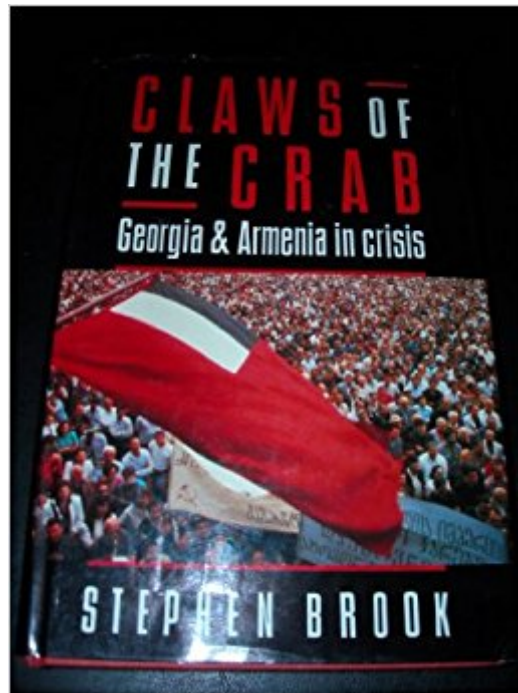




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Claws Of The Crab: Georgia And Armenia In Crisis



Synopsis

Travel book about the disintegration and the rush for independence of the Soviet Union.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Brook visited the Caucasus during 1991-92 as its two newly independent republics, Georgia and Armenia, sought to stave off chaos. In Georgia, on the brink of civil war, President Zviad Gamsakhurdia's neofascist posturing and extreme nationalism, which had isolated the country and brought it to a cultural standstill, gave way to the more democratic policies of former Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze, who chaired a ruling council to foster progressive government. In Armenia, Brook (L.A. Lore) found a proud, austere people whose homeland, pulverized by the 1988 earthquake, was further strained by an uprising in Nagorno-Karabakh (an Armenian enclave surrounded by Azerbaijan), by Azeri massacres and blockades, and by a diaspora that drew away much of Armenia's brightest people. This compelling blend of exotic travelogue and astute reporting delineates peoples of the former Soviet empire struggling to transform political hothouses into cohesive nation-states. Photos. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

THIS IS ONE OF THE BEST TRAVEL ESSAYS THAT I HAVE READ. ARMENIA AND GEORGIA ARE TWO ANCIENT AND PROUD NATIONS WITH AN EXQUISITE CULTURE, LOCATED IN THE CAUCASUS AT THE CROSSROAD OF EUROPE AND ASIA, IN THE BORDERLAND OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY REPRESENTED BY RUSSIA, AND ISLAM REPRESENTED BY TURKEY AND IRAN. ARMENIA AND GEORGIA WERE THE TWO FIRST

CHRISTIAN NATIONS IN THE EARLY FOURTH CENTURY. THE BOOK CONTAINS HISTORY, TRAVELOGUE, ANECDOTES WITH LOCAL PEOPLE, AND THE CONVOLUTED POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE EARLY NINETIES, WHEN THE TWO COUNTRIES BECAME INDEPENDENT AFTER SEVEN DECADES OF TOTALITARIAN COMMUNISM PLAGUED WITH GENOCIDE, REPRESSION, ATHEISM, AND ECONOMIC DISASTER. THE BOOK IS SET IN 1991 AND 1992, WHEN THE TWO COUNTRIES FACED POLITICAL INSTABILITY, ETHNIC-RELIGIOUS WAR AND SCARCITY. THE AUTHOR DESCRIBES THE MISGOVERNMENT OF THE PETTY DICTATOR ZVIAD GAMSAKHURDIA IN GEORGIA, AND OF HIS OVERTHROW IN THE EARLY 1992, ALSO THE CONFLICT IN SOUTH OSSETIA WHICH HAS BEEN PART OF GEORGIA (NORTH OSSETIA IS INSIDE THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION). IN ARMENIA THERE WAS THE CONFLICT OF NAGORNO-KARABAH, POPULATED MAINLY BY ARMENIANS BUT LOCATED INSIDE AZERBAIJAN. VERY INTERESTING ARE THE DEPICTIONS OF BOTH ARMENIANS AND GEORGIANS, VERY WARM AND CULTURED PEOPLE, AND THE WAY THEY DEALT WITH THE PROBLEMS OF EVERY DAY LIFE AND THE LEGACY OF SEVEN DISASTROUS DECADES OF SOVIET RULE. I ENJOYED THE DESCRIPTION MADE BY THE AUTHOR OF THE MARVELOUS CHURCHES OF BOTH COUNTRIES, SOME OF THEM AS OLD AS THE FOURTH CENTURY. POSTSCRIPT: 23 YEARS LATER, THE ETHNIC-RELIGIOUS CONFLICT HAVE CALMED DOWN, THE SOVIET LEGACY IS NOW AWFUL HISTORY, THE TWO COUNTRIES HOWEVER (AS THE REST OF THE WORLD), ARE BEING ENGULFED BY THE GLOBALIST TYRANNY OF INTERNATIONAL CAPITALISM. THE 24TH OF APRIL OF 2015 IS THE HUNDRETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE PERPETRATED BY TURKEY, IN WHICH AROUND ONE MILLION PERISHED.

Book Review Brook, Stephen. *Claws of the Crab: Georgia and Armenia in Crisis*. Sinclair-Stevenson, 1992. This is another treasure of a book about the Caucasus that I unearthed from the bowels of the Wandsworth Public Library system in south London. Only one other person had borrowed it, back in September 1999 when I was working in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi. Reading this book, I discovered that Stephen Brook had got there before me when all the exciting stuff was happening at the start of the nineties. Independence from the Soviet Union, the overthrow of the tyrannical president Zviad Gamsakhurdia and the battles for Nagorno Karabakh - Brook was there or thereabouts. Studiedly sympathetic to the Armenians and guardedly admiring of the Georgians, *Claws of the Crab* is a rare eyewitness account of many of the events that made independent Georgia and Armenia what they are today. Suffice to say that there's been remarkably little change

since the book's completion in 1992.

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