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CASCADe Final Conference in Brussels © Irina Lamour

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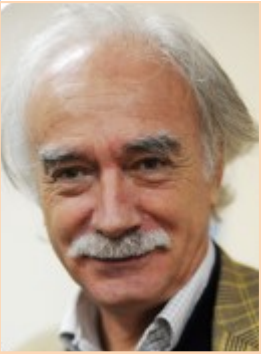
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Editorial

The CASCADE Atlas of the Caucasus, a regional and methodological challenge.

The Caucasus is difficult to describe with single and simple approaches. First of all, because of its diversity: it is not for nothing that it was called the "mountain of peoples". The complexity of the administrative map, now divided into four states, themselves subdivided into eleven lower entities inherited from the Soviet regime, three of which are unrecognised secessionist regions, is matched only by its ethnic or religious complexity. Any study, irrespective of its methodology and discipline, historical, geographical, geopolitical, economic or social, encounters this complexity at the risk of abusive simplifications, however these are frequent in the literature and in the reports published by national or international organisations.



Jean Radvanyi, Professor at the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations, Paris, designer of the Atlas

We are all looking for accessible tools, corpus of texts, chronologies, statistics and maps likely to help us to put some order or readability to this complexity. But can we rely on these instruments in a region plagued by tensions and conflicts, some of which are "frozen" and trigger contradictory historical narratives, a region where a significant part of the economy is considered as "gray" or "parallel", and where refugees or displaced persons constitute a significant part of the population? By proposing to publish at the end of the CASCADE project a new Atlas of the Caucasus, we knew that the challenge was great. The simple gathering of official statistics in this fragmented area, whose methods of calculation are undoubtedly near to international standards but keep a lot of specificities, was the first challenge. Much of the data does present at the scale of the entire region. Others present biases such that their extrapolation raises more questions than answers for our analyses. But it is also by reflecting on the defects this statistical and spatial shadow game that one reveals the underlying stakes.

The set of maps that will be presented as one of the products of the CASCADE project is, as we are aware, uneven and perfectible. It will certainly be the subject of polemics, inevitable when one tries to unite in a single framework these four states that separate "frozen" conflicts, disputed territories, distinct economic and strategic trajectories. We hope, however, that they will make it possible to advance the understanding of the mutations which, at different rates, affect the whole region, beyond its new frontiers, some of which remain contested. They will all be available on a single site, CartOrient*, where they will fit into a larger body, including post-Soviet Central Asia and Iran. Thus conceived, we hope that this Cascade Atlas of the Caucasus will fulfill its original objective: to illustrate the complexity of this region and to offer, through cartographic representation, an additional tool for understanding and reflection.

* The CartOrient project was initiated jointly by the UMR 7528 Mondes iraniens et indiens (CNRS, Sorbonne nouvelle – Paris 3, INALCO, EPHE) in collaboration with the EA 4513 Centre Europe Eurasie (INALCO). It is supported by the COMUE University Sorbonne Paris Cité (USPC). ■

CASCADE Working Papers and Recent Publications by CASCADE Researchers

Dagestan: tradition as a chance for modernisation Article by [Olga Vendina](#), September 2016

Local development, by whomever it is initiated – the State, private investors or small businesses, secular or religious authorities and institutions, is dependent on available resources and people participation. If it meets the needs and expectations of the population, local development is successful; on the contrary, if there is a mismatch between the project and societal perceptions, the scenario can be reversed: whatever its enthusiasm about development, society will resist changes. The objectives will come into conflict with the expected results. The paper aims to analyse this dilemma based upon the example of Dagestan. The author points to the discrepancy between the rational logic of economic management and people behaviour influenced by local culture. She assumes that culture impacts on local development as much as investments, resources and institutions. Drawing upon interviews and group discussions, she outlines the symbiosis of tradition and modernity in Dagestani society. The author argues that the role of traditions in modernisation processes is underestimated in Dagestan, and the general tools of regional socio-economic development are insufficient in a situation when a secular system of values competes with a religious one.

First published in a journal [of The North Caucasus Federal University "Science. Innovations. Technologies"](#): Stavropol, 2016, n 3, pp. 137-165. The full version is available [here](#).

Labour migration, vulnerability, and social change in Southern Caucasus: The case of Azerbaijan

Article by [Sophie Hohmann](#), November 2016

Labour migration from Southern Caucasus to Russia's Far North remains under-studied, whereas numerous studies were devoted to post-Soviet migration towards the main Russian cities (Moscow, Saint-Petersburg, Omsk, Novosibirsk). Migrants from Azerbaijan are numerous in Russia's Arctic cities, although in smaller numbers than in cities from central Russia. Migrations from Central Asia reflect more recent dynamics and they are more often examined in the context of post-colonial studies, in a post-Soviet logic. Nevertheless, migration flows to the industrial Far North offer a unique opportunity to study new migrants' trajectories. By focusing on migrants' professional niches, this working paper explores how migrants see their relationships to Arctic cities and to others nationalities in a special industrial environment and extreme climatic conditions.

The issue of organisational strategies of migrants in the post-Soviet era (after 1991) will be analysed while taking into account a generational dimension. This approach requires cross validating ethnographic, temporal and spatial situations. In particular, the understanding of the spatial distribution of migrants, of occupational selection, and of temporal sequences of migrant trajectories provides useful information on their modes of functioning, and on their negotiations in the Arctic urban space. The strategies developed by migrants cross each other: they are complex and oblige the observer to study in details their biographic trajectories in order to capture their historical and social dimensions.

This analysis of polar migration gives new insights on the geography and sociology of Russian margins. It shows how work migration after the collapse of the USSR follows different logics than these prevailing during the Soviet era. They offer new alternatives to the difficult economic and political situation found in the modern state of Azerbaijan, characterised by clientelism and presidentialism. Read [the full text](#) of the working paper.

Local Modernisation Initiatives in the North Caucasus

Working paper by [Centre of Geopolitical Studies Russian Academy of Sciences, IGRAS](#)

Authors: Prof. Vladimir Kolosov, Dr. Olga Vendina, Dr. Anton Gritsenko, Dr. Alexander Panin, Dr. Alexander Sebentsov, Dr. Maria Zotova, Dr. V. Streletskii

Private enterprise is a major driver of socioeconomic development in the regions of the North Caucasus. The inventiveness and hard work of the local population, its responsiveness to a changing market situation have fostered prosperity in some of the region's households. This especially stood out during visits to the republics of the North Caucasian Federal District (NCFD), where the local initiative favoured the emergence of various types of commodity productions, both in agribusiness and in small manufactories. However, it is not possible to talk of sustainable development in the region: success stories involved primarily private backyards, smallscale production, or the service sphere and they have not turned into regional development. The region counts among the laggards in the Russian Federation and stands out, at the same time, as a large-scale shadow economy. The problem of providing it with a socioeconomic and political future remains open. This paper maps successful private-enterprise economic projects in the NCFD. It focuses on the causes that hinder the expansion and viability of modernisation processes in North Caucasian society and emphasises their noneconomic nature. It shows that the universal mechanisms of socioeconomic development are insufficient to solve local problems. Tailor-made strategies are required, involving not only investments and institutions but also measures of indirect influence resting on shared values. In conclusion, the paper provides recommendations that could help overcome the gap between the economic and sociocultural modernisation of society, thereby facilitating the development of the North Caucasus. Read the full version of the [working paper](#).

Oversight of the Security Sector by Parliaments and Civil Society in the Caucasus: Cases of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan

Working paper by [GFSIS](#)

Authors: Ashot Khurshudyan, Marijn Zeger Van der Wal, Elkhan Mehdiyev, Tamar Pataraiia, Shorrena Lortkipanidze and David Sikharulidze

Edited by: Kakha Gogolashvili

Oversight of the security sector is one of the most important issues which directly affects the prospect of democratic development of countries. The past and recent history of all three South Caucasus states involves the Soviet legacy and continuous internal conflicts and

wars, political instabilities and violence. These circumstances has caused the securitisation of the political environment and practically all areas of public life and favour the concentration of excessive powers in hands of the military and law enforcement bodies. In some cases the political order relies on institutions or key personalities in army or law enforcement structures. Obviously, weakness of democracy calls into question the ability of institutions and the general public to oversee the actions of the security bodies. Parliamentary and civil society oversight of the security sector are two important dimensions of good practice of civil military relations, along with a clear division of authority between the Head of State, Head of Government and the security sector ministers, as well as peacetime governmental (executive) direction through security ministries, in democratic societies. Civilmilitary relations are being accepted as an element of democratic ac-



countability under a parliamentary system, recognising the primacy of politics over the military. Patterns of civilian control vary with changes in domestic ideology, domestic legal institutions, and external threat...Continue reading [GFSIS Working paper](#).

Conferences & Workshops

The European Union and the Caucasus: New Perspectives on an evolving relationship

On October 18, 2016 the CASCADE project together with the [ISSICEU project](#) held a joint policy workshop 'The European Union and the Caucasus: New Perspectives on an Evolving Relationship'. The event was organised by [SIPRI](#). This marked the concluding policy event for the two projects and was designed to bring together

leading policy makers and experts with the view to discussing and reflecting upon some of the main findings of the projects' research work. The particular focus for the meeting was two key issues at the heart of contemporary relations between the EU and the Caucasus: managing conflict and building peace in the region, and the question of migration. The event was organised in cooperation with Sweden's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and took place at the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the EU.

In his keynote address H.E. Amb Mayr-Harting (Managing Director, Europe and Central Asia, EEAS) underlined the evolution of the EU's involvement with the region, such that today the EU understands the need of differentiation and building partnerships in different formats and through different tools. He also emphasised that the EU is not pressing any of its partners to choose between EU and other formats and countries (Russia) of cooperation. Amb Mayr-Harting highlighted the risks of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict for the region, and noted that the EU is assisting the search for a peaceful solution to the conflict by supporting the OSCE Minsk framework.

The panel discussion 'Shifting Challenges of Conflict Management in the Caucasus' explored the dynamics and drivers of conflict. The panel identified three drivers of conflict, including, the increasing disconnect and drifting apart of the societies affected by the conflict; instrumentalisation of the conflict as a tool for power preservation by the political elites; Russian policy of selective revisionism: using the conflicts as tools to keep the affected countries in the state of controlled instability; the massive deterioration of international geopolitical context since 2014.

It has been noted that a set of processes have influenced the conflicts of the Caucasus and changed their nature. First, conflicts that were primarily local and driven by local grievances around inter-ethnic issues and struggle for resources in the immediate post-soviet period have been transformed into fundamentally inter-state conflicts. Second, conflicts themselves have become regionalised. Third, Russia's influence has evolved in all conflicts of the regions, to the extent that they have become an integral part of Moscow's foreign and security policy in the region. But, at the same time, the conflicts themselves have also reshaped the Russian state in the direction of a highly securitised institution. Fourth, the

most dangerous tendency is integration of the Caucasus security dynamics into the security of other regions, particularly the Middle East and Black Sea regions.

The panel also considered the emerging influence of Iran in the South Caucasus. It was suggested that with the end of sanctions on Iran this year, the country's economic, political and social influence will begin to recover in the region. Economically, Iran is becoming more deeply engaged in the markets and regional infrastructure projects of the South Caucasus. Although, Iran does not play a major role in conflict resolution, Iran was in active consultation with the Armenian and Azerbaijani governments during the escalation of violence around Nagorno-Karabakh in April 2016.

The panel 'The Issue of Migration in EU-Caucasus Relations' explored the changes and differences of remittances of labor migrant in Russia and their role in local economies. Speakers compared the difference of diaspora activities for South Caucasus communities based in Europe and Russia, and their influence on the local politics in Caucasus countries.

The panel identified several new migration trends from Georgia, including, the feminisation of migration, shifts in migration destinations (with Spain and Turkey emerging as new destinations supplanting Greece), notably for female migrants.

The panel has discussed the influence and advantages of the EU Mobility Partnership for Georgia, noting that while the format is one of the most optimal, the Georgian government is yet to take the full advantage of it.

Find more photos in our [Photo Gallery](#).

CASCADE Fourth Steering Committee, Brussels, 19 October 2016

CASCADE researchers and members of the External Expert Council gathered in Brussels on 19 October.

The meeting was hosted by the University of Birmingham (Brussels Office), CASCADE's partner in the United Kingdom.

The steering committee meeting was organised back-to-back with CASCADE's final conference "The Democracy-Security Nexus in and around Caucasus", which took place at Université libre de Bruxelles (20-21 October 2016) and CASCADE-SIPRI/ISSICEU conference "The European Union and the Caucasus: New Perspectives on an evolving relationship", which took place at Permanent Representation of Sweden to the European Union on 18 October.



Researchers presented the research findings, working papers and their planned publications. They also discussed perspectives for future research.

Find more photos of the Fourth Steering Committee in our [Photo Gallery](#).

CASCADE's final academic conference "The Democracy-Security Nexus in and around the Caucasus" took place on 20-21 October 2016 at the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) in Brussels and centred around the overall theme of the project itself – The Security-Democracy nexus in and around the Caucasus region.

The conference was organised by the CASCADE partners at the FMSH, the University of Birmingham, and the ULB and featured 11 panels with 36 paper pre-



sentations and up to 60 participants (including presenters, chairs and discussants). The conference was opened by Andrea Rea (Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences at the ULB), Laure Delcour (Scientific coordinator of CASCADE project) and Derek Averre (University of Birmingham).

The conference aimed to re-examine the link between security and democratisation in the context of growing authoritarianism and new protest movements, as well as conflict transformation resulting from broader political upheavals in the wider neighbourhood.

This re-examination was informed by a combination of macro- and micro-approaches and the various panels represented at the conference mirrored well the true (academic) diversity of the CASCADE project itself. They ranged from Gender, Activism and the Role of Women in the Caucasus; Migration and Mobilities in and out of



the Caucasus; Modernisation and Development; Civil Society; to Conflict and Violence; War Veterans; Religion and Domestic Regimes; Cleavages and Cooperation as well as Caucasus in Comparative Perspective. The conference was attended by up to 200 people. Closing remarks were given by Laure Delcour and Nino Kemoklidze. Find more photos in our [Photo Gallery](#).

International Conferences "Mistrust, Mobilities, Insecurities" and "Migration, Mobile Goods and Trade Networks in the Caucasus", Jena, 16 – 19 November 2016

These CASCADE conferences took place at [Friedrich Schiller University Jena](#) and were organised by the CASCADE team based in Jena. Both conferences were held under [WP 3](#), Migra-

tion, Mobility and Poverty and dealt with some of the core concepts of the CASCADE project, namely migration, mobilities and security.

The conference "**Mistrust, Mobilities, Insecurities**" featured three panels and a roundtable discussion with keynotes. The panels focused on mistrust and suspicion, mistrust and doubt as well as mistrust and detachment. As an invited lecture, Victor Vakhshayn from the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA, Moscow) talked about "Communities of Mistrust: From Thomas Hobbes to Modern Russia".

The conference "**Migration, Mobile Goods and Trade Networks in the Caucasus**" consisted of four sessions dealing with trade and trans-border networks, strategies of diaspora and political dimensions, migrants as actors of transforming social reality and circulation of tangible and intangible goods. In addition, two talks were offered: "Narratives Don't Burn": Understanding Oral Testimonies among Greeks in Central Asia after the Stalinist Forced Migrations by Effie Voutira (Thessaloniki) and "Shuttle Traders in the Caucasus: 'Tshelnoki' to Global Players" by Susanne Fehlings, Frankfurt.

CASCADE researchers participated in the conference "(Dis)-integration and Dis-connection in the post-soviet space" organised by CERI Sciences-Po and IFG, Université Paris 8 on November 21-22

[Laure Delcour](#) ([FMSH](#)) presented a joint paper "Deep economic integration: an instrument of increased fragmentation or renewed regional cooperation in the South Caucasus?", prepared with Samuele Dominioni. Discover the conference's programme [here](#). ■

Past fieldwork

Fieldwork in Abkhazia with CASCADE Support

In September and October 2017, CASCADE researcher [Florian Mühlfried](#) conducted three weeks of field-



"Abkhazia, a place where cross and crescent work together"

© Florian Mühlfried

work in Abkhazia. The fieldwork was embedded in [Wp6](#) dedicated to "Religion and Politics". The main focus of this exploratory trip was the relationship between the state and the three institutionalised religions in Abkhazia.

In Abkhazia, religious pluralism is a state-sponsored project. In addition to Orthodox Christianity and Islam, the so-called traditional religion has gained official recognition. Multi-culturalism and secularism are the ideological underpinnings of state-practiced religions pluralism. This differentiates Abkhazia from other *de facto or de jure* countries in the Caucasus where the project of post-soviet state building is tightly interwoven with the revival of a religious institution such as Orthodox Christianity (e.g. in Georgia) or Islam (e.g. in Chechnya).

Fieldwork was mainly taking place in the Abkhaz capital Sukhum(i) and consisted of interviews and participant observation. Trips to sacred sites such as churches and "folk shrines" completed the picture. Overall, the main task of this fieldwork project was to allow for comparisons with other parts of the Caucasus the fieldworker Florian Mühlfried is more familiar with.

Research trip Moscow-Kazan 28 October - 6 November by [Silvia Serrano](#)

The fieldwork for Cascade was conducted in the wake of a round table on "Christians and Muslims, a comparison France/Russia", organised

and funded by [INALCO](#) and [CEFR](#) in Moscow and Kazan, where I presented a paper on how framing "radicalisation" influences anti-radicalisation policies, in France and Russia.

The fieldwork was conducted in Moscow and Kazan. It aimed at collecting information about social or benevolence activities of the Muslim communities in the various regions of the Russian Federation, with a comparison between the North Caucasus, Moscow and Tatarstan. It aimed also at understanding the links between social activists from the North Caucasus and Tatarstan.

It has consisted of :

- in-depth interviews with experts and with imams involved in benevolence activities (including from Dagestan),
- visiting a rehabilitation center established in the mosque Yardem, with patients from the North Caucasus (Chechnya),
- visiting mosques in Kazan,
- participant observation of a seminar about financing and organising aspects of benevolence, for imams coming from all over the Russian Federation. ■



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CASCADE is an international EU-funded research project led by [the Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme](#).



CASCADE was selected under the EU FP7 call for proposal "Security and democracy in the neighbourhood: The case of the Caucasus." The duration is 3 years (2014-2017).