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Book Review. Boundary Issues in Central Asia by Necati Polat

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of International Trade Law: Adding New Subjects and Restructuring Old Ones"; part 3 tackles "Legal Relations between Developed and Developing Countries"; and part 4 concludes with essays on "The Operation of the WTO Dispute Settlement Procedure." Responsive comments and bibliographies follow some of the essays. The book concludes with a bibliography of Hudec’s writings and a detailed index.

§50 Generally, the essays are rich sources on the many issues facing the WTO. The Uruguay Round negotiations of 1986–94 expanded the jurisdiction of the WTO to include new subject areas such as trade and services, and trade and intellectual property rights.\(^{15}\) The WTO’s membership has grown since that time. The failure of the ministerial conference in Seattle brought to light the problems created by these new areas of business and an enlarged WTO. The problems discussed in the text include dissatisfaction by some existing members with the new agreements, particularly the Agreement on Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights or TRIPS,\(^{16}\) but also with the disagreement on additional new areas for the WTO to handle such as competition or antitrust law, and reforms needed to give a voice to developing countries and new members in WTO decision-making processes. Underlying all the essays is the background tension between national sovereignty and the need for an international body to govern trade relations. The authors also address some popular concerns about the legitimacy of the WTO, which can appear to be nondemocratic.

§51 *The Political Economy of International Trade Law* is a worthy tribute to one of the foremost experts in the field. It highlights the underlying political and economic factors influencing the working of the WTO. It teaches the reader what the WTO is, how it appears to work, and how it really works. It also includes aspirational essays that recommend changes to improve the effectiveness and public acceptance of the WTO. It is a valuable collection of essays that belongs in any academic research library.


Reviewed by Liz Larson

§52 In this fairly compact book, Necati Polat manages to cover the entire spectrum of boundary issues in the five formerly Soviet nations of Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. He covers the history and current state of boundary issues between these five countries themselves, as well as between each of these countries and their neighbors, particularly China, Russia, Afghanistan, and Iran.

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In addition to demographic issues and disputes over land, Polat details the fight for control of Central Asia’s water. The two main rivers in this region originate in the mountains of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and eventually make their way to the Aral Sea, which straddles the border between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Thanks to Soviet-era irrigation projects (built to water the enormous expanse of land devoted to cotton production), very little water now actually reaches the Aral Sea. The result has been environmental devastation on a grand scale, both to the sea itself and the regions and populations surrounding it.

Another water issue that Polat covers is the need for hydro power during the wintertime in the two upriver countries, which conflicts with the summertime need to irrigate crops in the downriver countries. Polat also details the long, complicated history of disputes over the rights to oil in the Caspian Sea. The Caspian holds vast reserves of oil, but the four nations that border it have failed time and time again to reach an agreement to apportion these deposits among themselves.

I was very impressed throughout this book with Polat’s ability to make complicated topics easy to understand. This is especially true of the chapter titled “Succession to the Ex-USSR.” Succession is a topic within international law that focuses on the rights and obligations under international agreements that a successor state inherits from its predecessor state. Having recently taken a course called “Politics and Society in Central Asia,” I was familiar with most of the material covered in this book. However, the issue of succession was completely new and because of its complicated nature, potentially very confusing to me. Fortunately, Polat expertly identifies the basic issues and laws of succession, and then clearly and succinctly explains how these issues and laws affected the nations of Central Asia when the USSR disintegrated in 1991.

The book includes six maps and twenty appendixes, comprised of boundary agreements entered into by Russia or the USSR from 1860 through 1957. These agreements might otherwise be very difficult to find, making this book a valuable resource for anyone researching the history of present-day boundary issues in Central Asia. Given the area’s growing significance in world affairs, I would also recommend this book for the collection of any academic law library and for the libraries of firms that do business in Central Asia. It offers a very well-written, thorough examination of the complicated disputes that make it such a fascinating region.


Rights, Duties and the Body by Rosamund Scott is an anomaly in the literature on the legal status of pregnant women and fetuses in that it contains relatively little discussion of abortion law. Scott is a barrister and a lecturer in law at Kings College, London. She has an academic background in philosophy as well as law. Her book is an erudite examination of the law of treatment refusal as it applies to