

## Abstract

The aim of the present paper is to answer the question on *how do regional powers shape the security environment within their regional subcomplex?* The research interest is conditioned by the rise of powers that represent strong actors, especially in regional affairs, and which certainly influence dynamics within their region. It has been assumed that the manifestation of power at the regional level can also be transferred, to the global level leading to an elevated position of these actors in global affairs, allowing equally for the existing Western-led order to be challenged.

These assumptions have been applied and tested on the example of the regional powers Russia, Turkey and Iran and their respective influence on the security dynamics in the South Caucasus as their historically common shared neighbourhood. In order to disentangle the complicated web of relationships and influential factors, the descriptive framework of the Theory of Regional Security Complexes as suggested by Barry Buzan has been outlined and applied. Based on these theoretical observations the attention has been further turned towards the empirical testing of the hypothesis which states that Russia, Turkey and Iran have exercised influence during the second Nagorno-Karabakh War 2020 that occurred between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2020. The empirical method chosen to investigate this relationship was Causal Process Tracing (CPT).

The results of the detailed tracing of the processes in this conflict, focusing exclusively on the regional actors and their decision-making and behaviour, have shown that an exercise of influence has taken place which has significantly predestined the outcome of the war, verifying the assumed hypothesis. Nevertheless, the study also revealed that the influence of the three powers is of different character and intensity, which is presumably due to their different foreign policies, threat perceptions and national interests. It was also found that despite Ankara's active involvement in the war, there was no shift in polarity observable within the region in favour of Turkey, by contrast Russia has been able to enhance its dominant position in the newly created geopolitical context. All in all, the investigation allowed for observations to be made pointing out that the three powers strive for a change in the global order and that they are therefore situationally allying with each other for a mutual benefit.