A significant number of edited volumes in the field of politics, economics and related sciences are born due to publication “pressure”; a phenomenon known both for editors and especially for authors in order to accommodate the prescriptions of their academic institutions. Volumes falling into this category are in the best case read by a certain number of peers and are totally dry and uninteresting for the general public.

Luckily there are exceptions and the volume ‘Conflict and Peace in Eurasia’, edited by Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra and released by Routledge at the beginning of this year is a clear example for this. The reader finds in it 11 articles that deal with carefully selected conflicts in the post-Soviet and adjacent regions. As such it brings a new perspective, since no single volume deals with these conflicts using a contemporary view and approach.

In the introduction of the editor, in which he in the first instance presents the major perspectives on Eurasia itself, he also contextualizes the different conflicts with an emphasis on conflict resolution towards a lasting peace. The introduction is then followed by the following papers:

- Johan Galtung: A perspective on conflict and peace
- Emanuela C. Del Re: From the Balkans to the Caucasus – Paradoxes of the precedents in a post-Balkan perspective
Andrew Foxall: Mapping ethnic relations – Cartography and conflict management in the North Caucasus, Russia
Françoise Companjen: Complexities of the peace process in Nagorno-Karabakh
Françoise Companjen and Abel Polese: Subtle line between self-defence and war – South Ossetia 2008
Dmitry V. Shlapentokh: Chechen conflict viewed through the prism of National Bolshevism
Sébastien Peyrouse and Marlène Laruelle: Kyrgyzstan – Conflict and prospects of peace
Jason E. Strakes: Southern Kurdistan - From conflict zone to subregional integration in Greater Eurasia
Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra: Prospects of inclusive peace, perception of players and stakes involved in post-9/11 Afghanistan
Henryk Szadziewski: Resolving Uyghur conflict through a participatory rights-based approach to development
Seema Shekhawat: Linking peace and development – An imperative for conflict transformation in Kashmir

Commencing the chain of articles with that of veteran peace academics Johan Galtung is a masterstroke; that paper defines the context in which peace and conflict resolution can be achieved in the coming decennia. Then a significant number of examples are taken from the Caucasus, for several reasons: some of the conflicts (e.g. the 2008 war between Russia and Georgia) have far-reaching interlinkages with other conflict zones or geopolitical conflict of interest of great powers, or have a major long-term impact on the Eurasian zone itself (e.g. the Chechen conflict, wherein major players move from an ethnic based standpoint to an international one).

In this group I have found one of my favorite articles, namely that of Dmitry V. Shlapentokh. Not only its topic is of crucial importance, but stylistically it is one of the most enjoyable, too. The editor’s own paper on Afghanistan is also a masterpiece in grasping the essence of the conflict and sketching its possible outcomes during the next crucial years in front of us. Stylistically it is also very readable and enjoyable, even for the casual reader.

Jason E. Strakes’s research on the sub-national interlinkages among the different actors in the Kurdistan region is a real eye-opener.

I recommend fully this edited volume to everyone who is interested in the major conflicts in the Eurasian zone and to the possibilities of their resolution. The volume is not only informational but is also highly readable and enjoyable not only for the expert but also for the interested layman.
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