary that it denied existed (Aivazishvili-Gehne 2022, 48). In their 'betwixt' position between the border and Baku, residents of the Muslim Ingiloy village of Mosul envisioned different paths for their community. Those who were oriented towards Baku saw a future of assimilation with Azerbaijani society, whereas those with cross-border interests continued to see the Ingiloy as brokers between Georgia and Azerbaijan (pp. 87–92). But despite such variations, most villagers saw themselves as citizens of Azerbaijan. Recent disappointments with the border as well as the topic of Islam strengthened this orientation, even if ambivalently so.

•••

By taking a few steps back from these intimate descriptive analyses, we can see the broader insights these monographs offer into the vagaries of collective

Downloaded from Brill.com 05/29/2024 07:53:32AM
via Open Access. This is an open access article distributed under the terms
of the CC BY 4.0 license.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

action and belonging in situations of duress. Given that at the margins state order 'continually [has] to be reestablished' (Asad 2004, 279), it is here that local actors play a role in the reconfiguration of the state (Das and Poole 2004, 30). The themes of retreat, polarization, and mobilization that characterised the 'betwixt' citizens in these books shed light on such reconfigurations. It was not just that crisis left citizens to their own devices, but that it facilitated the formation of collective projects. While the Muslim Ingiloy were somewhat split in their orientation towards Baku or the border, in Abkhazia the experience of violence and mobilization contracted into a solidified Abkhaz political identity, while in Dagestan a new collective Islamic identity started to germinate.

4 Entangled Ethnographers and the State

The monographs' grassroot perspectives and attention to the minutiae of everyday existence are markers of good ethnography, which the authors have mobilized to shed light on important questions. Consecutively, they illuminate what is at stake in accepting or challenging Azerbaijani citizenship, offer insight into why so many Abkhaz mobilized in a context of uncertainty, and clarify the appeal of radical religious answers in Dagestan. The books' close-up portrayals and intimate analyses were hard-won. They depended on their researchers getting their hands dirty, so to speak. Each lived for extended periods in their locations of interest and partook in daily life while developing bonds of trust and respect with their interlocutors.

The authors extensively describe the complexities of doing fieldwork on politically sensitive issues on the margins of the state. Facing considerable suspicion, Shesterinina took pains to present herself as an unaffiliated researcher and to be *seen* collecting documents and books, producing an image based on which community leaders 'would vouch for her legitimacy' as a serious university student when introducing her to new respondents (Shesterinina 2021, 29–30). Aivazishvili-Gehne recounts how some villagers initially thought that she might be an 'agent provocateur', even if she did not look like one (Aivazishvili-Gehne 2022, 22) – but with time such suspicions receded. For her part, Kaliszewska describes how the 'accusations of espionage' gradually declined as she expanded her social network and people came to know her as a student, a mother, and some sort of 'foreign correspondent' (Kaliszewska 2023, 16).

With time, each gained a sort of 'insider-outsider status' (Shesterinina 2021, 30), based on which they could share in local knowledge while retaining critical

Downloaded from Brill.com 05/29/2024 07:53:32AM
via Open Access. This is an open access article distributed under the terms
of the CC BY 4.0 license.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

distance. Even so, the authors naturally did not have equal access to everyone, and the intimacies of fieldwork produced their own blind spots. As discussed, Kaliszewska's account of Islamization in Dagestan is rather male-centred and Shesterinina largely leaves out the Georgian experience of war. These points of critique do not indicate deficiencies per se but indicate that in-depth knowledge of human affairs is unavoidably positioned and relational. Instead of objective-sounding depictions of citizenship that scratch only the surface, these monographs offer privileged insight into corners that otherwise remain unseen. Through them, we come to understand how people living in specific locations understand their reality, or how a specific segment of society envisions its future. That is, their value lies in the production and communication of 'partial truths' (Clifford 1986). In these final paragraphs it will therefore be useful to consider how they contribute to ongoing conversations on citizens and the state in the Caucasus.

Discussions of citizenship, the social contract, and state-society relations are often based on an implicit assumption that the state is relatively stable and coherent. As Mühlfried (2014, 7) points out, the notion of a social contract between citizens and the state only makes sense if the latter is somewhat reliable. Such assumptions of coherence and stability also exist in the Caucasus, but mostly as part of collective memory, in reference to the Soviet state. References to a stable past are especially strong among older generations but have been noted even among young new Muslims in Dagestan, who referenced 'the "good old" socialist past' they themselves had hardly experienced (Voell and Kaliszewska 2015, 14). Significantly, the shared Soviet historical backdrop translates into expectations of the state and a sense of entitlement (see Yalcin-Heckmann 2021, 1729), which are then projected onto post-Soviet incarnations of the state, to varying but rarely satisfying effect.

As the monographs show, the state is experienced differently across the Caucasus. On this topic, Voell and Kaliszewska (2015, 16) have suggested a key difference to be between the threatening state which is best avoided (such as in Dagestan) and the welcoming state with which subjects identify (such as in Georgia). This spatial variation is clearly relevant, but the monographs also show how state-society relationships changed over time. On this matter, very relevant is Mühlfried's (2014) descriptive analysis of fluctuating attitudes towards the state in highland Georgia. He shows that his interlocutors usually kept a 'healthy' distance from the state, criticising without rejecting it; but then, in some situations they would 'become' the state by embodying and identifying with 'their' state.

The topic of citizens who distance themselves from, yet are drawn into, the state's orbit, also speaks loudly through the three volumes under review,

Downloaded from Brill.com 05/29/2024 07:53:32AM
via Open Access. This is an open access article distributed under the terms
of the CC BY 4.0 license.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

and in doing so they reveal variations of a similar logic. On the margins of the newly independent Azerbaijani state, many Ingiloy at first capitalised on the trade opportunities granted by their 'betwixt' position. But even though this found expression in ambivalent loyalties, the practicalities of citizenship and an image as 'good Muslims' seemed to tip the balance towards Baku (Aivazishvili-Gehne 2022, 155). In Dagestan, the excesses of 'anti-terrorist' surveillance measures shaped Muslim experiences of the state and translated into a reaching out to a vision of rebuilding the state on Islamic fundaments, with the potential to invert their own marginalised position. A different but actual turning of tables had already occurred in Abkhazia, where the Abkhaz minority had initially retreated to the intimacy of local social networks which ended up being central to scaffolding a reconfigured political establishment. In the process, lines of exclusion were drawn by which Georgians were marginalised and expelled, while the Abkhaz dream of sovereignty ended up being frustrated by increased dependence on Russia.

The described sociopolitical dynamics on the margins of the state resonate with Khalvashi's point (2015, 93–4) that 'marginality and centrality are mutually constitutive', not just in having social and political consequences but in being constitutive 'of people's affective experiences'. The three books make palpable what it feels like to live on the edge of the state, and to deal with the uncertainties produced by war, by a police state, and by a capricious border. Taken together, the books may not have exhausted all possible permutations of state–society relationships on the margins, but they have made important contributions to what this has looked like across the Caucasus in recent years.

References

Abrams, Philip. 1988. "Notes on the difficulty of studying the state." *Journal of historical sociology* 1,1: 58–89.

Asad, Talal. 2004. Where are the margins of the state. Anthropology in the Margins of the State. In V. Das and D. Poole, eds., *Anthropology in the Margins of the* State, 279–88. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.

Clifford, James. 1986. Introduction: Partial Truths. In J. Clifford and G. Marcus, eds., *Writing culture: The poetics and politics of* ethnography, 1–26. University of California Press.

Das, Veena and Deborah Poole. 2004. Introduction: State and its Margins: Comparative Ethnographies. In V. Das and D. Poole, eds., *Anthropology in the Margins of the State*, 3–34. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.

Downloaded from Brill.com 05/29/2024 07:53:32AM
via Open Access. This is an open access article distributed under the terms
of the CC BY 4.0 license.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

Dragadze, Tamara. 1988. *Rural families in Soviet Georgia: a case study in Ratcha Province*. London: Routledge.

Khalvashi, Tamta. 2015. Peripheral Affects: Shame, Publics and Performance on the Margins of the Republic of Georgia. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Copenhagen.

Kotkin, Stephen. 1995. *Magnetic mountain: Stalinism as a civilization*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Mouffe, Chantal. 2005. *On the Political: Thinking in Action*. London: Routledge.

Mühlfried, Florian. 2014. *Being a state and states of being in highland Georgia*. Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Pelkmans, Mathijs. 2021. "Frontier Dynamics: Reflections on Evangelical and Tablighi Missions in Central Asia." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 63, 1: 212–41.

Roy, Olivier. 2006. *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Turner, Victor. 1964. "Betwixt and between: the liminal period in *Rites de Passage*." *The Proceedings of the American Ethnological Society*. Symposium on New Approaches to the Study of Religion, 4–20.

Voell, Stéphane and Iwona Kaliszewska. 2015. Pluralism, Tradition and Perspectives on the State in the Caucasus: Introduction. In S. Voell and I. Kaliszewska, eds., *State and Legal Perspectives in the Caucasus. Anthropological Perspectives on Law and Politics*, 1–23. London: Routledge.

Yalcin-Heckmann, Lale. 2012. "Re-thinking citizenship in the South Caucasus." *Europe-Asia Studies* 64, 9: 1724–38.

Downloaded from Brill.com 05/29/2024 07:53:32AM
via Open Access. This is an open access article distributed under the terms
of the CC BY 4.0 license.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/