

TORNIKE TURMANIDZE

BUFFER STATES

PH.D. Thesis Paper in International Relations

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Summary

Tornike Turmanidze's thesis paper *Buffer States* refers to a less popular subject in the field of International Relations: the problems of small/weak states that are clearly relevant for Georgia, and more specifically, the issue of buffer states, which is studied even less by International Relations scholars worldwide.

The main purposes of the study are: to develop an extensive theoretical definition of the “buffer state” concept and to identify the criteria for categorizing such states on the international arena; to determine various features of buffers states, such as their geographical and ethno-cultural characteristics, geopolitical location, power capabilities and influence; to explore the policies of great powers towards small/weak states and the cases of the latter performing buffer functions in great power rivalry; to analyze the models of foreign policy behavior of buffer states; to examine the instances of regions inside countries being perceived and used as buffers; to assess the past and present situation of Georgia with regard to the issues listed above.

The thesis paper consists of an introduction, eight chapters and a conclusion, which consecutively answer the following questions:

Chapter I: What is a buffer state?

Chapter II: What are the geographical and ethno-cultural characteristics of buffer states?

Chapter III: What kind of geopolitical location do buffer states have? Which states were buffers in the past and/or are such actors today? When was Georgia a buffer state and is it a buffer state today?

Chapter IV: Where do buffer states stand in the international power hierarchy?

Chapter V: What are the policies of great powers towards buffer states?

Chapter VI: What types of foreign policy do buffer states pursue?

Chapter VII: How does the buffer system function as a subsystem of the international system?

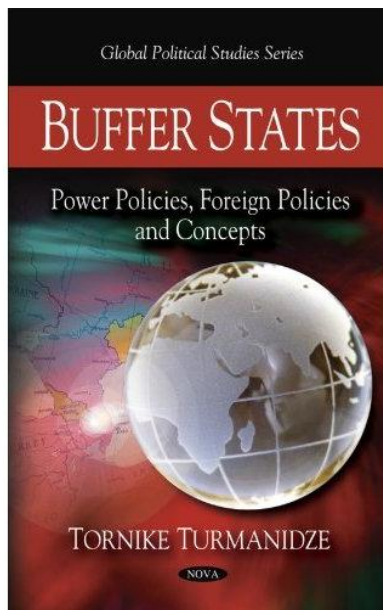
Chapter VIII: What is the practice of regions inside countries being used as buffers? How can the Russian occupation of Georgian territories be explained in this regard?

The paper is generally guided by the *Realism* theory and the *geopolitical* approach closely associated with it. Among the four broadly accepted levels of analysis in International Relations, the work mainly uses the third, i.e. the international level of analysis. The research methods are qualitative for the most part.

Tornike Turmanidze's work is the only comprehensive study of the buffer states' phenomenon in the world, which critically analyzes, summarizes, theoretically expands and empirically applies (including to Georgia) all the previously existing scholarly knowledge on this issue.

The major part of **Tornike Turmanidze's** thesis paper has been published as a book:

Buffer States: Power Policies, Foreign Policies and Concepts, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2009.



It is available in several online books stores, including at the following links:

<http://www.amazon.com/Buffer-States-Policies-Concepts-Political/dp/1606929011>

https://www.novapublishers.com/catalog/product_info.php?products_id=16079&osCsid=

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