Mostowlansky writes sagaciously when explaining recondite theory and lucidly when describing notions wedded to identity, values, and ideologies. He describes his settings and encounters vividly. Chapters and sections concerning Islam, a presidential visit, discussions of civilization and backwardness, and interpretations of the kind of state and government Tajikistan needs will resonate with readers.

The book should fit nicely in anthropology courses on modernity and globalization, in advanced graduate courses in the social sciences of post-Soviet space, and it is not beyond the grasp of undergraduates learning about Central Asia as long as they are provided guidance.

Lastly, a word about the title: As a reflection of the region's altitude and isolation, people occasionally talk about being on the moon, especially given the appearance of some landscapes. However, the *azan* is the Muslim call to prayer and refers to a story in a popular pamphlet on Islam and science that concerns what Neil Armstrong supposedly heard on the moon and related to an Egyptian audience. Thus, the title deals with concurrent senses of remoteness and universality, appropriate for so many of the topics Mostowlansky examines.

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Secessionist Rule: Protracted Conflict and the Configurations of Non-state Authority. By Franziska Smolnik. Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2016. 425 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Tables. Maps. $48.00, paper.
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Much has been written over the years about the origins and dynamics of the sovereignty conflicts precipitated by the Soviet Union's collapse. What is different, and useful, about the book under review is that rather than trying to explain the conflicts themselves, it analyzes their impact on politics and state building in the breakaway regions. That is, conflicts over sovereignty and status are treated as independent, rather than dependent, variables. And it does so through case studies of two de facto breakaway states, Abkhazia and Nagorno-Karabakh. Employing Pierre Bourdieu's conceptions of fields of power and capital, the author demonstrates how political actors in these de facto states deploy the struggles, violence, and insecurity entailed in the establishment and preservation of secessionist rule as instruments of power and state building.

After an introductory chapter, the author surveys the theoretical literature on protracted conflicts and political authority. Chapter 3 summarizes the history, origins, and evolution of the Abkhaz and Nagorno-Karabakh conflicts. The author returns to theory in Chapter 4 with a literature review on political authority, legitimacy, and state building, with particular reference to the writings of Max Weber and Bourdieu. The next two chapters present the project's key empirical findings, starting with the peculiarities of political authority and state building in her two cases. The penultimate chapter examines the theoretical implications of her research, which are summed up in a concluding chapter.

In the Abkhaz case, Franziska Smolnik narrates three "crisis situations" (15) in the region's recent political history—presidential elections in 1999, the presidential election campaign of 2004–05, and presidential elections in 2009. She describes how key actors deployed resources and used various strategies tied to Abkhazia's foundational conflict and de facto status in each instance. In particular, she shows how Abkhaz political actors used the history of conflict with metropolitan Georgia, the threat of renewed violence, and the need for external support from Moscow as

resources to preserve Abkhaz political control, as well as in the struggle for power among themselves. Throughout the period, however, Abkhaz political actors sought to preserve Abkhazia's de facto independence and ensure that ethnic Abkhaz monopolize power at the expense of others, notably Armenians, Russians, and especially Georgians. As she explains: "(T)he power game was constrained by one red line: protecting the titular's monopoly of the field of power, which the dominating Abkhaz basically equated with maintaining the entity's sovereignty" (134–35).

The politics described by Smolnik in post-Soviet Nagorno-Karabakh are in many respects similar. The key difference is that political control by Armenians is not at issue because the conflict led to the exodus of Azerbaijanis and Kurds from territory controlled by the secessionists, turning what had been a multinational region into a mono-ethnic one. As a result, Armenian political actors feel less threatened domestically, which in turn means they have even less incentive to seek accommodation with the metropolitan state than they would otherwise. Again, the author narrates the story of secessionist rule around three key episodes: a conflict between the president and the defense minister in the late 1990s; the election season of 2004–05; and the presidential elections of 2007. As in Abkhazia, albeit in subtly different ways, military backgrounds, active war participation, coercive capabilities, and the possibility of renewed warfare with the metropolitan state (Azerbaijan) are important resources in Nagorno-Karabakh's evolving field of power.

On balance, the theoretical and empirical arguments in *Secessionist Rule* are convincing. The book would have benefited, however, from more comparative control—that is, from greater attention to other cases directed at demonstrating that secessionist rule is different from non-secessionist rule. After all, informal politics and practices, use of traditional networks and administrative resources, personality-driven parties, weak legislatures, a formally strong executive, and appeals to external actors are hardly unique to secessionist rule, particularly in post-Soviet space. Nor are political strategies and tactics that draw on foundational struggles for legitimation purposes, violent or otherwise, unusual. In short, the reader is left wondering whether politics and state-building efforts in Abkhazia and Nagorno-Karabakh are importantly different, for example, from those in the "metropolitan" states, Georgia and Armenia, or for that matter from those in other postcolonial/post-imperial cases involving liberation struggles.

Finally, the book's central arguments would have been strengthened had the author made a convincing case for why she chose Abkhazia and Nagorno-Karabakh as case studies. Are they somehow more revealing about the dynamics of politics in de facto states, or are they otherwise more consequential than, say, in Transnistria or South Ossetia—or indeed than in Northern Cyprus or Somaliland?

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Twenty-Five Sides of a Post-communist Mafia State. Ed. Bálint Magyar and Júlia Vásárhelyi. Trans. Bálint Bethlenfalvy, Steven Nelson, Kata Paulin, Ágnes Simon, Anna Szemere, Robert Young, and Frank T. Zsigó. Budapest: Central European University Press in association with Noran Libro, 2017. xii, 662 pp. Notes. Index. Tables. $50.00, paper.
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This book is a massive (662 pages) series of twenty-five studies by well-known, liberal Hungarian scholars about the short-comings of the Viktor Orbán-led Hungarian