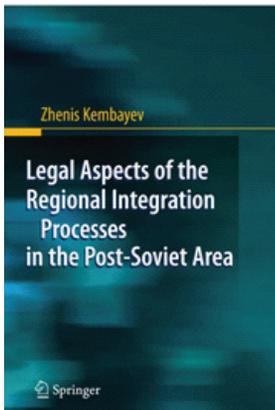


BOOK REVIEW

Legal Aspects of the Regional Integration Processes in the Post-Soviet Area

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The aftermath of World War II seems to make the post-War community realize the importance of the idea of peace through global integration. However, in the recent years, many states in the world change their focus into regional integration, in the form of Regional Integration Agreements (RIAs). Kembayev states that the increase of regional integration is driven by the urge to seek the economic and political stability. Also, Kembayev emphasizes that the rise of regional integration is very much affected by the further development of globalization, as it can be seen on the most crucial geopolitical event of the twentieth century, the political turmoil which results in the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (hereinafter will be named as USSR). This book will analyze the legal and political aspects of the regional integration processes in the post-Soviet era.

Kembayev divides the explanations and discussions into two main topics: the first part is about the fundamental theory regarding regions, integrations, and RIAs; and the second part is concerning the concept of regional integration in the framework of the Post-Soviet Area. On the first

part of the book, Kembayev thoroughly explains three important issues regarding regional integration: regions, regionalization, integration, and RIAs. In regards of regional and regionalization concepts, Kembayev sees that globalization could be more desirable than regionalization, however the ongoing process of regionalization could have more direct impact, particularly for political and economic reasons. The use of 'integration' term, according to Kembayev, can be categorized into three views, since each of it has conflicting views:

- a. political vs. economic integration
- b. realism vs. functionalism
- c. intergovernmentalism vs. supranationalism.

RIAs, in this book, stipulates as an association of group of economics to liberalize their mutual trade that can be ranked from the basic (lowest) to the highest (advanced). Based on the explanations from each components, Kembayev argues that the more effectively a particular RIA achieve its objectives of the economic integration, the close it will be to the establishment of a political union.

For the second part of the book, Kembayev will open up from the historical background of the legal and political perspective. Furthermore, it will also discuss about the development of regional integration in the Post-Soviet Area in the terms of their regional organization, for instance: Russian-Belarusian Union, the Single Economic Space, the Eurasian Economic Community and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. On this part, Kembayev will point out several points concerning the background, development, legal status, institutional framework and the fields of cooperation of these organizations. In this part, Kembayev examines the legal aspects of the Eurasian Union activities and its obstacles, concerning the cration of effective supranational organs able to pursue its integration agenda. After that, Kembayev will evaluate the RIAs created outside of the Russian control, Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova (GUAM), as an alternative to the regional integration.

In conclusion, Kembayev marks several prospects and perspectives of the integration process in the PSA that can give numerous advantages and benefits for every states in this area by analyzing the main problems that can be an obstacle in practical implementation. One of

the alternative that Kembayev raise is regarding the establishment of Eurasian Union alongside with the single economic space in the near future, in addition of changes in the internal and external environment of the particular area.

Zhenis Kembayev, as the author of the book, has a very thorough approach in explaining the regional integration development in the PSA. Furthermore, Kembayev is also able to figure the problems involved by breaking down the legal aspects for each part of the ongoing integration in PSA without leaning too much into the political aspects.