

The Proceedings of the International
Scientific Youth Conferences

THE CAUCASUS IN CHANGING TIMES

May, 2013
Tbilisi, Georgia

Organizers & Supporters

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University

The Centre For Cultural Relations “Caucasian House”

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TSU Student Self Government

**The Proceedings of the International Scientific Youth Conferences
“Unified Caucasus: Realities and Perspectives”
&
“The Caucasus in Changing Times”**

**May, 2013
Tbilisi, Georgia**

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*The First Classical University Founded in 1918 in the Whole
Caucasus Region*

Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University Is 95 Years Old

*The Publication Is Dedicated to the 95th Anniversary of Its
Foundation*

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The theme of the conferences was mainly concerned with the idea of a unified Caucasus, where students from different countries of the region, who study at the Georgian Universities, were participating together with Georgian youth. Relations with them made me believe that, although diverse, the Caucasus is a unified and indivisible region and it is possible for it to stand together either in adversity or prosperity. Such a potential exists within the new Caucasian generation. There were also participants from Islamic Republic of Iran and Lithuania at the conferences.

I would like to thank in particular: my lecturer, Ia Khubashvili, TSU Professor; Tamar Ujukhu, project coordinator; Giorgi Kanashvili, executive director of “Caucasian House”, for their encouragement and support to organize the conferences; also personal thanks to Mariam Chkhartishvili, Professor, director of the Institute of Georgian History, Faculty of Humanities for her contribution; and Dimitri Shvelidze, TSU Professor. Thanks a lot to TSU Student Self-Government for funding the publication.

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Maka Khutsishvili

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Tbilisi

May 2013

Caucasian Identity: Regional vs Religious

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Introduction

The phenomenon known as identity¹ determines person's *modus vivendi* and *modus operandi*.² The same can be stated not only about individuals but nations also, despite the fact that the factors forming national and personal characters are different.

Critical role in outlining national identity is nominated to geographic, geopolitical, cultural, and religious factors. They usually solidify the feeling of belonging to a particular nation. The more influential factor is the more it affects and specifies national identity.

Identity is not a static phenomenon. Supplementary factors can start playing dominant role and thus change or decide on critical issues. One of these issues is a project of creating common geopolitical and geoeconomic space for all Caucasians.

Some politicians consider such fusion as achievable, historians support their view by pointing out at many ages of common history and traditions, linguists in their turn emphasize kinship of Caucasian languages..., but there are other questions to be answered before. Are ordinary people ready for such integration? Does regional identity³ dominates in their mind and could be a basis for convergence or maybe there are some other much more powerful factors that drive Caucasians in a different direction?

¹ Identity in this paper is examined as a feeling that forces people to associate themselves with some particular group of individuals. Usually, people of one group have common interests which are based on racial, educational, ethnic or some other kinship.

² Л. В. Смирнягин, *О региональной идентичности*, Пространство и время в мировой политике и международных отношениях: материалы 4 Конвента РАМИ в 10 т. под ред. А. Ю. Мельвиля; Российская ассоциация международных исследований, М.: МГИМО-Университет, 2007, С. 81-107. At <http://www.mgimo.ru/fileserver/books/rami4konvent/t2-smirnyagin.pdf> Last accessed March 28, 2012.

³ Region in this paper means either a part of one country or several countries (parts of them) which have common geographic, economic or/and cultural features that differ that territory from others. See "Геополитика", Популярная энциклопедия, под общ. ред. В. Манилова. М.: ТЕПРА, Книжный клуб, 2002, С. 485.

One of the most potential aspects that separate nations of the region is religion. Therefore the goal of this paper is to analyse which type of identity regional or religious dominates in the Caucasus. Several sociological research methods have been used to meet the aim of the article and compare power of the factors that unite and separate Caucasian nations.

Religious and regional identities, coexistence and conflict

Both regional and religious⁴ identities are very important and can be even crucial forming nations. History provides us with many examples when the process of state or nation-building was determined by these identities. However, relations between them sometimes are complicated. In some cases they supplement each other, in others – compete. Sometimes they help saving national identity, sometimes - destroy it. Antagonism between them is especially obvious in situation when people of one region confess different religions while religious identity plays significant role. The question is which of these identities is stronger and what makes its position dominating?

Both of them imply certain solidarity which based either on religion or on geographical place of origin does not matter if it is a village, city or region.⁵ Regional identity as well as religious demonstrates its strength by contradicting globalisation process and, as it was mentioned afore, they both can succeed in forming a nation. A good example is American nation that was shaped mainly on the basis of territorial identity, which, according to Z.A. Zhade, is a complex of cultural features that relates to the place of origin or living.⁶ Spreading of Islam in the early MiddleAges would be an illustration of triumph of religious identity that outlined a new empire and built a new nation. Noteworthy fact is that both religious and regional characteristics possess a huge emotional potential to bring people together into very stable groups with shared values and similar reaction to different processes and situations.

However, it should not be forgotten that naturally developed identities are much stronger and exist longer than ones that have been constructed by rulers on political or another purpose. Inhabitants of particular region can be absolutely indifferent to plans of a government. The same is applicable to isolated religious communities. Nations, tribes or communities can resist harshly if they are being

⁴ The term *religious identity* has not completely elaborated yet. One of the descriptions says: “Religious identity is a category of religious consciousness, which means sharing religious ideas and values of certain community. Confessing of particular religion also describes the term. See *К вопросу об определении религиозной идентичности в современном мире*, At <http://sun.tsu.ru/mminfo/000063105/324/image/324-099.pdf> Last accessed March 25, 2012.

⁵ Н. А. Шматко, Ю. Л. Качанов, *Территориальная идентичность как предмет социологического исследования*, №4, СоцИс. 1998, №4. С. 94-101.

⁶ З. А. Жаде, *Региональная идентичность с точки зрения геополитики*, № 4, Вестник Адыг. гос. ун-та., Майкоп, 2006, № 4. С. 95-100. At http://www.vestnik.adygnet.ru/files/2006.4/380/zhade2006_4.pdf Last accessed March 30, 2012.

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forced to change their identity. For example, ethno-politics or nation-building process in Russia can be assessed as complete failure because a concept *Rossiyanin*⁷ has been invented, not developed naturally. There is almost no person to state that he is a Rossiyanin.

Struggle in order to safe identity is usual for Diaspora. As a rule most emigrants try to keep close contacts with people of their nationality, region or religion. The combination of all three components is considered as perfect. Otherwise personal preferences would decide the place of regional and religious identities.

Opportunity to practice native language; to communicate with people of the same culture, who share the same or similar models of behaviour; to feel support of the group – all these aspects are very important for emigrants. Besides, they help to protect national identity. Religion, that acts as a part of culture or separately, can be utilized as mobilizing factor also. For example, a small group of Tatars in Lithuania, who settled there about 6 ages ago, lost their native language, but managed to keep national identity because of religion. Islam kept them together and distinguished from Lithuanians. They used to practice their religion and national rites, used to build mosques and temples, used to stay in quite closed community. Even nowadays, as it was noticed by Georgian scholar Gia Nodia, “...temples and churches are being utilized as usual place to meet by emigrants”.⁸

Regional and religious identities can compete in some other cases also. Rivalry is likely to happen if regional identity overgrows or shrinks to national one as a result of unification or secession. Clashes between them sometimes happen if two or more groups claim the same territory which is or could be origin of their culture, history, etc. Territory and nations of former Yugoslavia could serve as an example of such perturbations.

The strength of both identities increases significantly if nation occupies specific territory which borders with several bigger states. Another case when it is on the verge of extinction because of exterior pressure. Caucasian identity, for example, became much stronger because of invasions the region suffered from powerful neighbors. Religious identity was something that helped Georgians to resist and safe the nation in late XVIII century. Other examples would bring up regional identity which was a factor that would unite different Caucasians in face of common enemy.

One more fact which makes evaluation of these identities complicated is that the different communities can have totally different attitude towards the same religion or the same region. For example, Muslims from Indonesia on some extent are not comparable with Muslims from Iraq. It is also not so easy for Italians to understand Polish people who confess the same Catholicism and live in

⁷ The term was forged by Russian politicians in order to overcome nationalistic movements that appeared within the in the last two decades. Rossiyanin supposed to be Russian equivalent to the USA which managed to build American nation.

⁸ Interview was submitted by M. Iliysov, Georgia, Tbilisi, 2011.

the same Europe. Situation can become confused even more if a person identifies himself as a Muslim or Orthodox only because he belongs to a community which confesses definite religion.⁹

Thus, it can be inferred that religious and regional identities both play significant role in outshaping specific groups and contradicting them to others. Under certain circumstances they are able to become a basis of unification for different people. However, sometimes religious identity can be a rival of regional one dividing people of the same origin. Some specific features of Caucasian identity besides religious and regional are being analyzed in the next chapter.

Caucasian identity

Analysing Caucasus and prevailing identities of different nations here, the first questions to answer are on what basis it can be examined as a region and what role of religion is here. Researchers point out that exact territory can be perceived as a region not only if it has similar geographic features. It is necessary to bear in mind some characteristics of inhabitants that bring them together also. Such particularities as common history, culture (material and spiritual), economic bonds etc., enable to connect people and thus help to determine a region as a unit.¹⁰ According to Georgian researcher Levan Tarkhnishvili, economic relations of Caucasians also would contribute to the formation of the region in the past, but situation is different now. Due to political factors ties between North and South Caucasus are cut off and this fact sharpens division of the region into two parts.¹¹

However, analysing attitude of Caucasian nationalities towards others (dichotomy ‘we-they’) it is obvious that talks about regional unity really has background.¹² Except of already mentioned common history and culture, there are some behavioural and ethical similarities. As it was noticed by L. Tarkhnishvili, “...even religious factor cannot be judged as dividing Caucasians”.¹³ Until the very recent time local inhabitants used to confess Christianity and Islam along with paganism. He also stated that nowadays many people highlight their religious views without paying actual attention to the spiritual part of it. “Religion for many people remains just a ritual which they are forced to

⁹ A. Paasi, *Religion, place and space: a framework for investigating historical geographies of religious identities and communities*, Progress in Human Geography, February 2006. 30: 28-43.

¹⁰ Such kind of bonds does not necessarily mean social or territorial unity. See Anthony Giddens, *The constitution of society*, Oxford: Polity Press, 1997. In Н. М. Межевич. ‘Основные направления региональной политики Российской Федерации’. С-П. Государственный университет телекоммуникаций им. проф. М. А. Бонч-Бруевича. Ч. 2. Механизмы региональной политики. Учебное пособие. At <http://dvo.sut.ru/libr/history/i299mez2/index.htm> Last accessed March 30, 2012.

¹¹ L. Tarkhnishvili, Interview was submitted by M. Iliysov, Georgia, Tbilisi, 2011.

¹² А. Ю. Шадже, *Феномен кавказской идентичности*, Научная мысль Кавказа, СКНЦВШ, 2002, №1. pp. 36-45.

¹³ L. Tarkhnishvili, Interview was submitted by M. Iliysov, Georgia, Tbilisi, 2011.

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perform by the pressure of public opinion”.¹⁴ Nevertheless, under certain circumstances like war, famine, national revival, etc. religious factors can become decisive. It happened in the North Caucasus when Russian empire invaded it in the late XVIII century. Religious aspect is gaining more influence in the North Caucasus now, because it distinguishes local people from Russians.

Other factors that constitute Caucasian identity mostly solidify regional dimension of it. For example, jokes about Caucasians created in Soviet time definitely contributed to generating kinship of the people from the region. Furthermore, the very same effect had recent Russian propaganda that was aimed at forming negative stereotype. However, a label “the face of Caucasian nationality” factually induced Caucasians to feel their particularity and empathy towards each other.

Another factor that would help to build Caucasian identity is mythology. Myths about common ancestors of all Caucasians; about mystique creatures and heroic battles against them; about historic or modern time brave men who in certain situation would act as ‘a real Caucasian’ etc., are being utilized as a mobilizing factor, especially by those who stay out of the homeland.¹⁵

It is very important to bear in mind the influence of collective memory about some historic events. Both positive and negative memoirs can strengthen or ruin common Caucasian identity. For example, the Chechens’ identity was enormously affected by deportation of nation in 1944. The way how other people acted after Chechen came back to the homeland influenced people’s approach towards them... positive in some cases. War in Abkhazia could be another example of the effect of collective memory which had negative impact on Georgian attitude towards other Caucasians.

Summing up, it can be stated that beside indispensable factors like geography, culture and history, different nations of the region partially were brought together by the approach of non-Caucasians whose sometimes negative attitude helped to form common Caucasian identity. Nonetheless, comparatively recent political events drove nations of the region to different directions. Despite this kind of negative experience, Caucasian identity, as some authors claim, is something that can be called an ability to realize social and cultural unity as well as geographical one.¹⁶ The long history of coexistence, similar way of behaviour, common mythology strengthened by positive memorable events – all these aspects allow Caucasians to believe in probability of reanimating regional identity. The results of small sociological survey conducted on that issue also support that point of view.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ *Конструирование политических мифов как способ формирования позитивной известности регионов России*, at http://www.fondedin.ru/dok/04_Nazukina_v.pdf Last accessed March 25, 2012.

¹⁶ А. Ю. Шадже, *Этнические ценности как философская проблема*, Майкоп: ООО ‘Качество’, 2005, С. 80.

Dominating identities in the Caucasus: students' perspective

In order to confirm or deny stated the hypothesis stated in introduction of the article a small research was conducted. Prepared questionnaire and performed survey cannot be judged as reflecting the real picture¹⁷ about situation in the region, but common trends were detected anyway. Some assumptions were also confirmed by work with focus-group and interview with experts.

Russian speaking group

Absolute majority of respondents tended to emphasize positive characteristics of Caucasians. Only 17% highlighted negative ones like low self-esteem, passivity, low-profile, bad manners, inclination to sexual abuse towards non-Caucasian women.

Despite quite poor knowledge about other nations (nobody could mention any traditions except of 'bride abduction' and prohibition for Muslims to use alcohol), most participants of the survey as uniting factors mentioned culture (100%) and geography (78%). All respondents agreed that main dividing factor in the Caucasus is religion. Little bit more than 50% also named politics including both domestic (the way of ruling) and international (the gravitation towards different regional powers).

1/3 of respondents highlighted features like proud, respect to elderly, hospitality, dedication to family as common to all Caucasians. Men's jealousy, women's shyness, and negative attitude towards sexual minorities were also emphasized as characteristics of the people from the Caucasus.

50% of respondents were sure that there is no such thing as Caucasian appearance. According to them, all Caucasian nations are so different that it is even impossible to understand if the one is from the region or not. However, another half ensured that they would be able to recognise where the person came from.

Most respondents (72%) pointed out that they feel safe within Caucasian community, but only 22% expressed a will to work in one office with other Caucasians. 94% of participants declared that they are tolerant people, but 83% stated that members of their families would prefer them to marry a person of the same nationality and religion. More than half however showed their trust to other Caucasians and did not deny the possibility of asking for help, especially, if they are out of the homeland and in trouble.

More than half (55%) respondents described themselves as religious people, but nobody stated clearly that they are performing all rituals.

¹⁷ The survey was limited by two groups of Master's students from Ilia State University. Russian speaking group consisted of different nationalities from all over the Caucasus. Georgian speaking group was interviewed simultaneously. All people were under the age of 35 with low or medium income mainly single or maximum with one child. Most of them stated that they share liberal views.

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Georgian speaking group

Simultaneous survey on Georgian speaking group showed the very similar results. The group also demonstrated very poor knowledge about other Caucasians. Nobody knew other peoples' traditions and hardly could tell anything about neighboring nations.

As the main unifying factor Georgian students emphasized geography. Culture and Soviet legacy was distinguished by less than half respondents. Almost all (95%) participants perceived religion as dividing factor, but did not make obvious very strict religiousness. Politics of different countries was also described as dividing aspect.

Georgian respondents also (very similar to Russian-speaking group) tried to highlight positive characteristics of all Caucasians. Georgian group pointed at such characteristics as respect to elderly and attitude towards family.

Appearance of Caucasians, according to them, could also be judged as uniting, because it is easy to recognize people from the region. Moreover, similarities were detected talking about the way of acting in certain situations. For example, all Caucasians possess almost the same attitude towards penitentiary system and criminality. Almost half respondents would ask other Caucasians for help avoiding address to police.

Georgian group demonstrated astonishingly similar results to Russian-speaking group on the check of tolerance. They declared a high level of tolerance, but would mind working in the same office with other nationalities and would prefer to create a family with a person of same nationality and religion.

Focus group

Work with a focus-group helped to put in order results of the survey. Some of the comments actually repeated words of experts. For example, participants of focus-groups also stated that the role of religion is not decisive, that, according to them was clearly demonstrated by Russian-Georgian war in 2008.

Considering similarities of appearance, participants mainly agreed that all Caucasians are very different. According to them, it is probably easier to distinguish foreigner in the Caucasus than a Caucasian in the different community. They also pointed out that models of behaviour give much stronger background than appearance.

Examining the lack of knowledge about neighbouring nations respondents assumed that Caucasian youth probably is very introverted. Participants refused to tie ignorance with intolerance. As they claimed, it is usually a press from the older generation that force them to look up a spouse in the same community.

Conclusion

The question of Caucasian identity is becoming a very acute political issue. It is something that can be utilized as a basis for unification of the region. Therefore, a feeling that all we do belong to the same territorial and cultural space should exist beside a will or decision of politicians. Without that feeling it is really hard to justify convergence of all Caucasians.

This article and research was aimed to make clear if different people in the Caucasus have such feeling or not and if they do, how deep it is? Results of the survey basically confirmed stated hypothesis that dominating identity is regional one, which includes culture, history, and many other factors.

The most negatively affecting factor of Caucasian unity is religion. Although, as it was predicted by experts, not so many people appeared being as religious as it would have been imagined. Actually, most of respondent were not so strict talking about their confession. Probably that is why religious identity is less important than regional one. However, power of religious identity should not be underestimated also. When people in trouble they tend to be more religious and the region is far from tranquillity right now.

One more dividing factor is political orientation or preferences of the Caucasian countries. However, political orientation (along with identity) can be changed quite easily. Thus it was not worthy to analyse it deeper.

Despite comparatively poor awareness about neighbors, research revealed that Caucasians share feeling of nationalism and regional nationalism. While in the Caucasus it can be evaluated as negative, because different societies tend to maintain reserved relations, out of the region Caucasians usually support each other.

It was mainly admitted that there are much more similarities than differences between different nations in the Caucasus. What is more important, that people even without proper knowledge about other nations can feel their kinship.

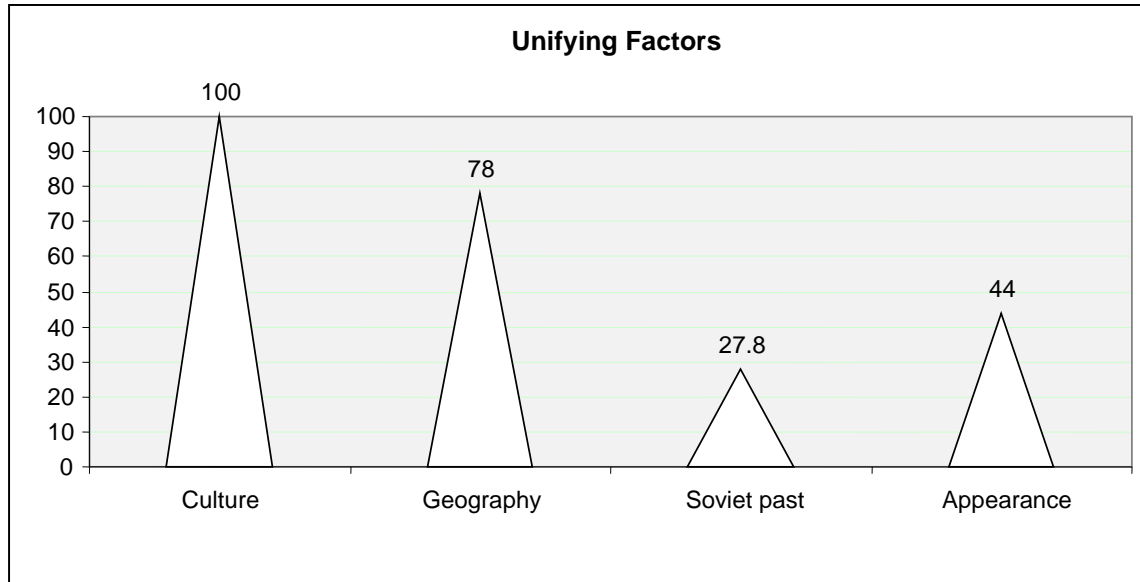
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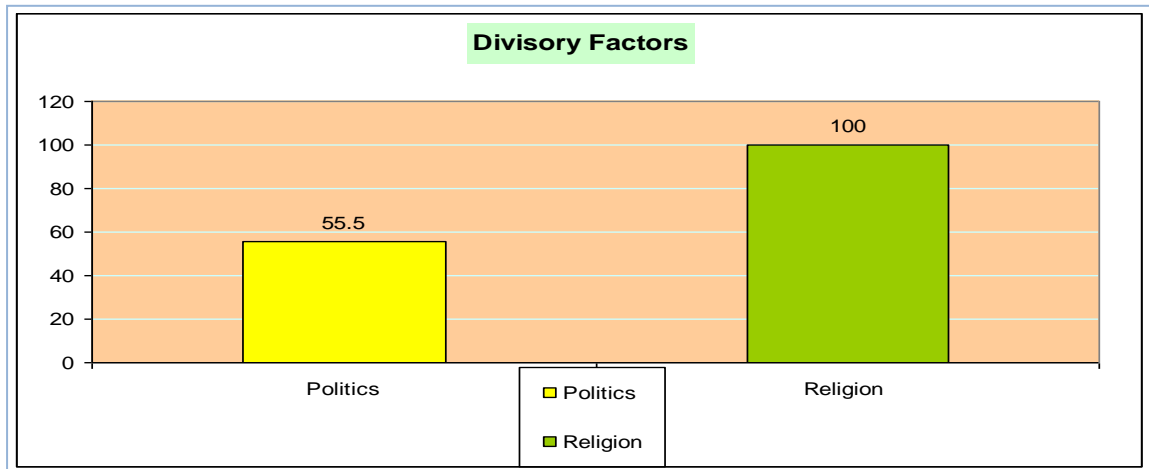
Results of survey

Russian speaking group

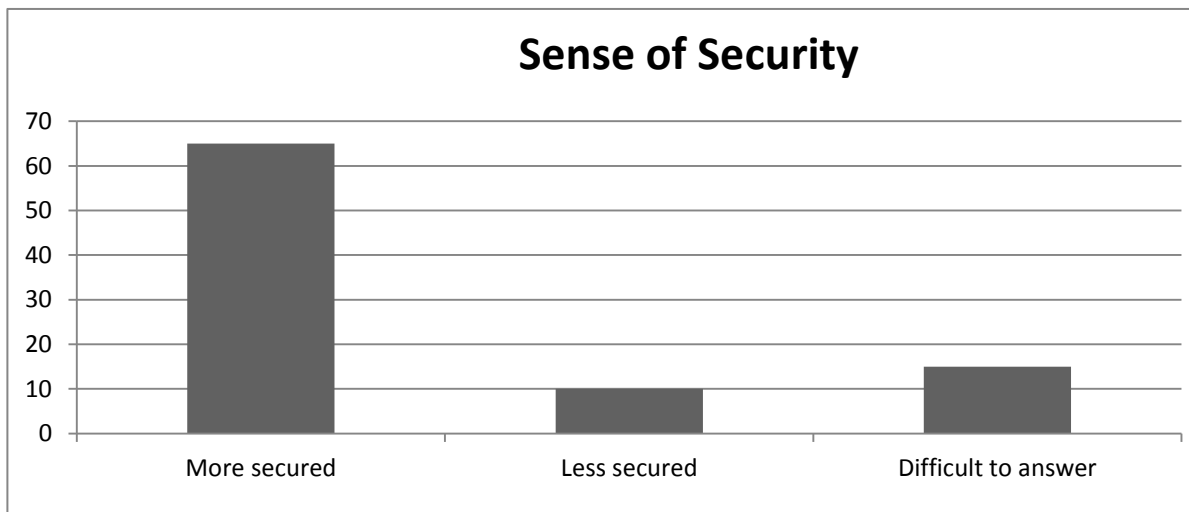
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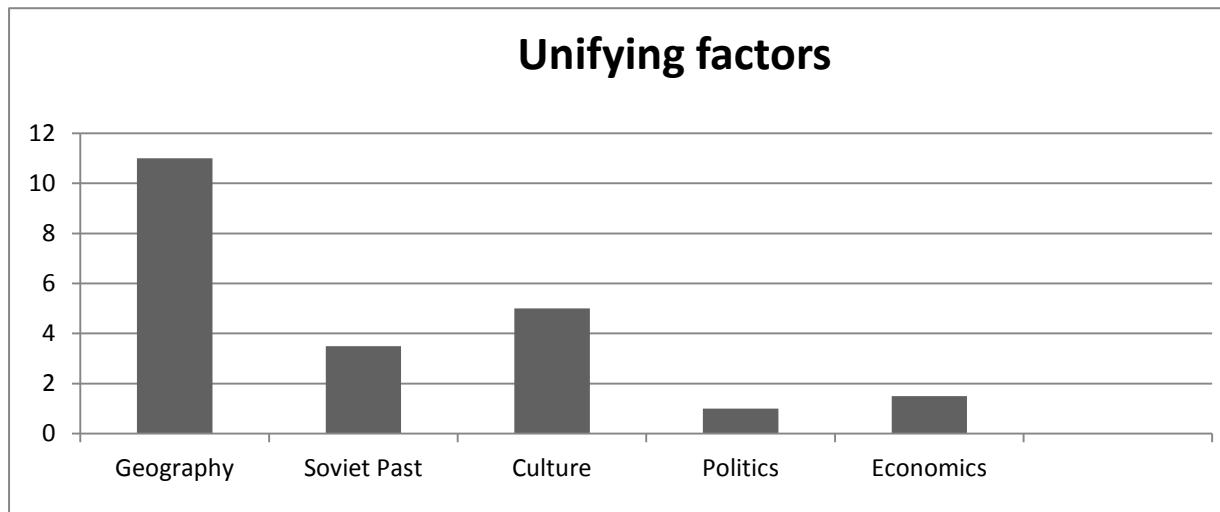


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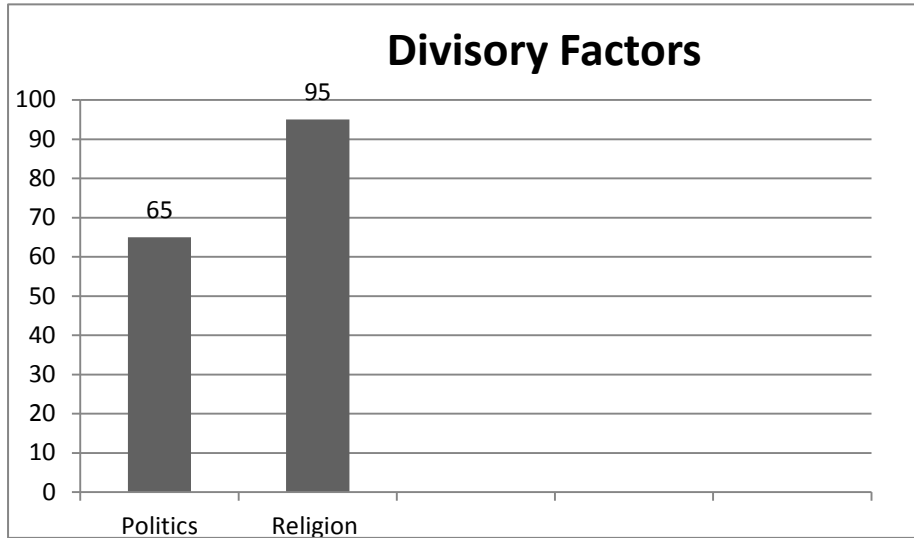


Georgian group

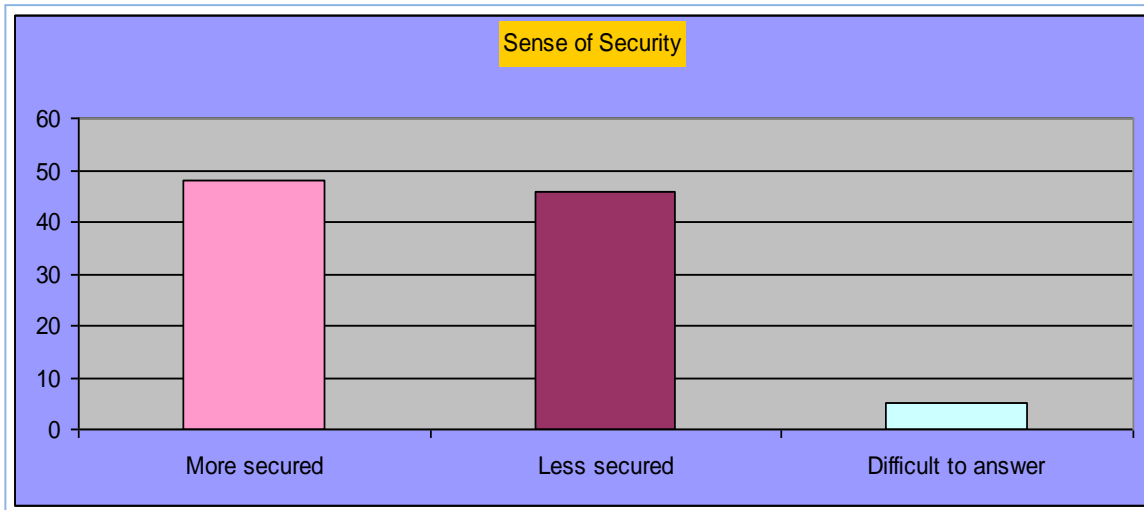
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**Caucasian & Circassian People at the Safavid Court
According to Persian Sources (Sixteenth & Seventeenth Century)**

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Introduction

Many thousands of Caucasians, Georgians, Armenians, and Circassians who were transplanted to Persia by Shah ‘Abbās I (996-1038/1588-1629) were peasants, and they were settled in villages in the Persian hinterland. A large group of Georgians and Armenians were moved into the Farīdan region, west of Isfahan, probably in 1603-5, when the shah embarked upon a systematic depopulation of the area north of Azerbaijan to discourage Ottoman incursions.¹ Because the Isfahan-Borūjerd road, which passed through their territory, was seldom used by European travelers, we have very little information about them before the 19th century. When J. M. Kinneir visited them in 1810, he estimated the number of Georgians in the region at one thousand families. By then, they had already converted to Islam, but they were not yet intermarrying with Persians.² In 1896, Lado Aghniashvili wrote that the Georgians of Farīdan comprised 2,500 households, or 15,000 individuals.³ According to

¹ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Eşfahānī, *Dayl-e Tārīk-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī Kānsārī, Tehran, 1317 Š./1938, pp. 667-670.

² J. M. Kinneir, *A Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire*, London, 1813, p. 128.

³ L. Aghniashvili, *Sparset’i ik’auri k’art’veloba (The Georgian community in Persia)*, Tbilisi, 1896, p. 192.

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A. F. Stahl, by the early 1900s they were intermarrying with Persians.⁴ However, most of them continued to speak Georgian, as is indicated by Basil Nikitin. According to Nikitin, their chief center was Ākora Bālā (also called Farīdan and Martqopi), which contained 1,600 homesteads, 20 mosques, and 7 public baths.⁵

In the 1950s, Ḥosayn-‘Alī Razmārā described eleven villages (Ākora Pāyīn, Afūs, Āqča, Bādejān-e Ākora, Bū’īn, Jaqjaq, Čoqyūrt, Dāžgān, Sībak, Šeš Javān) in the districts (dehestān) of Gorjī and Mūgū’ī in which Georgian-speaking individuals also resided.⁶ At least two groups of Georgians were settled along the Isfahan-Shiraz road, perhaps to protect that thoroughfare from raids by predatory nomads. According to Thomas Herbert, Amīnābād, south-east of Qomša, had a part-Georgian population when he passed through the village in 1627. By then, they had already converted to Islam.⁷ In any case, they must have been quickly absorbed by the local population, for no subsequent travelers have mentioned them. A larger group of Georgians, along with a group of Circassians, was settled in and around the small town of Āspās, west of Dehbīd, on the old Yazdkvāst-Zarqān stretch of the caravan route. During the 17th century, they were visited by several famous travelers, including Pietro Della Valle in 1621,⁸ Herbert in 1627,⁹ Jean Baptiste Tavernier in 1665,¹⁰ Jean de Thévenot in 1665,¹¹ and John Fryer in 1677.¹² By 1677, many of the Georgians of Āspās had already embraced the Muslim faith (Fryer, loc. cit.). When the new road through Ābāda and Dehbīd was built in the 18th century, most of the caravans bypassed Āspās and the economy of the region steadily declined.

⁴ A. F. Stahl, *Reisen in Zentral-und-Westpersien*, Petermanns Mitteilungen 51, 1905, p. 9.

⁵ B. Nikitin, *Life and Work of Y. N. Marr, Jr.*, *Georgica* 4-5, autumn 1937, pp. 284-285.

⁶ Farhang X, pp. 5, 24, 31, 41, 56, 63, 84, 116, 120.

⁷ Th. Herbert, *Some Years' Travels into Divers Parts of Africa and Asia the Great*, London, 1677, p. 153.

⁸ P. Della Valle, *Viaggi*, 3 vols. in 4 parts, Rome, 1658-63; tr. J. Pinkerton as *Travels in Persia*, London, 1811, p. 50.

⁹ Th. Herbert, *Some Years' Travels into Divers Parts of Africa and Asia the Great*, p. 152.

¹⁰ J.-B. Tavernier, *Les six voyages de Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, en Turquie, en Perse at aux Indes*, 2 vols., Utrecht, 1712, p. 246.

¹¹ J. de Thévenot, *The Travels of Monsieur de Thévenot into the Levant*, tr. A. L. Wing, 3 vols., London, 1687, II, pp. 121-122.

¹² J. Fryer, *A New Account of East India and Persia, Being Nine Years' Travels 1672-1681*, ed. W. Crooke, 3 vols., London, 1909-1915, II, pp. 231-232.

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When Robert Ker Porter visited Āspās in 1818, he saw “nothing but dilapidation, poverty and wretchedness”.¹³ Oddly enough, some of the Georgians of Āspās were absorbed by the Fārsīmadān tribe of the Qašqā’ī tribal confederacy, becoming one of its clans. These Georgians, who are called Gorjā’īlū, are Turcophone and constitute the only tangible vestige of the Georgian community of Āspās.¹⁴ A large group of Georgians and Armenians was transplanted to Māzandarān beginning in 1024/1615 as a result of further campaigns in the Caucasus by Shah ‘Abbās I.¹⁵ Most of them were settled around Faraḥābād and Ašraf (Behšahr), the shah’s favorite Caspian resorts. According to Della Valle, who passed through the area in February 1618, the forests around Sārī, south of Faraḥābād, were cut to make room for the newcomers who, by the time of his visit, had already started cultivating the land.¹⁶ Some of the Georgian immigrants were also employed as sericulturists, and a large number of mulberry trees were planted in the vicinity of Faraḥābād. At the same time, more Georgians were settled in the towns of Faraḥābād and Ašraf.¹⁷ But these Georgians were gradually absorbed by the surrounding population in Māzandarān, so that today no trace of them exists except in the form of suggestive village names, such as Gorjī Maḥalla and Gorjī Kalā.¹⁸

Yet another group of Georgians was forced to establish itself midway between Šāhrūd and Sabzavār for the purpose of protecting a barren stretch of the Tehran-Mašhad route from attacks by Turkmen bandits. A village by the name of ‘Abbāsābād was built, complete with a fort and a spacious caravanserai, and the settlers were provided with a firman which guaranteed them an annual stipend, as well as a yearly ration of wheat.¹⁹ These Georgians, like those of Māzandarān, were rapidly

¹³ R. K. Porter, *Travels in Georgia, Persia, Armenia, ancient Babylonia, &c. &c.: during the Years 1817, 1818, 1819, and 1820*, 2 vols., London, 1821-1822, II, p. 16.

¹⁴ P. Oberling, *Georgians and Circassians in Iran*, in *Studia Caucasica* 1, 1963, p. 142.

¹⁵ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Ešfahānī, *Dayl-e Tārīk-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī K̄vānsārī, II, pp. 881-913. J. R. Perry, *Forced Migrations in Iran During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, *Iranian Studies* 8, 1975, p. 207.

¹⁶ P. Della Valle, *Viaggi*, 3 vols. in 4 parts, Rome, 1658-1663; tr. J. Pinkerton as *Travels in Persia*, London, 1811, p. 50.

¹⁷ P. Della Valle, *Viaggi*, 3 vols. in 4 parts, Rome, 1658-1663; tr. J. Pinkerton as *Travels in Persia*, London, 1811, p. 51. H. L. Rabino, *Māzandarān and Astarābād*, London, 1928, p. 63. G. C. Napier, *Extracts from a Diary of a Tour in Khorassan and Notes on the Eastern Alburz Tract*, *JRGS* 46, 1876, p. 119.

¹⁸ H. L. Rabino, *Māzandarān and Astarābād*, p. 13. Razmārā, *Farhang* III, p. 253. J. de Morgan, *Mission scientifique en Perse*, Paris, 1894, I, pp. 162-163.

¹⁹ E. Smith, *The Perso-Afghan Mission, 1871-72* in Goldsmid F. J., *Eastern Persia*, London, 1976, I, p. 376; J. Bassett, *Persia, the Land of Imams: A Narrative of Travels and Residence 1871-1885*, New York, 1886, p. 208.

converted to Islam,²⁰ and, when Vladimir Minorsky visited them in 1934, he was told that only one very old woman could remember some Georgian.²¹ The most detailed descriptions of ‘Abbāsābād are those of J. B. Fraser,²² J.-P. Ferrier,²³ and Bassett.²⁴ They portrayed a dwindling community living in abject misery. According to Razmārā, in the 1940s ‘Abbāsābād had 750 Persian-speaking, Shi‘ite inhabitants.²⁵ Finally, according to de Morgan, in 1890-91 there was a small colony of Georgians in Dezful, Kūzestān. “They have preserved in very pure form the traits of their ancestors” he observed, “and, although they have become Muslims, they have not yet given up their language”.²⁶ But no trace of these Georgians exists today. In conclusion, it can be said that the Georgians in Persia have at all times displayed a special talent for adaptation to their new environment. While their Armenian neighbors in Farīdan have remained Christians, they long ago espoused Shi‘ism, and, while their Circassian neighbors at Dez-e Kord, near Āspās, have survived as a tight-knit community, they have become thoroughly assimilated to the surrounding population.

Circassians under the Safavids

The Safavids introduced a considerable number of Caucasian elements into the Persian society, either as prisoners of war or as population segments relocated by force, for instance, the Čarkas tribe of Fārs mentioned in Fasā‘ī’s Fārs-nāma about the turn of this century.²⁷ Between 947/1540 and 961/1553, Shah Ṭahmāsb (930-84/1524-76) led four expeditions to the Caucasus. In the course of these campaigns, Čarkas prisoners, as well as Georgians and Armenians, were taken in large numbers and were brought back to Persia. The majority of the prisoners were women and children,²⁸ and many of them were introduced into the court. The men were employed as royal pages (ḡolām), while some of the women were married to the king or the princes. Shah Ṭahmāsb had several wives from the

²⁰ J. Bassett, *Persia, the Land of Imams: A Narrative of Travels and Residence 1871-1885*, p. 209.

²¹ V. Minorsky, *A History of Sharvan and Darband in the 10th-11th Century*, Cambridge, 1958, p.18.

²² J. B. Fraser, *Narrative of a Journey into Khorasan in the Years 1821 and 1822*, London, 1825, pp. 367-371.

²³ J. P. Ferrier, *Voyages en Perse etc.*, Paris, 1860, pp. 159-162.

²⁴ J. Bassett, *Persia, the Land of Imams: A Narrative of Travels and Residence 1871-1885*, pp. 208-210.

²⁵ Farhang III, p. 194.

²⁶ J. de Morgan, *Mission scientifique en Perse*, p. 58.

²⁷ Fasā‘ī’s Fārs-nāma, II, p. 331.

²⁸ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Eṣfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḡ-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī Kūānsārī, I, pp. 84-88; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, Cambridge, 1980, pp. 139-146.

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Caucasus, and, of his nine sons who reached adolescence, at least five were of Caucasian mothers, four Georgians²⁹ and one Čarkas.³⁰ Gradually they grew into a powerful faction, which at the time of ʿĀḡā Khanom's death (984/1576) was vying with the qezelbāš for power.³¹ The court was the scene of numerous intrigues involving the ladies of the royal harem, each of whom, supported by her ethnic faction, tried to place her own candidate on the throne.

A very influential figure in the middle of the 10th/16th century, from the latter half of the reign of ʿĀḡā Khanom to the beginning of the reign of Solṭān-Moḡammad Ḳodābanda, was Parī-kān Khanom, daughter of the Čarkas woman, Solṭān-Āḡā Khanom,³² a wife of ʿĀḡā Khanom. She was “more intelligent than the other royal princesses” and “her opinion and counsel were valued by her father”.³³ She was once engaged to a cousin, but as the marriage was never consummated she was constantly in attendance on her father.³⁴ A Čarkas party formed around her and her brother, Solaymān Mīrzā, and her uncle, Šamḳāl Solṭān. Her residence (manāzel), which was so large that Shah ‘Abbās later used it as a temporary palace just after his coronation at Qazvīn,³⁵ was next to the garden (bāḡġa) of the royal harem, and she could enter the palace freely.³⁶

Parī-kān Khanom acted as a king-maker in two instances. Once she worked to promote the succession of Esmā‘īl Mīrzā upon the death of Shah ʿĀḡā Khanom (984/1576). Having detested the Georgian mother of Ḥaydar Mīrzā, who had been a favorite son of ʿĀḡā Khanom and regarded as heir apparent, she gave the keys to the royal palace to her maternal uncle, Šamḳāl Solṭān, who took control of the palace immediately and filled it with 300 Čarkas. Her plot succeeded, and Ḥaydar Mīrzā was murdered by some assassins among whom was Jamšīd Beg, a Čarkas ḡolām of Solṭān Solaymān

²⁹ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Ešfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḳ-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī Ḳvānsārī, I, pp. 133-134; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, pp. 215-217.

³⁰ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Ešfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḳ-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī Ḳvānsārī, I, p. 133; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, p. 215.

³¹ R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, pp. 67-68.

³² Q. A. Qomī, *Ḳolāšat al-tawārīḳ*, ed. E. Ešrāqī, Tehran, 1359 Š./1970, p. 671.

³³ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Ešfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḳ-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī Ḳvānsārī, I, p. 119; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, I, p. 199.

³⁴ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Ešfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḳ-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī Ḳvānsārī, I, p. 135; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, I, p. 218.

³⁵ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Ešfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḳ-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī Ḳvānsārī, I, p. 380.

³⁶ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Ešfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḳ-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī Ḳvānsārī, I, pp. 192-193; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, I, pp. 283-284, 337.

Mīrzā.³⁷ But the new king, Esmā‘īl II (984/1576), was not the man she had expected. To the amirs who made it a habit to call at the house of Parī-kān Khanom even after his accession he said, “the interference in matters of state by women is demeaning to the king’s honor”.³⁸ After this declaration, the amirs ceased to visit her.

Esmā‘īl was killed after less than two years. According to Eskandar Beg, one possible explanation for his murder is that Parī-kān Khanom “had conspired with maidservants of the harem to arrange that poison be inserted in the electuary mixture”.³⁹ In view of her habitual attachment to the political power, his theory is not impossible. In any event, she was effectively the sovereign after her brother’s death, shouldering the responsibility for the conduct of state affairs.⁴⁰

Soḷtān-Moḥammad Kōdābanda, the next king she put on the throne, had become aware of the dangerous influences of Parī-kān Khanom and her Čarkas group on state affairs and had decided to eliminate her party. On the very day of their entrance to the capital, Qazvīn, they ordered the execution of the princess and her uncle, Šamkāl.⁴¹

With the death of Parī-kān Khanom, the intervention of the Čarkas in the political arena of the Safavids was suspended for a time, but it did not cease. During the reign of ‘Abbās I, Farhād Beg, a Čarkas favorite (moqarrab) of the shah who had begun his career as a falconer (gūšči) and had been promoted to the office of “chief of the hunt” (amīr-e šekār) was suspected of forming a seditious relationship with the shah’s eldest son, Moḥammad-Bāqer Šafī Mīrzā, whose mother was a Čarkas. The shah handed Farhād Beg to the prince, who, to show his loyalty, ordered that he be put to death immediately and his property confiscated (1023/1614). Soon after this execution, however, a Čarkas ḡolām, Ūzūn Behbūd Beg, murdered the prince by the order of the shah, who feared the popularity of

³⁷ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Ešfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīk-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī K̄vānsārī, I, pp. 192-195; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, I, pp. 83-84, 288-289.

³⁸ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Ešfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīk-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī K̄vānsārī, I, p. 201; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, I, p. 298.

³⁹ Falūnīā; B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Ešfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīk-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī K̄vānsārī, I, p. 219; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, I, p. 327.

⁴⁰ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Ešfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīk-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī K̄vānsārī, I, p. 223; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, I, pp. 333-334.

⁴¹ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Ešfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīk-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī K̄vānsārī, I, pp. 226-227; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, I, p. 337.

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the young prince.⁴² Contrary to the general image of the *gōlāms* as being faithful and loyal to the shah, such incidents of treachery were not uncommon, even just after the initiation of the *gōlām* system by Shah ‘Abbās. This is one of the reasons the system did not function well.

Among other *Čarkas* during the period of Shah ‘Abbās, we can cite the name of Qazāq Khan. He was appointed *amīr al-omarā’* of the *Šīrvān* in 1034/ 1624-25 and led the *Qezelbāš* (*Qarāmānlū* and *Kenestlū*) following the new policy of the shah of putting a *gōlām* commander over troops of the *Qezelbāš* to diminish their political influence.

During the last days of Shah *Soltān-Ḥosayn* (1105-35/1694-1722) and his nephew, *Loṭf-‘Alī Khan*, the talented vizier *Fath-‘Alī Khan Dāgestānī*, e‘*temād-al-dawla*, exerted a strong influence on state affairs.⁴³

We have little evidence concerning the *Čarkas* after the fall of the Safavids. As the *gōlām* system did not survive well under the succeeding states, it is not difficult to suppose that the days of the *Čarkas gōlāms* had ended (See also *barda* and *barda-dārj*, v).

Georgians in the Safavid administration

Safavid interaction with Georgia and its inhabitants dates from the inception of the state in the early 16th century, when Georgians fought alongside the *Qezelbāš* in Shah *Esmā‘īl I*’s army.⁴⁴ Under Shah *Ṭahmāsb I* (930-84/1524-76), Georgians, taken captive during the shah’s four expeditions into Georgia, began to be imported into Safavid territory. *Ṭahmāsb*’s campaign in 961/1554 is said to have brought thirty thousand people from the Caucasus to Persia.⁴⁵ For the most part women and children, these were taken to the harems of the shah and the elite.

Shah ‘Abbās I further enlarged the pool of Georgians in Persia. Thousands were captured and taken south during his various campaigns in the Caucasus between 1023/1614 and 1025/1616. Fifteen

⁴² B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Ešfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḵ-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī *Ḳvānsārī*, II, pp. 881, 884-85; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, II, pp. 1096, 1099; N. Falsafī, *Zendagānī-e Šāh ‘Abbās-e awwal*, 4 vols., Tehran, 1334-1346 Š./1955-1967, II, pp. 175-180.

⁴³ L. Lockhart, *The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty and the Afghan Occupation of Persia*, Cambridge, 1958, pp. 106, 465-466.

⁴⁴ G. Grey, ed., *Travels to Tana and Persia II: A Narrative of Italian Travels to Persia*, London, 1873, pp. 190, 193; B. Scarcia Amoretti, ed., *Šāh Ismā‘īl I nei “Diarī” di Marin Sanudo I: Testi*, Rome, 1979, p. 61.

⁴⁵ Shah *Ṭahmāsb Šafawī*, *Taḍkera-ye Šāh Ṭahmāsb: Šarḥ-e waqāye‘ wa aḥwālāt-e Šāh Ṭahmāsb Šafawī*, ed. ‘Abd-al-Šakūr, Berlin, 1343/1924, p. 72; Ḥasan Rūmlū, ed. *Navā’ī*, p. 492; B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Ešfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḵ-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī *Ḳvānsārī*, p. 88.

thousand families, Muslims, Jews, and Armenians, are said to have been deported from the Georgian capital of Zagam, Šīrvān, and Qarabāg and resettled in Faraḥābād in Māzandarān, where they were put to work to develop the area.⁴⁶ According to the Georgian historian Parsadan Gorgidzhanidze and the Frenchman Jean Chardin, eighty thousand families, Georgians, Armenians, and Jews, were deported to Māzandarān and other areas.⁴⁷ Eskandar Beg speaks of 130,000 as the number of Georgians taken to Persia during the campaign of 1025/1616, and Malekšāh Ḥosayn Sīstānī even claims the huge number of 200,000 captives.⁴⁸ Into the 19th century, concentrations of transplanted Georgians were still visible throughout Persia (Oberling and sources quoted therein).

The influence and power acquired by the Georgians in this period began in the royal harem, where women from the Caucasus, many of them of Georgian origin, became prominent. No less than four of Shah Ṭahmāsb's surviving sons were born to him by Georgian wives,⁴⁹ and one of his daughters by a Georgian wife, the powerful Zaynab Begom, played an important role at the court of her nephew, Shah 'Abbās I. According to John Fryer,⁵⁰ the queen mother in the 17th century was always a Georgian. In reality, she was usually Circassian, though the difference is not always clear. Georgian women played an important role in the court's marriage politics, and by the end of the Safavid reign a whole web of relations had been established.⁵¹ Krusinski,⁵² *inter alia* insists that the influence of the Georgian harem women accounted for the Safavid tolerance for the country's

⁴⁶ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Eṣfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḳ-e 'ālamārā-ye 'abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī K̄vānsārī, p. 881; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, II, p. 1096; P. Della Valle, *Viaggi*, 3 vols. in 4 parts, Rome, 1658-1663; tr. J. Pinkerton, *as Travels in Persia*, London, 1843, I, p. 598; M.-F. Brosset, *Histoire de la Géorgie depuis l'antiquité jusqu'au XIXe siècle*, 2 vols., St. Petersburg, 1856, I, p. 488.

⁴⁷ P. Gorgidzhanidze, *Istoriya Gruzii (History of Georgia)*, tr. R. K. Kiknadze and V. S. Puturidze, Tbilisi, 1990, p. 73; Chardin, II, p. 62.

⁴⁸ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Eṣfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḳ-e 'ālamārā-ye 'abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī K̄vānsārī, pp. 900-901; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, II, p. 1116; Malekšāh Ḥosayn Sīstānī, *Eḥya' al-molūk*, ed. M. Sotūda, Tehran, 1344 Š./1965, p. 509.

⁴⁹ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Eṣfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḳ-e 'ālamārā-ye 'abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī K̄vānsārī, p. 133; R. Savory, *Safavid Persia*, in *Cambridge History of Islam*, 2 vols., Cambridge, 1970, I, pp. 215-217.

⁵⁰ J. Fryer, *A New Account of East India and Persia, Being Nine Years' Travels 1672-1681*, Crooke ed. W., 3 vols., II, pp. 290-291.

⁵¹ T. Krusinski, *The History of the Revolutions of Persia*, repr., 2 vols. in one, New York, 1973, I, p. 122.

⁵² T. Krusinski, *The History of the Revolutions of Persia*, repr., 2 vols. in one, I, pp. 128-129.

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Christian population. Writing in the early 17th century, Pietro Della Valle⁵³ claimed that there was not a household in Persia that did not have its Georgian slaves.

Georgians entered the ranks of the army and the bureaucracy in great numbers as well, turning into the mainstay of *gōlāms*, or slave soldiers. Allāhverdī Khan (q.v.), an Armenian from Georgia, served as the army's commander-in-chief for more than fifteen years (1004-22/1595-1613). During the reign of Shah 'Abbās I, most of the soldiers equipped with firearms were Georgians, their integration into the army facilitated by the relative ease with which they apparently gave up their religion and converted to Islam.⁵⁴ A total of thirty thousand Georgians are said to have served in Shah 'Abbās's army.⁵⁵ Georgians soon occupied administrative positions of the highest rank. Shah 'Abbās in 998/1590 created the *qollar* (slave) corps, consisting of Circassians, Georgians, and Armenians, and its leader, the *qollar-āqāsī*, became one of the principal state officials.⁵⁶ Allāhverdī Khan was one of the first to hold this post. In the 1630s its incumbent was the equally powerful *Ḳosrow Mīrzā* (Rostam Khan), who has resided at the Safavid court since the days of Sultan *Ḳodā-banda*.

Many provinces also fell under Georgian control. The first Georgian to occupy the governorship of a major province was Allāhverdī Khan, who in 1003-4/1595-96 received *Fārs* (*Kūhgīlūya* was added to his domain a year later). His son, *Emāmqolī Khan* (q.v.), succeeded him as the governor (*beglerbegī*) of *Fārs* and ruled that province until Shah *Şafī* had him and his family executed in 1042/1632. *Şīrvān/Şarvān* was another of the provinces to which Georgian governors were appointed. In 1013/1605 Shah 'Abbās sent *Constantin* (*Konstandīl*) *Mīrzā*, the son of the Georgian king *Alexander*, to head this region. *Emāmqolī Khan*'s brother, *Dāwūd Beg*, served as governor of *Qarabāg* between 1037/1627 and 1040/1630.⁵⁷ *Golāms* ruled *Şūstar* from 1042/1632 until

⁵³ P. Della Valle, *Viaggi*, 3 vols. in 4 parts, Rome, 1658-1663; tr. J. Pinkerton, *as Travels in Persia*, London, 1811, p. 8.

⁵⁴ P. Della Valle, *Viaggi*, 3 vols. in 4 parts, Rome, 1658-1663; tr. J. Pinkerton, *as Travels in Persia*, London, 1843, I, p. 760; E. Kaempfer, *Amoenitates exoticae*, tr. W. Hinz as *Am Hofedes persischen Grosskönigs*, 1684-1685, Leipzig, 1940, repr. Tübingen and Basel, 1977, p. 273.

⁵⁵ P. Della Valle, *Viaggi*, 3 vols. in 4 parts, Rome, 1658-1663; tr. J. Pinkerton, *as Travels in Persia*, London, 1811, p. 8.

⁵⁶ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Eşfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḳ-e 'ālamārā-ye 'abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī *Ḳvānsārī*, II, p. 1106; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, p. 419; *Mīrzā Beg Jonābādī*, *Rawzat al-Şafawīya*, ed. Ğ-R. Ṭabātabā'īMajd, Tehran 1378 Š./1999, p.716; V. Minorsky, *A History of Sharvan and Darband in the 10th-11th Century*, pp. 33, 46-47.

⁵⁷ M.-Ma' şūm b. *Ḳvajagī Eşfahānī*, *Ḳolāşat al-sār*, ed. Ī. Afşār, Tehran, 1368 Š./1989, p. 51; B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Eşfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḳ-e 'ālamārā-ye 'abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī *Ḳvānsārī*, II, p. 81;

the last days of the Safavids.⁵⁸ Şafîqolî Khan, the governor of Hamadân, was appointed beglerbegî of Baghdad following Shah ‘Abbās’s conquest of the city in 1033/1622-23.⁵⁹ Georgia itself continued to be governed by a Georgian after the Safavid conquest, following an agreement between Shah ‘Abbās and Taimuraz (Ṭahmūrāṭ) Khan, its last independent ruler, whereby the latter submitted to Safavid rule in exchange for being allowed to rule as the region’s wālî and for having his son serve as dārūḡa (city prefect) of Isfahan in perpetuity.⁶⁰ The first Georgian to hold the position of dārūḡa of the capital since 1620 was K̄osrow Mīrzā.⁶¹ K̄osrow Mīrzā held the position until his death in 1658, though he mostly let himself be represented by a deputy (nā’eb). Georgians continued to occupy this position until the last days of the Safavid rule.

The position of the Georgian ḡolāms was further strengthened under Shah Şafî and Shah ‘Abbās II. Eskandar Beg claims that at the time of Shah Abbās’s death, ḡolāms (not all of them Georgian) held twenty-one of the ninety-two most powerful positions.⁶² And of the thirty-seven great amirs appointed under Shah ‘Abbās II, at least twenty-three were ḡolāms.⁶³ Following the slaughter of a great many Qezelbāš, the Georgians under Shah Şafî consolidated their hold over key positions in the inner palace, the bureaucracy, and the military. The shah’s own chamberlain (mehtar) was a white eunuch of Georgian origin.⁶⁴ Aside from the positions of qollar-āqāsî and dārūḡa of Isfahan, they virtually monopolized the posts of dīvānbeḡî (q.v., chief justice) and sepahsālār (military commander). These and other positions tended to become hereditary, and one powerful functionary typically held more than one simultaneously. Thus, K̄osrow Mīrzā served as dīvānbeḡî and dārūḡa of Isfahan under Shah ‘Abbās, played a crucial role in the accession of Shah Şafî in 1038/1629, and was

⁵⁸ Sayyed ‘Abd-Allāh b. Nūr-al-Dīn b. Ne‘mat-Allāh Ḥosaynî Şūštarî, *Taḡkera-ye Şūštar/An Account of Shushtar from the Earliest Time to A. H. 1169*, ed. Khan Bahadur Maula Bakhsh, Calcutta, 1924, pp. 46-47.

⁵⁹ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Eşfahānî, *Ḍayl-e Tārîḡ-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsî*, ed. A. Sohaylî K̄vānsārî, p. 1004; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, II, pp. 1226-1227.

⁶⁰ J.-B. Chardin, X, p. 29; E. Kaempfer, *Amoenitates exoticae*, tr. W. Hinz as Am Hofedes persischen Grosskönigs, 1684-1685, pp. 110-111.

⁶¹ P. Della Valle, *Viaggi*, 3 vols. in 4 parts, Rome, 1658-1663; tr. J. Pinkerton, *as Travels in Persia*, London, 1843, II, p. 176.

⁶² B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Eşfahānî, *Ḍayl-e Tārîḡ-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsî*, ed. A. Sohaylî K̄vānsārî, pp. 1084-1089; R. M. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, II, pp. 1309-1317.

⁶³ K. M. Röhrborn, *Provinzen und Zentralgewalt Persiens im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, Berlin, 1966; tr. K. Jahāndārî, *Nezām-e ayālāt dar dawra-ye şafawīya*, Tehran, 1357 Š./1978, p. 33.

⁶⁴ A. Olearius, *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung der muscowitischen und persischen Reyse*, Tübingen, 1971, p. 571; V. Minorsky, *A History of Sharvan and Darband in the 10th-11th Century*, pp. 127, 138.

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made qollar-āqāsī the following year, on which occasion he was renamed Rostam Khan.⁶⁵ In 1632, following a rebellion in Kartli, he became wālī of that part of Georgia.⁶⁶ Having been appointed to all of Georgia in 1058/1648, he remained in power until his death in 1069/1658. He is not to be confused with another Rostam Beg, who was dīvānbeḡī in the last years of Shah ‘Abbās I’s reign, and served as tofangčī-āqāsī (rifleman commander), sepahsālār, and beglerbeg of Azerbaijan between 1040/1631 and his execution in 1053/1643. Rostam Beg’s younger brother, ‘Alīqolī Khan, had a remarkable career spanning fifty years, during which he served as dīvānbeḡī under Shah Şaftī,⁶⁷ held the post of sepahsālār and the attendant position of beglerbegī of Azerbaijan between 1058/1648 and 1064/1654, fell out of favor, but was rehabilitated by Shah Solaymān, who reinstated him as sepahsālār. Chardin called him the effective ruler of the country at the time of his death in 1667.⁶⁸ Rostam Beg’s son, Şafīqolī Khan, was appointed dīvānbeḡī in 1067/1657,⁶⁹ and took up the governorship of Maşhad in 1074/1664.⁷⁰ Şafīqolī Khan’s son, Rostam Khan, was dīvānbeḡī under Shah Solaymān and also served as tofangčī-āqāsī, and in 1692 was appointed sepahsālār and beglerbegī of Tabrīz.⁷¹ The brother of Gorgīn Khan (Giorgi XI, the former king of Kartli), Levan (Leon), also known as Şāhqolī Khan, was appointed dīvānbeḡī of Isfahan in 1700 upon his victorious return from a campaign against the Baluch marauders in Kermān.⁷² Levan’s son, Kay-koşrow (Kosrow Khan) similarly briefly served as dīvānbeḡī in 1709 and was rewarded with the position of dārūḡa of Isfahan for quelling a bread

⁶⁵ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Eşfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḡ-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī Kūānsārī, p. 1078; M.-Ma’şūm b. Kūājagī Eşfahānī, *Kolāşat al-sīar*, ed. Ī. Afşār, p. 46.

⁶⁶ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Eşfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḡ-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī Kūānsārī, pp. 114, 136; M.-Ma’şūm b. Kūājagī Eşfahānī, *Kolāşat al-sīar*, ed. Ī. Afşār, p. 144.

⁶⁷ B. Eskander, and M.-Y. Wāla Eşfahānī, *Ḍayl-e Tārīḡ-e ‘ālamārā-ye ‘abbāsī*, ed. A. Sohaylī Kūānsārī, pp. 146, 166; M.-Ma’şūm b. Kūājagī Eşfahānī, *Kolāşat al-sīar*, ed. Ī. Afşār, p. 197; Mīrzā M.-Ṭ. Waḡīd Qazvīnī, *‘Abbās-nāma*, ed. E. Dehqān, Arāk, 1329 Ş./1950, p. 47; A. Olearius, *Vermehrte neue Beschreibung der muscowitischen und persischen Reyse*, p. 671.

⁶⁸ Mīrzā M.-Ṭ. Waḡīd Qazvīnī, *‘Abbās-nāma*, ed. E. Dehqān, pp. 138, 174-75; J.-B. Tavernier, *Les six voyages de Jean Baptiste Tavernier*, 3 vols., Paris, 1679; tr., *The Six Travels*, London, 1684, I, p. 638-643; J.-B. Chardin, IX, pp. 555-563, X, p. 70.

⁶⁹ Şāmlū, fol. 133v.; Algemeen Rijks Archief, VOC 1224, fol. 316 v.

⁷⁰ Şāmlū, fol. 146 v.

⁷¹ Mīr M.-Sa’īd Maşīzī (Bardsīrī), *Taḡkera-ye Şafawīya-ye Kermān*, ed. M.-E. Bāstānī Pārīzī, Tehran, 1369 Ş./1990, p. 626; Sayyed ‘A.-al-Ḥ. Kātūnābādī, *Waḡāye ‘al-sannīn wa’l-a’wām*, Tehran, 1378 Ş./1998, pp. 548, 550.

⁷² L. Lockhart, *The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty and the Afghan Occupation of Persia*, p. 46; D. M. Lang, *Georgia and the Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, BSO (A) S 14, 1952, p. 527.

revolt, and in 1709 became sepahsālār and was also made wālī of Georgia.⁷³ He was killed during an expedition in Afghanistan against the Ġilzī (q.v.) Afghans. The sepahsālār (and beglarbegī of Azerbaijan and wālī of Georgia) in 1716 was Ḥosaynqolī Khan (Wahtang VI), the brother of the qollar-āqāsī, Rostam Mīrzā. In 1717 he succeeded his brother as qollar-āqāsī.⁷⁴

As these examples show, the administrative and military power of Georgians continued right up to the end of the Safavid period. Fryer's claim⁷⁵ that in 1677 Georgians contributed forty thousand soldiers to the Persian army is surely exaggerated, but Engelbert Kaempfer⁷⁶ may well have been right in his assertion that, by the 1680s, about twenty thousand Georgians (including Circassians and Daghestanis) were living in Isfahan. Shah Solaymān, who seemed to have favored Georgians, asked Šahnāvāz Khan (Vakhtang V), the king of Kartli, to marry his daughter Anusa and made Šahanavāz's son, Alexander, the dārūgā of Isfahan.⁷⁷ It is also said that Shah Solaymān kept the Georgians content and forgetful of their origins by promoting them to high positions.⁷⁸ Their internal divisions, noted by Chardin (II, p. 42)⁷⁹ and the fact that they never achieved full autonomy but had to compete with other groups, kept them from establishing supremacy in the administration. The Georgians, moreover, were not universally loved and their tremendous power gave rise to a great deal of friction and factionalism. Chardin tells the story of 'Alīqolī Khan, a Georgian, who was sent to Lorestān and caused a local revolt (Chardin, IX, p. 206).⁸⁰ The same author (V, p. 228)⁸¹ further notes that older Persians loathed the Georgian newcomers, calling them qara oġlū, sons of blacks; he also remarks (II,

⁷³ Algemeen Rijks Archief, VOC, 1753, fol. 293 v.; M.-M. Mostawfī, *Zobdat al-tawārīk*, ed. B. Gūdarzī, Tehran, 1375 Š./1996, p. 116; L. Lockhart, *The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty and the Afghan Occupation of Persia*, pp. 49-50.

⁷⁴ P. P. Bushev, *Posol'stovo Artemiya Volynskogo v Iran v 1715-1718 gg. (The Mission of Artemiya Volynskii to Iran in 1715-1718)*, Moscow, 1978, pp. 181-82; Algemeen Rijks Archief, VOC 1897, fol. 271; T. Krusinski, *The History of the Revolutions of Persia*, repr., 2 vols. in one, I, pp. 190, 198-199.

⁷⁵ J. Fryer, *A New Account of East India and Persia, Being Nine Years' Travels 1672-1681*, Crooke ed. W., 3 vols., II, p. 291.

⁷⁶ E. Kaempfer, *Amoenitates exoticae*, tr. W. Hinz as Am Hofedes persischen Grosskönigs, 1684-1685, p. 204.

⁷⁷ M.-F. Brosset, *Histoire de la Géorgie depuis l'antiquité jusqu'au XIXe siècle*, 2 vols., St. Petersburg, 1856, II, p. 9.

⁷⁸ N. Sanson, *Voyage ou état présent du royaume de Perse*, Paris, 1694, pp. 176-177.

⁷⁹ J.-B. Chardin, II, p. 42.

⁸⁰ J.-B. Chardin, IX, p. 206.

⁸¹ J.-B. Chardin, V, p. 228.

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pp. 42-43, 150)⁸² on the animosity that existed between Georgians and Armenians, another group that figured conspicuously in governmental circles. Others noted that the Georgians were feared in Persia.⁸³ In late Safavid times an anti-Georgian faction consisting of the superintendant of the royal workshops (nāzer-e boyūtāt) and the grand vizier is reported.⁸⁴ There surely was no love lost between the Qezelbāš and the Georgians in late Safavid times; while the Qezelbāš are said to have encouraged the Afghans to invade Persia to further their own cause against the Georgians, anti-Muslim sentiments seem to have prompted some of the latter to hope for a Russian invasion.⁸⁵

However that may be, the very demise of the Safavid state is entwined with Georgian military leadership. Giorgi XI or Gorgīn Khan (Šahnavāz Khan III), was the ruler of Georgia who, having lost his throne, in 1699 was made governor of Kermān with the task of halting the Baluchi incursions that threatened the country's southeast. Four years later the need to repel invading Afghans prompted the shah to appoint him as sepahsālār, beglerbegī of Qandahār and, nominally, wālī of Kartli. In 1716 it was the turn of Ḥosaynqolī Khan (Vakhtang VI), Giorgi XI's regent in Georgia, to be appointed sepahsālār and charged with fighting the Afghans. Georgian troops, led by Rostam Khan, fought valiantly against the Afghans at the battle of Golnābād in 1134/1722, but their number was too small to keep the enemy from laying siege to Isfahan. A refusal on the part of Vakhtang VI, now again residing in Georgia, to send relief troops to Persia, finally made it impossible for the Safavids to save the city and their realm.⁸⁶

⁸² J.-B. Chardin, II, pp. 42-43, 150.

⁸³ Carmelite Archives, O.C.D. 243 1 bis; Ph. Avril, *Voyage en divers états d'Europe et d'Asie*, Paris, 1693, p. 60.

⁸⁴ D. M. Lang, *Georgia and the Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, BSO (A) S 14, pp. 530-531.

⁸⁵ D. M. Lang, *Georgia and the Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, BSO (A) S 14, 1957, p. 109; L. Lockhart, *The Fall of the Safavi Dynasty and the Afghan Occupation of Persia*, pp. 86, 89; K. M. Röhrborn, *Provinzen und Zentralgewalt Persiens im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, Berlin, 1966; tr. Jahāndārī K., *Nezām-e ayālāt dar dawra-ye šafawīya*, p. 38.

⁸⁶ M.-M. Mostawfī, *Zobdat al-tawārīk*, ed. B. Gūdarzī, p. 129; D. M. Lang, *Georgia and the Fall of the Safavi Dynasty*, BSO (A) S 14, pp. 104-13; K. M. Röhrborn, *Provinzen und Zentralgewalt Persiens im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, Berlin, 1966; tr. Jahāndārī K., *Nezām-e ayālāt dar dawra-ye šafawīya*, p. 89.

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Defining Modern Russia: if it is Empire or Not?

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Introduction

Disintegration of the Soviet Union opened a new page in the book of history of Russian and many other nations. Especially, it had impact on former Soviet peoples. “The last empire” (as the USSR used to be known) fell in 1991 freeing those who were incarcerated in this huge concentration camp for about 7 decades. Violently established union of 15 republics was replaced by independent states some of which managed to form and start their own politics. Others still suffer bandwagoning effect following orders of the Kremlin or consulting with Moscow before making decisions.

The situation changed dramatically one more time just in a few years after disintegration of the USSR. It appeared that democracy is not what Russians wanted. Neither politicians, nor ordinary people had a satisfactory feeling coping with a new type of problems. Unusual way of life seemed to be so unbearable, that people started sharing nostalgia for the “Soviet stability”. Politicians in their turn reversed to the old means in foreign affairs applying them to the new proxy states (“near abroad”). The core nation of Russia was eager to forget democratic values and to remember “its grandeur” and “superior status” they used to have. According to the survey conducted by Levada

centre in 2006, 60% of Russia's inhabitants would like to live in restored Soviet Union.¹ Moreover, public agrees on Kremlin's concentration on military sector rather than economic development.

This gradual regression to the Soviet methods poses the question, "If Russia still is an empire?" Researchers disagree on that issue because, on the one hand, Russia has transformed significantly and notably differ from the Soviet Union, which mainly is recognized as an imperial kind of polity. On the other hand, there are some constant features that still point at the country's imperialistic nature. As it is claimed by Marie Bennigsen-Broxup, modern "Russia is facing the same nationalities problem – with all its political, territorial, ethnic, economic, and religious complexities – that beset the Soviet Union before its demise".² Furthermore, it waged two bloody wars in Chechnia and one in Georgia, which were named as colonial by some researchers.³

The goal of this paper is to give as clear answer to the posed question as possible. It can be achieved by analyzing Russia's attitude and politics towards its the least integrated subjects, which might also be helpful forecasting directions of Russia's further steps.

Types of empires

It would be illogical to start the analysis with anything else except for the definition of empire. One of encyclopedias defines empires as follows: "Empires are relationships of political control imposed by some political societies over the effective sovereignty of other political societies."⁴ Simplistic explanation would sound like that - a bigger more powerful country imposes its rule and control onto a smaller one.

Very famous researcher of empires Dominic Lieven does not deny previous explanation and that kind of relations between particular polities, but he stresses some factors more precisely. According to him, empire should have a great territory; multi-ethnicity; it is supposed to rule without

¹ С. Черняковский, *Возврат к СССР*, интернет-журнал Новая Политика, 03. 05. 2006, <http://www.novopol.ru/-vozvrat-k-sssr-text8062.html>.

² M. Bennigsen-Broxup, *The 'Internal' Muslim Factor in the Politics of Russia*, in *Central Asia and the Caucasus after the Soviet Union* edited by Mohiaddin Meshabi, University Press of Florida, 1994, pp. 75-94.

³ This idea can be inferred from notorious Russian ideologist Aleksandr Dugin who thinks that shrinking processes mean death for empires. Dominic Lieven also thinks that perpetration of genocide or large-scale ethnic cleansing is one of the ways to save an empire. See Dominic Lieven, *Empire*, Yale University Press, 2002, pp. 50-51, 275-277.

⁴ D. A. Lake, *Imperialism: Political Aspects*, International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, Elsevier Science Ltd., 2001, pp. 7232-7234.

explicit consent of the governed; and (above all) empire has to possess very great power in international affairs.⁵ Sphere of influence is one more attribute that also belongs to the range of imperial qualities.

The last description makes it clear that the spirit of empire contradicts basic tenets of democracy and nationalism. On contrary to them, empires tend to acquire as much territory as possible, to impose their ruling on alien peoples, and to make the first two things beneficial for the metropolitan society. Moreover, they usually entail authoritarian governance, which tends to introduce their policy as mission and promote messianic idea. The latter one accepted by the metropolitan society becomes a real driving force and *raison d'être* for an empire.

One can argue that some democratic nation-states are also based on centralized forms of government, but they are being ruled without institutionalized differentiation between core and periphery. Moreover, they embrace the principle of equality of citizens whose well-being is the main goal and driving force for governments. Therefore, the role of empire can be estimated as both positive and negative. On the one hand this type of state can be significant in ensuring security, consolidating local elites, and promoting civilization mission. On the other hand, the negative effect of this comprises national suppression, highly bureaucratic administration, and unification.

It is also worth noting that there are many types of empires and those of even one type may sometimes vary greatly. In spite of this, both afore presented definitions are universal, nevertheless more clear-cut specific might be needed for the sake of quality of the analysis.

Scholars usually divide all empires into two categories: maritime and land. This classification determines the origin of main characteristics, the way of ruling and dealing with issues and local authorities.

It is natural that maritime empires possessed colonies overseas. Although, history shows that land empires also could project power over the oceans, their main target nevertheless usually were neighboring states. Very good examples of land empires with colonies overseas are The Third Reich and France in Napoleon's times. Russian empire at some point also tried to strengthen its power by gaining access to warm seas and setting its colonies in non-contiguous territories (Alaska 18 century). But the world was already more or less divided when Russian sailors started roaming the oceans searching for the new terrains. Furthermore, handling overseas territories seemed too complicated for Russian emperors.

⁵ D. Lieven, *Legacy of Empires*, in *Perspectives on the Russian State in Transition*, edited by Wolfgang Danspeckgruber, Princeton, New Jersey, 2006, pp. 8-27.

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Another main difference between land and maritime empires is the way of ruling. Geographers noticed causality between the type of imperial polity and the way it used to impose rules. Land empires usually were stricter and conducted harsher politics. However, the means utilized by maritime polities, especially on the first stages after conquest, did not differ a lot in some cases.

As D. Lieven points out, land powers also had more centralized bureaucratic forms of government and had usually been “ruled by autocratic monarchs in alliance with aristocratic or bureaucratic elites”.⁶ Contrary to them maritime empires or sea powers trusted more their local envoys and not only them. There was little or no hierarchy between rulers and ruled based on an ethnicity or culture. Local elite could gain education and be incorporated into elite of metropolis on a larger scale (as it occurred in the Great Britain). In addition, maritime empires used to be more flexible and inclined towards relative liberalism. Of course they also tried to absorb colonies, but those lands were not defined as part of the metropolis or seen as integral to the nation by the metropolitan population. Inhabitants of colonies sometimes had even more manifested imperial attitude than residents of metropolis. For example, the Ghurkas from British Indian Army were core troops in some British military campaigns.

Despite mentioned differences, both types of empire had many similarities. Such features as: 1) the domination of a core region over peripheries; 2) claims to universal legitimacy whether referring to a revolutionary ideology or religious conversion; 3) a mission civilisatrice; 4) a messianic idea, etc. are essential parts of all empires. Moreover, as it was noticed by D. Lieven sometimes it is nearly impossible to make a clear division because, “The manner in which Spain ruled the Americas or the British ruled India, for example, had much in common with the traditional ways of autocratic land empire”.⁷ The same can be said about Russia, which also adopted many atypical features being analyzed in the next chapter.

Russian empire and its features: from the past to present

Russian state actually became an empire in the 16 century when Ivan IV “The Terrible” conquered large areas (the Tatar khanates of Kazan in 1552 and Astrakhan in 1556). That was probably the first time when Russians subdued and incorporated culturally alien nation. To put it differently, the very first time in Russian history the factor of multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multi-

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

linguistic populations appeared on the stage. Russian expansion ended as recently as 1945, when the last new territories were added to the Soviet Union after the Second World War. It should be noted that the process of evolution of Russian state is more comparable with eastern type of state building than with western one. The latter type of empires usually consisted of metropolis as national state and colonies. The former (Eastern type) included different nations into one integral state, where the one nation was dominating. In this case, we mean Russian nation.

The way of absorbing conquered people over the course of those four centuries has not changed. There was a constant migration process from the core of the Russian empire to its outskirts. This policy was successful to some extent. Many small nations were assimilated. But the more empire grew the less capacity to continue assimilation it had. At the end of the 19 century, Russians made up to 44% of the empire population (more than 65% if Ukrainians and Belorussians are added).⁸ Bearing in mind nationalism popularity in that time, Moscow was balancing on the verge of collapse, because ability to “digest” local inhabitants of other nationalities is very important for land empires. Moreover, it can be even named a condition *sine qua none* for empires. As it claimed Barbara A. Anderson and Brian D. Silver, very similar demographic situation was in Soviet times just before the disintegration. According to them, “Ethnic Russians composed 50.8% of total population in the Soviet Union”.⁹ (Now ethnic Russians comprise about 80% of population of the Russian Federation). However, Soviet rulers conducted harsher assimilation policy than their predecessors and therefore had stronger positions. Soviet antinational politics was concealed by democratic slogans, but the real situation can be assessed judging from the strategy approved by the Kremlin. The ruling Communist party (“aristocracy” or elite) implemented very strict migration policy.¹⁰ Graduated students, specialists, workers etc. used to be sent to the national outskirts of the country for a certain period of

⁸ Dissertation, *Empire, Ethnicity and Nation-State: China and Russia in comparative perspective*, LSE, 2009, p. 21.

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/economicHistory/Research/CCPN/publications/Dissertations/DissertationsCCP/72558.pdf>

⁹ B. A. Anderson and B. D. Silver, *Growth and Diversity of the Population of the Soviet Union*, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 510, Jul., 1990, pp. 155-177 Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 510, Jul., 1990, pp. 155-177.

¹⁰ China in Xinjiang province used demography in the same way. In 1949 the Han accounted for about 7% of the population of the autonomous region, by 1996 the proportion had risen to over 40%, and Uyghurs comprised less than 42% in the year 2000. See Dru C. Gladney, *Dislocating China. Muslims, Minorities, and Other Subaltern Subjects*, London: Hurst & Company, 2004, pp. 219-220.

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time. Usually, newcomers would marry there and stay for the rest of life. Opposite process was incited in national republics. Local inhabitants used to be encouraged for seeking career in Russian mainland. Recent strategy of the development for the North Caucasus adopted by the Kremlin in 2010 suggests the very same model.¹¹ The noteworthy fact is that it was easier to get promoted having a spouse of a titular nationality.

Another important and inherent feature of land empires is a symbiosis of dynasty and nobility. It is known that Russian state was basically created by these two internal powers or ruling classes. Tsar based its power on loyal nobility and maintained loyalty by purging aristocracy from time to time. However, aristocracy could and would also plot against Tsar the very same way as it used to do the Mamluks in Egypt or the Janissaries in Ottoman Empire. A little bit updated but, in fact, the same tradition could be detected in the Soviet Russia. The main difference was that noble titles were not only inherited, they could be gained easier than before. Although, it must be noted, that the possibility to make a career was presented even in the times of Peter the Great. One could also notice that Soviet rulers approved British *modus operandi* incorporating local nobility into the one of metropolis.¹² However, as some scholars of nationalism suggest, it might be just a way to avoid national liberation movement. Modern Russia also tries to follow this tradition. There are some representatives of national minorities working in the Kremlin, but nowadays it is not sufficient to pacify suppressed people who feel as if they are second class citizens.

This type of societal division into classes also is a specific of imperial countries, not the only though. Differently than in Soviet Union, which tried to melt nationalities down, modern Russia can be blamed in creating even more vicious system of suppressing people of other nationalities. Everywhere in the Russian Federation, apart from the homeland, non-Russians face the risk of racist attacks and harassment from police or neo-Nazis. Offensive labels like “khachiks”, “black asses”, “narrow-eyed”, “churkas” etc.¹³, actually, were popular long before the collapse of the Soviet Union, but after 1991 this attitude became much “better” elaborated.

¹¹ See, *Strategy for Social and Economical Development of the North Caucasian Federal District to 2025*, Chapter IV, Paragraph 1, p. 64.

<http://government.ru/media/2010/10/4/35578/file/1485.doc>

¹² Such kind of policy is quite normal for empires. For instance, those who were able to master the principles of “Confucian classics” had the right to rule in Chinese empire.

¹³ In China others were often portrayed as less civilized or “uncooked” and could only become civilized by adopting Chinese customs and values. See Dru C. Gladney, pp. 38, 42.

One more factor that can be named as a feature of empire is the way of ruling their subjects, which can be named typical colonial. Territories of the North Caucasus, for example, today remind medieval fiefdoms of barons and dukes. However, the king-baron or lord-vassal relationship can be also compared with relations between metropolis and periphery in the first stage after conquest. Local authorities possess a lot of power that was granted them for their faithfulness and relative stability. “Ramzan Kadyrov’s (Moscow appointed head of Chechen republic – aut.) soldiers terrorize people ... by methods such an execution without a court verdict, hostage-taking, kidnapping, torture, imprisonment in illegal jails etc.”¹⁴ Personal cult of the head of Chechen republic is combined with efforts expressing allegiance to the Kremlin by naming streets after Vladimir Putin or annihilated in 2000 Russian paratroopers. In other words the region, as it stated U. Halbach, is “...completely cut off from the rest of Russia”.¹⁵ Ordinary Russian people see the Caucasus as *terra incognita*, something that is dim, very far, and unstable. Meanwhile more advanced and educated Russians usually from St. Petersburg and Moscow “...perceive the region as a kind of internal colony”,¹⁶ which actually is.

As for the south Caucasus Russia mainly implemented *divide et impera* policy here complemented it by the principle of punishing disobedient. Current time this policy evolved into managing frozen conflicts which can be kindled if necessary, as it was in case of South Ossetia in 2008.

As it was emphasized afore, all empires must have a background. In other words, they have to possess centripetal function submitting idea and what is more important the core nation must accept this idea. It ought to be a driving force that is necessary to implement imperial objectives. Small nations that are subdued usually do not share or even resist to such ideas, but until empire has enough strength they would stay within the polity.

For Russian empire this idea was the notion of continuing Christian imperial tradition of Rome and Constantinople (Moscow is the Third Rome). It was convenient and acceptable for Russian Christians. The center of power in the Christian world, according to it, moved to Moscow, which even

¹⁴ M. Falkowski, *Chechnya: Between a Caucasian Jihad and 'Hidden' Separatism*, Center for Eastern Studies, Warsaw, January 2007, p. 56.

¹⁵ U. Halbach, *Russia's Internal Abroad, the North Caucasus as an Emergency Zone at the Edge of Europe*, Berlin, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Research Paper, 2010, p. 28. There are many examples when local leaders acted and even passed laws offending Russian Constitution, e.g. The Law about Adopting Shariah Courts in Ingushetia. See Владимир Бобровников, *Ислам на постсоветском Северном Кавказе. Дагестан: Мифы и реалии*, Москва: Логос, 2000, p. 22.

¹⁶ W. Górecki, *Managers Instead of Governors-Generals? Moscow's New Tactics in the North Caucasus*, Warsaw, Centre for Eastern Studies, 2010, p. 2.

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adopted symbolic of Byzantine. Religion was actually forbidden in the USSR. Instead of previous Orthodoxy-based concept another one was invented. Russian people were united on the basis of belief in communism that would vanquish very soon in favor of the whole world.

It was very eloquent signal for the international community when Russia under the first presidency of Vladimir Putin turned back to its previous symbols that are mixture of soviet and Tsarist emblems. It can be intercepted that V. Putin might have shared the same feeling as Josef Stalin did before him. He sees himself as the inheritor of Tsarist Empire and the USSR with the task to preserve it. That is why new Russia has imperial coat of arms and soviet hymn, but it is not enough to restore the former power. Putin also endeavored to consolidate the country economically, politically and socially. He reorganized and strengthened the security apparatuses, which gave him greater ability to dominate the people under one political party and to purge foreign influence from the economy and build a cult of personality.

Nowadays Russia has neither core nor messianic idea; nothing that would stimulate people to implement today's Moscow politics or even keeps different nationalities together. The Kremlin lost its mission and failed to create new identity¹⁷ for all inhabitants as it was in the Soviet Union¹⁸ or as it is in the United States. It also failed to foster one of the old universal religions that could become a basis of deeper integration of a multi-ethnic federation, in which all nationalities would enjoy guaranteed equal rights and opportunities.¹⁹

The Kremlin puts a lot of efforts to establish Eurasian union and make it the *raison d'être*, which is half the battle. As it is seen by analyst Lauren Goodrich, "Russia will begin this new iteration of a Russian empire by creating a union with former Soviet states based on Moscow's current associations, such as the customs union and the collective security treaty organization. This will allow the 'EuU' [a Eurasia union] to strategically encompass both the economic and security spheres ... Putin is creating a union in which Moscow would influence foreign policy and security but would not

¹⁷ J. O'Loughlin and P. F. Talbot claim that Russians lost their national identity. J. O'Loughlin and P. F. Talbot, *Where in the World is Russia?* Geopolitical Perceptions and Preferences of Ordinary Russians, Eurasian Geography and Economics, 2005, Copyright © 2005 by V. H. Winston & Son, Inc, No. 1, pp. 23-50.

¹⁸ According to Hans Kohn, the Bolsheviks turned "nationalism from an all-commanding absolute into the servant of a supranational idea." See Reza Zia-Ebrahimi, *Empire, Nationalities, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union*, The School of Russian and Asian Studies, 2007. at

http://www.sras.org/empire_nationalities_and_the_collapse_of_the_ussr

¹⁹ According to D. Lieven it is one of the way to safe an empire. D. Lieven, *Empire*, pp. 50-51, 275-277.

be responsible for most of the inner workings of each country".²⁰ However, it does not seem so easy to do.²¹ The future of the country partly depends on how successful these trials will be. Nonetheless, the process of withering away is hardly possible to stop since the only feeling Russians share is nostalgia without strength to act.

Conclusion

Summing up, it must be said that despite huge changes it underwent after the collapse of the Soviet Union, modern Russia still definitely possesses a lot of imperial features.

- The sharp division between the centre and the periphery, in which the former dominates the latter;
- The Russians are the dominant a titular nationality and have more career opportunities than small nations;
- The relationship with republics based on lord-vassal model, which is based on both: allegiance of local rulers and Russian military capability;
- Local elite is partly incorporated into metropolis elite in order to ensure their allegiance;
- Russia still tries to assimilate indigenous people by conducting migration policy;
- The legitimacy of authority is based on the agreement between government and “aristocracy”.

Although, it must be said that Moscow has lost the most important characteristics of empires: *the mission civilisatrice*, and *the messianic idea*. However, it tries to find new driving force or the new *raison d'être* in order to restore former power or at least to survive. Thus, it can be concluded that nowadays Russia is not an empire, but trying to act as such utilizing Soviet methods in relations with its current subjects and trying to revive leftovers of former power.

²⁰ L. Goodrich, Russia: *Rebuilding an Empire While It Can*, Stratfor Global Intelligence, 31. 10. 2011, <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/2011.10.31-russia-rebuilding-empire-while-it-can>.

²¹ Moscow tries to implement this idea for a very long time (since the very collapse of the Soviet Union) and very different shapes, e. g. military union of some former USSR republics, energetic union, CIS, united state of Russia and Belarus, etc. The last attempt presented as successful was establishment of Eurasian union. See at *Putin calls for 'Eurasian Union' of ex-Soviet republics*, 2011. 10. 04, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-15172519>

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Regional Stability of the South Caucasus - the Guarantor of Reducing Europe's Energy Dependence on Russia

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Introduction

Before moving to the main theme of my article, as a small historical excursion I will tell you a few words about the formation of Russian geopolitical idea in order to understand better the principal of its action in the nowadays.

After the fall of Byzantium in 1453, Russia has deployed a religious fever, with great phobia gazing at all nonorthodox. As a result a new utopic religious - philosophical doctrine by Pskov Pastor Philotheus, Moscow - the Third Rome¹ appeared, the essence of which was recognition of Russian only orthodoxy enlightening bridgehead and defender of the cherished belief. Followers of the theory accused Constantinople in the recognition priority of Rome Pope at Florence synod in 1438,² and asserted that Eastern Rome fell by sin, and now vested in the Russia mission to release all orthodox nations.

In 1840's, a new ideological thinking Slavophiles was formed. The most famous representative was Nikolai Danilevsky, who introduced the concept of cultural-historical types. Cultural-historical types³ as the author believes is the unity of the people involved linguistic, territorial, psychological, cultural and political community. The author concludes that the people speaking the same language or cognate languages should form a coherent whole. And if you act within all the rules, you need to create the union of all Slavs, or common Slavic federation with Russian at the head to skillfully confront

¹ <http://www.megabook.ru/Article.asp?AID=653396>

² А. Л. Дворкин, *ФЕРРАРО-ФЛОРЕНТИЙСКИЙ СОБОР (1438–1439 ГГ.)* – <http://www.mgarsky-monastery.org/kolokol.php?id=643>

³ Н. Я. Данилевский, *Россия и Европа* – <http://monarhiya.narod.ru/DNY/dny05.htm>

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the Roman-German cultural-historical type. This confrontation is the main for the normal existence of Slavs. Slavophiles confronted Europe and all Western innovations. On this base, later Pan-Slavism was born, which was very popular among Southern Slavs, those who tried to free themselves from the yoke of the Ottoman Empire. But the other situation was with eastern Slavs. Their unaffiliated of Russian idea was manifested at the first Pan-Slavic congress.⁴ Slavophiles were confronted by Westernism, which asserted that Russia has no preconditions for original existence and the only way to progress and non-violent development is Europe. In this sense, “Philosophical letters” and “Apology of a madman” by Peter Chadayev are very interesting.

Russia Today

What have we for today? - Eurasianism. The Eurasian movement began in Russia after Civil War (1920-1930). The basic work on this was made by Nikolay Trubetzkoy "Europe and Mankind". This concept was attempted to renounce the imperial post. According to the opinion of Eurasianism Russia differs from other countries and is not like Europe or in Asia.⁵ Russia is distinctive civilization, which is the midland driven by special-historical reality. In this sense, are very interesting works of Petr Savitsky, who said that the Eurasian nature dictates the necessity of cultural, economic and political union. That's way tremendous unification movement Huns, Mongols, and others took place on Eurasian space.⁶ Russia is a follower of the empire of Genghis Khan, the Russian people are a perfect symbiosis of European forests and Asian steppes.

In the same way, this ideological tradition is followed by Alexander Dugin, Andrej Epifantsev, and many others.

Today's aggressive Eurasianism looks like the negative energy, sublimated as a reaction on the collapse of the USSR.

If since Primakov, Russian foreign policy was focused on getting aid from the West and the transition to democratic values, then with coming Putin to power everything has changed. A new aggressive rhetoric was especially expressed since 2003-2004 years. This policy is focused on strengthening the military superiority in the former Soviet countries, and focuses on economic (including energy) ways of forcing.

⁴<http://panslavist.ru/ver/%D0%BF%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%B8%D0%B7%D0%BC/>

⁵ Н. С. Трубецкой, *Европа и человечество* – <http://gumilevica.kulichki.net/TNS/tns03.htm>

⁶ П. Н. Савицкий, *Степь и оседлость* – <http://gumilevica.kulichki.net/SPN/spn03.htm>

REGIONAL STABILITY OF THE SOUTH CAUCASUS - THE GUARANTOR OF REDUCING EUROPE'S ENERGY DEPENDENCE ON RUSSIA

Since then, the conception of liberal empire of Anatoly Chubais is the main principle foreign policy of Russia. This means: to find its natural place among the U.S.A., Japan and the EU its necessary to make popular the Russian culture, to secure Russian-speaking people and to get dominant position in trade and business among⁷ neighbor countries. For implementation of these goals began nationalization of energy sector, and the first target was the oil company Yukos. Today, Gazprom and Rosneft – huge state companies are merged into Alian commissioned by the Kremlin with companies such as Lukoil, RAO EES, Rosnano and etc. the policy relies on the following basic principles:

1. The Kremlin must not allow the diversification of energy supplies for Europe.
2. Russian energy companies should strengthen controls on international gas market.
3. They must control all the links through which gas flows to the west.
4. The Kremlin shall use this fact to the active political onslaught.

As we know, the most striking example of the energy policy of Russia is Europe, whose dependence on Russia is growing more and more, especially if you take into account such new projects Nord Stream and South Stream. By today's figures, the EU gets from Russia 30 percent gas and 50 percent oil; seven countries in Eastern Europe have 90 (ninety) percent dependence on Russian oil and six countries of the European Union have 100 (one hundred) percent dependence on of the Russian gas. The Kremlin began active participation in energy markets of Europe, not only by the export of energy resources but also through participation in obtaining important assets, which was contributed by liberalization of the European market. It is known, that Gazprom has assets of at least 16 countries of the European Union. According to the recommendations, dependence EU from a single supplier of gas shall not exceed 30 percent, so alternative projects on the old continent should be lobbied, but despite the contract was made on building two important pipelines with Russia: Nord Stream and South Stream.

Nord stream project belongs to German ex-Chancellor Gerhard Schroder and the president of Russia Vladimir Putin. Realization of this project started in 2005 year, according to this construction pipeline under the Baltic Sea from Russia to Germany was planned. This project costs in three times more expensive than the construction of pipelines in Poland and Lithuania,⁸ but it is made for reducing the role of transit countries, for Kremlin was able to directly affect Europe through energy speculation. Nord stream (where Gazprom shares 51 percent) is shining example of strengthening Russian

⁷ P. Escobar, *Russia's liberal empire* – <http://www.peacereading.org/Russia's%20'liberal%20empire'.htm>

⁸ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14803065>

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energetic dependence on Europe; in the case Germany will be restricted from making political decisions that are not profitable to the Kremlin.

As to the southern stream, agreement between Russia and Italian concern ENI-was signed in 2007. Project involves the construction of gas pipeline under the Black Sea, which will take place on the territories of Greece and Bulgaria and will reach Apennines. With the aid of the project Russia really is trying to become a major gas supplier for Europe passing round Slavic states Belarus and Ukraine, and Poland as well. The politics of the liberal empire, which has been proposed by Anatoli Chubais Russia passes actively towards neighbor countries. In Ukraine, Georgia, and Kirgizstan after color revolutions Russia changed the tactics of action and in former soviet countries strengthening the role of economics. The politics so called man of paper pass so, which is expressed in strengthen of the role of Russian companies in neighborhood countries⁹ and their utilization in political purposes.

For use of the Kremlin two most important fact work - first USA, EU and NATO, interrupted its evident movement on Orient, the second- the economic dependence of Russia has been changed.

It is well described on example of Uzbekistan. This State played the political role with USA, now it is the alien country of Russia. It happened with Occident after bad situation of the relation with Occident, because of worse fact of the free situation of person and human rights, Russia helped Uzbekistan Government in fight against opposition.¹⁰ After that the companies of Uzbekistan drawn up collaborative agreement of long term with Gas Prom and Lukoil about common exploitation of new places communicated with gas of Uzbekistan.

The best of liberal politics has been realized in case of Ukraine, where because in 2006- 2009 years gas-war Europe and Byelorussia have been damaged, where in 2007 Alexander Lukashenko has been obliged to give Gas Prom the half of actions of the national company of “Beltransgas”, instead the Kremlin duplicated the tariff on the gas instead that the tariff of the gas must be increased into four times.

As to Moldova, Russia tries to manipulate by speculation of Transnistria conflict, also it is important that fact, that the first try of the approach of Moldova with Occident was the influence¹¹ on Moldavian wine and on agricultural production.

⁹A. Zagorski, *Russia's neighbourhood policy*, 14. 02. 2012 –

<http://www.iss.europa.eu/publications/detail/article/russias-neighbourhood-policy/>

¹⁰R. Sundee, *The Role of the Akramiya in the May 13, 2005 Unrest in Adijan* –

http://www.hudson.org/files/publications/Ronald_Sandee_HT.pdf .

¹¹M. Rojansky, *Frozen Transnistria Conflict Begins to Thaw*, 17. 04. 2012 –

<http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/11846/frozen-transnistria-conflict-begins-to-thaw>

REGIONAL STABILITY OF THE SOUTH CAUCASUS - THE GUARANTOR OF REDUCING EUROPE'S ENERGY DEPENDENCE ON RUSSIA

The most dependent on Russian energy import in Caucasus is Armenia. The Russian companies make the expansion with in Armenian economics.¹² It is worthy that the unique gas tube, from which Armenia takes the natural air, passes via Georgia. Because of this reason "Gas Prom" began the construction of gas tube which is connected with Armenia.

The relations of Russia and Azerbaijan are characterized with tendency of improvement, which is explained by Russian purposes to solve the problems of resources achievement in Caspian Sea, although mountain Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has the negative influence, in which Russia takes the side with Armenia.¹³ In the region Georgia is the most pro-Occidental country, which tries to utilize as economical as other possibilities. According to the concluded contract with "Gas Prom" this company became the main importer of the gas in Georgia. "Rao- EES" acquired the distribution company of electric energy of Tbilisi "AIES - TELASI" and several hydroelectric station. In 2006 year in Georgia entered the great company of cellar communication of Russia "Vimpenkomi" (by trade mark "Beeline"). In frequent cases in Georgia the Russian companies were trying to take an active part in privatization competitions of the gross actives by helping of intermediate companies registered in European countries.

Conclusion

Today the theme of energy means occupies the first place in order of day of the world politics and conformably all the ways towards to the gas and petrol is the front of the political fight of great countries, especially, when Russia is one of the greatest exporters of the gas and of the petrol all over the world. Such energy dependence evidently will not bring good to the West from Russia, because parallel of increasing of the political influence of the Kremlin, the diplomatic influences on Russia will be reduced. It will be the realization of Putin's conception. That's why everything must be done by purpose of diversification of energy means, in this affair, following form the actual geopolitical conjunctures South Caucasus and its peaceful development has the greatest importance. In this region, it is worthy the transit role of Georgia. By point of view of energy security of Europe such alternative sources of the energy have the most great importance, as are: Baku - Supsa, Baku – Tbilisi - Jeyhan, Shah - Denise, Nabucco and GUEU projects.

¹² <http://forum.hyeclub.com/showthread.php/10850-Russian-Armenian-Relations>

¹³ M. Cecire, *Azerbaijan-Armenia Tensions: Regional Risks, Policy Challenges*, 12. 06. 2012 – <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/12046/azerbaijan-armenia-tensions-regional-risks-policy-challenges>

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The Presidents of Azerbaijan and Georgia signed the project of Baku - Supsa in 1996.¹⁴ The petrol tube has the strategic destination not only for Georgia, but for other countries of the region.

The other important project Baku- Tbilisi- Ceyhan is tube, by which the petrol is transported by the direct itinerary between Caspian and Mediterranean Seas.¹⁵ The European countries saw many years ago, that the monopoly of Russia took under danger energy - security of Europe. Following from it, still in 2003 year European Parliament and European Council began the project of the new gas tube – (Nabucco), which foreseen the gas transportation from Turkey to Austria - via Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary. A project exists on the transportation to Europe via region of Black Sea - GUEU (Georgia - Ukraine - European Union), which foreseen the communication of Georgia with Poland via Ukraine by helping of gas tube on fond of the Black Sea.

Nabucco, as for the realization of the project of GUEU the position of Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan is important,¹⁶ because without Trans - Caucasian gas tube the both projects have not any sense. Actually the unique way, by which Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan supply Europe with gas passes in Russia, so both countries must be interested in existence of alternative ways, which will contribute the arrangement of the prices, the economic development of these countries and the eradication of the strategic dependence on Russia.

But as Mr. Pavel Felgengauer ordered, that the danger exists any try of the diversification of energy means supply for Europe provokes the reception of extreme measures for Russia and may be repeated the scene of August from nearest neighborhood against Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan or other countries.¹⁷ In this case what will make Occident? It will have the wish and capacity for being against Russia? Supposedly there the game of empty words and peace, the affair will not promote, it is not guarantee of the security for small countries. That's why if Occidental will not address most acute measures towards Russia its energy dependence will be increased little by little, which means only the recognition of game rules of the Kremlin.

¹⁴ <http://www.hydrocarbons-technology.com/projects/supsa/>

¹⁵ http://www.oilfund.az/en_US/layiheler/baki-tbilisi-ceyhan-esas-ixrac-boru-kemeri.asp

¹⁶ Н. Стариков, *Газопровод Набукко приказал долго жить* – <http://nstarikov.ru/blog/18239>

¹⁷ П. Фельгенгауэр, *Первая часть войны с Грузией* – <http://magazines.russ.ru/continent/2008/138/fe9.htm>

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Some Aspects of Muslim Meskhetians' Repatriation

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Introduction

In 1944, by the decision of the Soviet Government, Georgia was abandoned by its most ancient inhabitants – Meskhetians (more than 100 000 of them were exiled). They spent the next dozen of years away from the homeland in central Asian countries, where another tragic episode of their lives has been written. Destiny converted them into refugees again. The “lost generation” of Georgia never ceased to search the ways to return back to the motherland (mostly through activities of the influential Meskhetian None-government organizations); as a result, the Georgian government presently runs the process of their repatriation. However, this problematic issue has arisen different positions, supported with some important arguments. Therefore, we suggest discussing specific issues of this problem; analyzing them will assist us realizing its complicated nature better. These are few aspects for further discussion:

1. Identity of Moslem Meskhetians and their tragic fate.
2. Historic episodes against Moslem Meskhetians.
3. The danger of presumable conflict and possible interest of Turkey in the Meskheti Region of Georgia.
4. Analyzing the process of Meskhetians’ repatriation by the Government of Georgia.

Historic episodes and analysis of the process of Meskhetians' repatriation

Identifying Moslem Meskhetians with the “the space of Georgia” gets more complicated with different opinions existing among the various communities arisen regarding their being and origin. Georgian and Turkish historians also differ in their viewpoints about that: “most of the Georgian scientists, the Moslem population of Meskheta Region has been Christian from the start and belonged to the Georgian tribe; they were actually called Meskhetians. Later, in 1578 when Ottomans conquered the region, the mass Islamization started, which was followed with converting the nationality of local residents into Turkish. In 1828, this region moved to the possession of the Russian Empire. Unlike the Georgian scientists, the Turkish researches, together with some Meskhi leaders argue that the basic population of the Meskheta region was ethnic Turks, but influenced with Georgian culture and customs”.¹

Georgia had to undertake the responsibility regarding the repatriation of Moslem Meskhs, in connection with the integration in European Council (in 1999); as a result, the Georgian society got actively involved into the discussion on this issue. One party took a strictly negative and a categorically aggressive position regarding repatriation; while the other insisted on consent to bring them back.

Considering that, our objective is to show the reverse side of coin, we think it would be appropriate to observe the issue of repatriation from the position of Meskhs (and not only of them). We can protect them with the statement that they are people with hard destiny, constantly searching for the motherland. Moreover, their persecution and oppression is terrifying. We shall try to describe their condition and feelings with the quotation by Mamuka Khutsishvili - who is a Turkish Meskhetian, who has returned to motherland and said: “this is hard when you don't know your hero, when you have no writer, or king... we have been deprived of everything, values, history....”²As he states, he had been dreaming of returning back to homeland all the time.

On the reverse side of the coin there is a completely opposite situation. Unfortunately, historic memory about Meskhetians tells nothing positive. In May 26 1918, when Georgia declared independence, on the same day the “decision by the Moslem population delegates of the Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki Regional Administration Units” has been ratified, which stated the following: “due

¹ T. Trier, G. Tarkhan-Mouravi, P. Kilimniki, *Meskhetians: homeward-bound* (in Georgian) – <http://www.scribd.com/doc/86468894/Meskhetians-Homeward-Bound-2011-GEO>

² Beyond the shutter (in Georgian) – http://dghiurebi.blogspot.com/2009/12/blog-post_979.html

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to impossible peaceful living conditions for the Moslem population of Georgia, to apply the government of Turkey with the request to join the part of Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki Regional Administration Unitsto Turkey... From this day onwards, these territories shall be considered as the integral part of Turkey”.³ Besides, as commonly known, in the ”1918-19 years, the separatist elements have created the so called Central Committee of South – West Caucasian Muslims and the government under the leadership of Server – Beg Jakeli. These separatist organizations have launched terror against the Christian population of Meskheta region and started religious – ethnic purification in terms of this region”.⁴ As for the local population of the Samtskhe – Javakheti region, they have no good stories about Moslem Meskhs inherited from their ancestors. Therefore, they are strictly against their coming back. All they remember is the horror felt towards them, life in fear, when women and children were unable to go outside. This is why they do not want them to settle down here!

As far as the repatriation issue goes, we have to refer to the attitudes of Ms. Naira Gelashvili and the late Prof. Guram Sharadze towards this process. Prof. Guram Sharadze has been strictly against their settlement and actively fought against activities connected to that. In 2005 he stated that the re-settlement of so called “Turkish Meskhs” would face Georgia to the danger of the “Great Turkish Invasion”. In the same year he submitted the resolution of the Bishkek congress of “Turkish Meskhs”, referring to following: “We are Turkish, willing to return not to Georgia, but to Turkey – in the “Akhaltsikhe Eyalet”, which presently belongs to Georgia, however, captured by the General Paskevich in 1828-29 years during the Russian-Turkish war. Since then, this Turkish territory has remained in Georgian borders, while we are oppressed and persecuted because of that”.⁵ The main argument for Guram Sharadze’s position was the point that the Meskhs, residing in Central Asia considered themselves as Turks. He was afraid, their repatriation to Samtskhe – Javakheti Region, which is the ethnic conflict mine itself, would create another dangerous hearth in our country.

According to the point of logics by Guram Sharadze, in case of massive settlement of Meskhs (425000), which has to deal mostly with pro-Turkish population, who identify themselves as Turkish, with very few, who are pro-Georgian oriented, the danger of conflict is not excluded, but right on contrary, it becomes more pressing. As for the viewpoint of Ms. Naira Gelashvili, she supports the idea of

³ T. Laskhishvili, *Turkish Meskhetians: according to common sense*, Sakinform, 20. 04. 2012 (in Georgian) – http://www.saqinform.ge/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9796:2012-04-20-07-13-44&catid=109:arno&Itemid=538#axzz2LFJsNQ9O

⁴ D. Arabidze, *The danger of clash in Meskheta*, Iberiana, April, 2007 (in Georgian) – <http://iberiana.wordpress.com/turqi-mesxebi/arabidze-meskheta/>

⁵ Newspaper ALIA, 29-31. 01. 2005 (in Georgian) – <http://guramsharadze.wordpress.com/devnili/turqi-mesxebi/>

resettling Meskhs. At the 60th anniversary of deportation she declared, that “the Soviet Union mass media have been establishing the terms: “Caucasian Turks,” “Soviet Turks”, “Meskhetian Turks”, “Turkish Meskhs” since 70s. The last two terms were especially spread...” When these terms were established in Georgia, this made the Turkish orientation even stronger because, if Georgia together with two empires states, that these people are Turks and not Georgians, they have been deprived of their identity.”

There are many examples in the World History of interfering with the conflicts of neighbouring countries in order to protect local communities and national minorities. Let us recall the Russian-Georgian conflict of 2008. But with the case of Moslem Meskhs, the problem refers to Turkey. In 1974, the Turkish Republic has performed military intervention of Cyprus Republic. The cause for that has been protecting the rights of Turkish people residing in Cyprus. Armenia did the same with the case of the Karabakh conflict. Therefore, the following conclusion becomes groundless: “when the Turkish – Armenian relationship is so tense due to the tragic events of 1915, when the military-political cooperation between Turkey and Azerbaijan daily increases, when Armenia and Russia have signed mutual aid and protection treaty, the conflict between densely populated Turkish and Armenian minorities shall lead Georgia to catastrophic conditions (in case Meskhs shall be massively settled in Samtskhe – Javakheti region, where the most of the local population is Armenians)”. The armed conflict in Meskheti region may cause military intervention of surrounding areas. Georgia may get into the same situation as Czechoslovakia in 1938-39 years, when its neighboring countries: Germany, Poland and Hungary distributed the Czechoslovakian Republic among them for the protection of their tribesmen”.⁶

To our opinion, the government of Turkey is concerned with lodging the Moslem Meskhs in the Samtskhe – Javakheti region. At least, it will not be “unacceptable” for it. Such “caring” of Turkey towards Moslem Meskhs of Central Asia is doubtful. “Particularly, after the breakup of the Soviet Union, the government of Turkey financed the language courses of literary Turkish for the Meskhs in big cities of central Asia. Consequently, the contact between the Meskhetian dialect and standard Turkish language has become stronger. Beside this fact, in 1992-2005 the government of Turkey adopted legal acts as requested by Meskhs on the basis of which 35000 people were permitted to settle down in Turkey”.⁷

⁶ D. Arabidze, *The danger of clash in Meskheti* (in Georgian) – <http://iberiana.wordpress.com/turqi-mesxebi/arabidze-meskheti/>

⁷ T. Trier, G. Tarkhan-Mouravi, P. Kilimniki, *Meskhetians: homeward-bound* (in Georgian) – <http://www.scribd.com/doc/86468894/Meskhetians-Homeward-Bound-2011-GEO>

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The law on repatriation adopted in 2007 by the government has enabled the process of lodging the Moslem Meskhs in Georgia. The deadline for submitting the applications by the Meskhs residing abroad for receiving the status of repatriation has been January 1 2010. According to the official data obtained, only 8900 people have submitted applications, which is very small quantity considering the total number of Moslem Meskhs.

The indifferent approach from the Government of Georgia towards the process of repatriation indicates the absence of real willingness to settle them on this territory. On the other side, the government tries to avoid additional problems. Moving them in at great numbers shall be evidently dangerous for a multi ethnic country, as Georgia is. Sooner or later, the country shall have to cover expenses in order to provide new population with elementary living conditions. This would be quite hard for the country with the 500000 refugees.

Conclusion

Thus, in the final part of the present paper we can sum up the opinions above, which provides with the possibility to account for the concept of the problem. The complicated repatriation issue of Moslem Meskhs does not mean the deadlock; in case of the right and timely solution to the repatriation process from the side of the government, this problem shall not be blocked. In order to prevent the danger, the reasonable step to take initially would be returning those Moslem Meskhs, who identify themselves to Georgians and take care of their settlement respectively. This would assist the government to regulate the relationship between the local population and repatriates. The biggest mistake, the government can ever make is to populate them densely, which shall prevent the quality of their integration. The next important stage refers to the awareness of the local population about the new settlers in Georgia, which would avoid aggression and estrangement among the local people and newcomers. Special role in this is attached to the mass media. We share the viewpoint of Ms. Naira Gelashvili regarding the repatriation issue; as she thinks that in terms of normal approach to this problem, Georgia may acquire the population, which shall make the agricultural sector and army stronger, while the country shall benefit from that.

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The Caucasus in Global Geopolitical Schemes

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Introduction

Since the very beginning of political life on the Earth, geopolitics¹ played a significant role deciding the behavior and relations between states and determining the dynamics of their development. Moreover, the influence of geopolitical factors could be grasped even in pre-state societies. In geographic proximity situated tribes felt their kinship or antagonism and according to these specific feelings constructed affairs which later allowed scientists to decide which area can be examined as a one body and where its place in a broader or global context.

It must be admitted that the task is not easy, because political separation or effect of surrounding can sometimes overcome geographic unity or other features and vice-versa. Especially this problem is tangible while analyzing Caucasus. On the one hand the region is undoubtedly geographic and cultural entity, but on the other hand it is divided politically into several parts each of which has its own political orientation and gravitation. Anyway, applying classical and modern geopolitical schemes to the Caucasus is helpful spotting the place of the region in the world, which is the main goal of this paper.

Geopolitics and the place of the Caucasus in the world

What part of the world or civilisation the Caucasus belongs to has been the question of scholar discussion for a long time. Since the birth of geopolitics and its development in 20 century the

¹ Most definitions of geopolitics emphasize interrelation or interaction between geography and political processes.

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question was rephrased. Scientists started examining if the Caucasus a part of *heartland*² or *rimland*³ applying schemes elaborated by the founding fathers of the new science.

Those, who believe that the region belongs to *rimland*, support their point of view saying that geographically the Caucasian mountains stretch to Turkey and Iran extending the region geographically. Both mentioned countries are undoubtedly a part of *thalassocratic* (thalassocracy – ‘rule of the sea’ - Greek) world. Opposite group of scholars argues that Caucasus belonged to Russia for a long enough time and thus it must be analysed as a part of pivot area (landmass or the world of terrain). In other words, they highlight political factors rather than geographic. Both aspects can be detected in the first schemes of grand masters of geopolitics who drew the new lines on a map of the world.

In the first famous Halford Makinder’s scheme the Caucasus was divided into western and eastern parts. Deemed as the farther of geopolitics, Makinder thought that region must be examined as a part of heartland.⁴ To be precise, eastern part of the North Caucasus (North Ossetia, Ingushetia, Chechnya, and Dagestan), modern Azerbaijan, and a bulk of Iranian territories were included into the pivot area. Later, due to certain political changes, as a part of heartland he reconsidered all Caucasus, and territories around the Black and the Baltic seas.

Makinder’s attitude towards such division was actually supported by another great adherent of geopolitics Nicolas Spykman. He revised Makinder’s formula of domination in the world by strengthening notion of Rimland,⁵ but had not rethought geographic contours of the later scheme provided by the British geographer. The idea of the central role of marginal crescent actually led to rethinking of the American strategy towards its main rival, but it did not concentrated on the areas thought to be exceptional turf or Moscow (Soviet Republics).

After the collapse of the Soviet Union developed Russian geopolitical thought also was and still is focused on the Caucasus. However, famous studies of Russian scientists can be named as the case when a science serves politics. Most of Russian scholars treat the region as a part of Heartland

² Heartland, according to geopolitics, is a pivot land area which contains the main resources. Control of this territory is crucial for domination over the world.

³ Rimland is a category that describes territories with access to warm seas situated around heartland.

⁴ P. Venier, *The geographical pivot of history and early twentieth century geopolitical culture*, The Geographical Journal, Vol. 170, No. 4, Blackwell Publishing, Ltd., December 2004, pp. 330–336.

⁵ Who rules East Europe commands Heartland; who rules Heartland commands the World-island; who rules World-island commands the world. Spykman’s version of the formula is: who controls the Rimland rules Eurasia; who rules Eurasia controls the destinies of the world. See Saul Bernard Cohen, *Geopolitics of the World System*, USA, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2003, p. 22.

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seeking to justify its incorporation into the main landmass. The dependence of the North Caucasus and Moscow's political clout in Transcaucasia are especially accented by Aleksandr Dugin.⁶ The only thing Moscow agreed on was independence of the three Caucasian states, but every step of the governments is being perceived as hostile if it was taken not in compliance with Kremlin's plans.

This simplistic incorporation of political reality in scientific graphs, that is obvious in Makinder's, Spykman's and Dugin's visions, can be called classical approach. However, the world is more complicated and there are more variables that have to be born in mind considering the place of the Caucasus.

Scientists should not forget that the highest mountain range in Europe for centuries had been seen as a natural barrier or border which divided Europe and Asia, Christian and Muslim worlds, Persian and Ottoman empires from Russian one. Even now, when modern military technology diminished the role of buffer zones there are many political scientists who assess the Caucasus as a border between such categories as East and West or 'familiar and alien'.⁷ The bordering role of the mountains was really obvious in 2008, when Russian troops invaded Georgia via Roki tunnel. Other mountainous passes in the Caucasus are impassable for armoured vehicles and tanks.

On the other hand it is also known that Caucasus was connected with the Middle East and Central Asia by sophisticated network of roads since the very old days. The thoroughfare of this grid of course was The Great Silk Road which stretched from China to Europe. Therefore, a 'border' is not the only word in geopolitical lexicon that can be applied to the region. Another term for the Caucasus is a 'bridge' which ties Europe and Asia or, according to Yury Tikhonravov, plays the role of 'gates' letting great powers to approach each other.⁸

Nowadays Caucasus regained the importance it enjoyed once in ancient times. The region can be considered as a transport corridor for energetic resources. It is already became a part of the world transport and communication infrastructure, which has raised significance of the Caucasus and strengthened independence of the local states. As it taught French geographer Paul Vidal de la Blanche 'an infrastructure has a huge affection on the regional balance of power and economy of the states'.⁹

Another well-known geopolitical term applicable to the Caucasus is 'boundary'. The category was forged by German geographer Friedrich Ratzel and developed by N. Spykman. The latter notion

⁶ А. Дугин, Основы геополитики, See at http://society.polbu.ru/dugin_geopolitics/ch114_all.html

⁷ К. Гаджиев, *Геополитика Кавказа*, Москва: Международные отношения, 2001, р. 294.

⁸ Ю. Тихонравов, *Геополитика*, Москва: ЗАО Бизнес-школа „Интел-Синтез“, 1998, р. 33.

⁹ В. Дергачев, *Геополитика*, Киев: Вира, 2000, р. 16.

means frontline territories or frontier areas that have feature to absorb tension between great powers which contact each other in this specific area. In other words, countries of such areas can be seen as a mix of cultures which serves as a background for the rivals to get closer.

One more similar geopolitical concept that also describes the region is ‘the belt of debris in discontinental zone’. The definition of this description is provided in the book of Lithuanian political scientists ‘Geopolitical Codes’. According to this treatise, ‘such regions are politically divided because both land and sea powers are struggling to spread influence to them. The domination in these areas would have provided strategic preponderance.’¹⁰ That is why Caucasus has always been an object of rivalry between regional powers recently Iran, Turkey and Russia.

Caucasus is well known for its volatility. Despite the fact that conflicts here appeared only due to political perturbations, scientists point at some variables¹¹ that enable them to talk about objective instability. Some scholars even started to define Caucasus as a part of the Instability Bow which stretches either from the Balkans to the Central Asia or from Iberia’s peninsula to the Chinese East Turkestan. Z. Brzezinski in his seminal book *The Great Chessboard* calls this territory ‘Eurasian Balkans’ for the same reasons.¹²

It should be noted, that many authors try to connect the paradigm of Instability Bow to Islamic factor utilizing famous concept of Samuel Huntington about the clash of civilizations. However, deeper analysis shows that main issues here has political background and do not content Islamic component. This point of view is more reflected in the scheme provided by Russian political analyst Vadim Tsimburski. The Great Limitrof is an intermediate space between empires or civilisations that embraces *Heartland*, and the Caucasus definitely can be called as a part of it.¹³

Conclusion

As it is seen from the presented concepts of geopolitical thought, Caucasus can be examined in very different ways. On the one hand it is definitely a unit, at least geographically. While on the

¹⁰ Č. Laurinavičius, N. Statkus, E. Motieka, *Geopolitiniai kodai*, Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 2003, p. 31.

¹¹ Caspian hydrocarbon resources, multiethnicity of the region, tension over territory can be judged as instability provoking factors.

¹² З. Бжезинский, *Великая шахматная доска*, Москва: Международные отношения, 1999, p. 150.

¹³ В. Цымбурский, *Геополитика для “Евразийской Атлантиды”*, 1999, See at http://gatchino.com/knogg/1999_009.htm

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other, Caucasus usually is not being examined as unified mainly due to the political separation into Northern and Southern parts.

Despite this political reality, geopolitical theoretical models do not allow us to make a clear division. Considering world processes and their relevance to the Caucasus scholars view it as an entity. It would not do any sense to claim that one part of the region can be regarded as a ‘boundary’ or ‘instability bow’, while another not.

Analyzing Caucasus in a broader geopolitical context its place is not so definite. However, closeness to the warm Black Sea which is connected with the world ocean makes it belonging to the Rimland more likely.

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THE GERMAN COLONIST SPIRITUAL LEADERS PERSECUTED BY SOVIET VIOLENCE IDEOLOGY IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS

The German Colonist Spiritual Leaders Persecuted by Soviet Violence Ideology in the South Caucasus

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Introduction

Process of the foundation of German colonies in the South Caucasus began since the period of Romanov’s reign, exactly during the power of Aleksey Yermolov, commander-in-chief of the Russian forces in the Caucasus (1816-1827).¹

German settlements appeared in the northern as well as the southern part of the Caucasus. The colonies founded in the North Caucasus were: Alexanderdorf near the Nalchik Fortress, Michaelsdorf on the north outskirts of Vladikavkaz, Nikolayevsk around the north Piatigorsk and etc.² As I have mentioned above the colonies also were established in the South Caucasus: namely, in Georgia and in Azerbaijan. Such compact settlements did not exist in Armenia. Several families lived fragmentally around Yerevan. At the beginning of 1820s six colonies already were in Georgia, two – in Azerbaijan.

German colonies existed in Georgia, in below Kartli region (Kvemo Kartli) and in Azerbaijan, around Shamkir and Ganja.

Sectarian movement named “Separatism” originated in Germany at the beginning of the 19th century. Their preachers Bengel and Shtiling were predicting advent of the end of world and calling

¹ G. Manjgaladze, *German Colonists in the South Caucasus*, Tbilisi, (in Georgian) 1974, p. 11.

² *Caucasian Line (North Caucasus)*, The center for Volga German studies at Concordia University, Available at http://cvgs.cu-portland.edu/gazetteer/other_places/caucasian_line.cfm

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“Separatists” that survival was possible only in the Caucasus, near the Ararati Mountain.³ This is one of the arguments why they moved in the Caucasus. There were also economic and political causes. Russian imperial authorities had economic interest to master and revive uninhabited areas. Political officials purposed to have their own supporters among the population by the colonization of the Caucasus.

The colonies lived as a closed caste and their living conditions were better, than those of local peasants by the support of Tsarism.⁴

I have used the archive materials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia for the first time ever to the end of this topic study. As a result, the information of these spiritual leaders is coming to scientific circulation for the first time and therefore, it is novelty.

In general, there are studied questions on German colonists in the South Caucasus in Georgian historiography. Namely, it is studied how colonies were founded, their social and economic development, colonists relationships with Germans and etc. In this case the object of my interest is to study the Soviet period, exactly, how Conditions the Soviet authorities created for German spiritual leaders living here in 20-30s; What kind of methods the Soviet power used against them. In fact, these issues are not studied. My goal is to fill the gap of historiography in this area.

Soviet Repressions against spiritual leaders of the colonists

It is well known, that Soviet Union was the empire based on constraint system. Its main ideology was worship of the great leaders: Lenin and Stalin. Throughout the history of the Soviet Union millions of people became victims of political repression. Religious life was not acceptable to this regime, thus they established atheism as the only scientific truth. So the Bolsheviks started battle against church and spiritual figures regardless of their belonging to any denomination. Churches were remade into other structures with different functions. Representatives of Lutheran Church also were not rescued by repressions and persecutions of the regime.

Most of the Caucasus Germans lived in Georgia. There existed nine Lutheran churches in the South Caucasus. One of them was in Baku, eight - in Georgia. The Bolsheviks forbade religion service in all church and study religion in schools of the colonists. Many of religion servants were executed and exiled: from the high hierarchy to ordinal figures. The authorities made some spiritual persons loyal to Soviet regime.

Oppression and persecution of representatives of Lutheran church was caused not only by the reason of religion but the Soviet power had doubt that higher spiritual council functioned as a secret service and espionage for German. Namely, Germany received information from this council about

³ G. Manjgaladze, *German Colonists in the South Caucasus*, (in Georgian) p. 17.

⁴ A. Songulashvili, *the Germans in Georgia*, Tbilisi, (in Georgian) 1995, p. 19.

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economic and political situation in the Soviet Union. Suspected were also Mennonites and Adventists denominations by the government.

Voldemar Bauer was one of the victims of the Soviet repression, pastor of Lutheran church. His persecution began in 1920s. He was born in Tbilisi, November 13, 1887. He graduated from Tbilisi Peter & Paul spiritual school in 1908 and Yuryev State University's Faculty of Theology in 1916. Bauer served as spiritual figure at Baku's Lutheran church for a year; afterwards he completed his service there continued his working at Elisabeththal's Lutheran church in Georgia (Asureti). He also was involved in pedagogical activity.⁵

In 1924, on February 26, he was arrested. After a day, the sub-committee of Georgian communist party of Asureti applied to the Tbilisi committee of Georgian communist party with a special letter. In this application it was written, that though the school was closed by the executive committee of the district, where Bauer was teaching religion for under-ages, he was still continuing his activities in church with the parish. In the document it is also denoted, that during the teaching, Bauer was instilling in children the hatred to the Soviet government.

Voldemar Bauer was very authoritative figure in the colony. It is said in the document, that he had great influence on population of the village and moved them as one by his long activities. He helped undermine the prestige of the communist government, so that inhabitants perceived each communist as a deadly enemy.

After a short period of time he was released as he demanded that they inform German consulate about his arrest. Even the fact that he was a citizen of Germany was enough reason that the Soviet government had not right to put him in the jail. He was released from imprisonment with agreement of residence from Tbilisi. At the same time, Bauer demanded that the government give him an explanation for all the unlawfulness carried out against him.

Being interested in anti-communist influence of Bauer on children, the Soviet Authorities continued investigation against him to reveal the facts of his pressure on the local Soviet government. Briefly, he was charged with opening a school unlawfully, teaching religion, resistance against the local Soviet government, opposing Lenin commemoration meeting, in general, undermining activities, anti-propaganda and agitation against the regime.

Finally, he was found guilty in all the accusations except anti Soviet agitation and was exiled from Georgia.

After a year, Lutheran society of Asureti applied to special federal commission of the South Caucasus. By this application the society requested that the authorities allow Bauer to return in Georgia, because he was worthy person and important figure for the German colony. The government did not grant this request.

⁵ The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Fund №6, Archives number №3155, old number №4251 (in Russian).

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Punitive measures against Ober-Pastor Richard Mayer and other spiritual figures of Lutheran Synod of the South Caucasus are also very interesting. They were imprisoned in 1931. The accusations against them were similar to Bauer's ones.

According to the preliminary investigation, Richard Mayer and the members of his group were pursuing anti-Soviet activity in German colonies, were counter-revolutionists, having ties with the German consulate in Tbilisi, taking directives and money for anti-Soviet activity. Instead, the German Consulate received political information about the Soviet Government.

Richard Mayer was born in Tbilisi in 1862. At the time of arrest he was an Ober-Pastor of the South Caucasian Lutheran Synod. He was sentenced to eight years of imprisonment in correction facility. When the term of imprisonment was over, he was exiled to Novosibirsk.⁶

Albert Hoffmann was born in 1878. He was a Psalm-reader at the Lutheran church of the Luxemburg colony. He was tried by a Special Committee, associated with the South Caucasian State political Committee. He was sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment in the correction facility.⁷

Wilhelm Geine was born in 1866. He was a pastor at the Lutheran church of Luxemburg Colony. Likewise, He was tried by a Special Committee, associated with the South Caucasian State Political Committee. He was sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment in the correction facility.⁸

Unknown judgments against the repressed spiritual leaders

There were some clergymen, judgments against whom are unknown for us. For example: Gottgold Gann was born in 1863, a pastor of Elizavetal Colony, living in a village Asureti.⁹

Ivan Richter was born in 1895, a psalm-reader and resident of Rozenberg Colony.¹⁰

Alexsander Fetter was born in 1890, a psalm-reader of Traubenberg Colony Lutheran church, a citizen of the USSR.¹¹

Carlo Schill was born in 1870, a psalm-reader of Waldheim Colony Lutheran church, a citizen of the USSR.¹²

Johann Koch was born in 1863, a chair-man of the Religious High Council of Rosenberg Colony, a resident of this colony, a citizen of the USSR.¹³

The family members and friends of the above mentioned people repeatedly applied to proper Soviet State instances in order to find truth, but in vain.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

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As we have mentioned above, the Soviet government acted very carefully, also to German sectarians. They were viewed doubtfully, as well as the clergymen of the Lutheran church. One example of this is Ivan Genrichs.

A certain group of Germans living in Abkhazia was a member of the Baptist Sect. Ivan Genrichs was one of the active leaders of a sectarian activity. He was arrested in 1932 and was tried by the court of Gudauta. It is also unknown what judgment the court delivered. However, the fact is that he was also pursued by the Soviet government.¹⁴

New repressive wave in the middle 1930s

The Soviet government started a new wave of repressions against the Lutheran church clergymen in the middle 1930s. More precisely, some German clergymen were arrested in 1935.

Nikolas Trdschaska was born in 1895, a resident of Rosenfeld, a clergyman of the Lutheran church. Trdschaska was isolated from other prisoners (“Because of the importance and character of the case given”) and put in a separate cell.¹⁵

Wilhelm Bauer was born in 1904, an active pastor of Tbilisi Lutheran church, a clergyman, and psalm-reader.¹⁶

Wilhelm Zimmer was born in 1896, in Asureti Colony, a pastor of Grunfeid, Alekseevka and Marksofk colonies. He was arrested and transferred to Baku.¹⁷

Theodor Foller was born in 1895, in former Saratov (Samara) province, a teacher by profession, a pastor of Shamkir (Georgievsk) colony.¹⁸

Conclusion

To sum up, a religion was unacceptable to the Soviet ideology and all people connected to it were persecuted. Besides, there were some important things:

1. The Soviet government always viewed public figures of a foreign origin doubtfully and considered them as spies and agents. They were blamed in anti-constitutional and anti-Soviet regime activity, even if there was not a proper proof.
2. The Soviet government was searching a cause in order to arrest, execute, or, in a better case, exile them from the country.
3. The Soviet totalitarianism did not let people have a freedom of thinking and everybody whoever went beyond the Soviet dogmas was declared an enemy of people.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Fund №6, Archives number №21,94,9 (in Russian).

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

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**Общность башенной культуры Восточной
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Культурные взаимоотношения и взаимовлияния горцев Восточной Грузии (хевсур, тушин, пшав и мохевцев) и ингушей прослеживается с древнейших времен, это наглядно видно по схожести материальной и духовной культуры. В средневековый период показателем культурного взаимовлияния является и башенная культура, вызванная общим, хотя и имеющим локальные особенности, социально-экономическим положением и уровнем материальной культуры.

В типологии башен разработанной для Ингушетии и Чечни различаются три типа башен: жилая, полубоевая, боевая.

Эти типы башен есть и в горной части Восточной Грузии, однако боевая башня (со ступенчато пирамидальной кровлей) встречается в единичных экземплярах, что говорит о том, что родиной этих сооружений является Ингушетия, в горной части которой они сосредоточены в наибольшем количестве. Более распространенным в Грузии является дом-крепость - или хевсурские «квиткири» или же тушинские – «чардахияни».¹ Это трех-четырёх этажные каменные дома башенного типа, предназначенные для жилья большой семьи, но в тоже время, в случае необходимости, обороны и ведения боя. Для этого в них были устроены бойницы для стрельбы из огнестрельного оружия и бойницы с машикулями для сбрасывания на противника камней. Машикули расположены по углам четвертого этажа над дверными и световыми проемами, такое расположение давало возможность более эффективной защиты. Сам четвертый этаж полностью был приспособлен для обороны, в отличие от остальных: первый этаж предназначался для устройства в нем хлева, а второй и третий для жилья самой семьи.

По своей конструкции интересны и тушинские дома-крепости, которые «совершенно идентичны хевсурским. Их отличает обычно большее количество этажей и двускатные или

¹ С. И. Макалатия, *Хевсурети*, Тбилиси, 1940, с. 106.

односкатные кровли вместо плоских, характерных для Хевсуретии. В верхнем, оборонительном этаже в центрах трех стен устроено по одной бойнице с машикулей на кронштейнах. В четвертой стене имеется лоджия, которая в случае опасности надежно прикрывается шиферным щитом».²

По типологии башен для Ингушетии и Чечни этот тип имеет название «полубоевая» башня, (впервые термин «полубоевые башни» был применен В. И. Марковиным).³

Башни данного типа, в отличие от боевых, являются жилыми, но в тоже время, по сравнению с жилыми башнями, имеют элементы обороны (бойницы, навесные балкончики – машикули). В случае нападения врага, такая башня, благодаря своим оборонительным особенностям, могла держать осаду. В науке утвердилось мнение, что они являются «переходной формой от жилых к боевым»,⁴ но в отличие от жилых каменных построек, они в плане занимают меньше площади, почти квадратные (размеры: 4,5-5х5-5,5м). Благодаря чему здесь отсутствует центральный опорный столб. Число этажей, как и в хевсурских домах-крепостях, достигает четырех. Четвертый этаж здесь также предназначен для обороны, по его углам расположены бойницы, прикрытые навесными балкончиками. Находясь над дверными проемами, они успешно защищали башню от проникновения противника во внутрь.

Дома-крепости (квиткири) Грузии идентичны полубоевым башням горной Ингушетии, есть лишь незначительные отличия, которые связаны с особенностями и локальными чертами, вызванными природными условиями и наличием подручного строительного материала. Однако и эти различия имеют в основе общую башенную культуру.

Схожесть данного типа сооружения дает возможность провести сравнительный анализ, который позволил бы реконструировать полубоевые башни горной Ингушетии, а также их некоторые утраченные элементы. Как, например возможность существования в ингушских башнях связывающих башни крытых мостиков, открытых галерей, а так же навесных балконов. Такого рода элементы архитектуры, формирующие внешнее пространство сохранились в Хевсуретии, в селении Шатили. В Горной Ингушетии на архитектурных сооружениях жилого и оборонительного характера прослеживаются следы от былых

² М. И. Джандиери, Г. И. Лежава, *Народная башенная архитектура*, Москва, 1977, с. 60.

³ В. И. Марковин, *Некоторые особенности средневековой ингушской архитектуры*, Архитектурное наследие Вып. №23, Москва, 1975, с. 120; В. И. Марковин, *Заметки об ингушской архитектуре*, КСИА №172, Москва, 1982, с. 31.

⁴ М. Б. Мужухоев, *Средневековая материальная культура горной Ингушетии*, Грозный, 1977, с. 20.

дополнительных конструкций, которые не сохранились до наших дней: большие оконные проемы, пазы для вставки деревянных балок, каменные пристройки и т. д. Данные конструкции не сохранились или дошли до наших дней в разрушенном состоянии и сегодня трудно понять их функциональное значение. Лишь проводя аналогию с типичными сооружениями возможно добиться каких-то результатов.

На основе аналогичности этих сооружений, возможен и пересмотр самой терминологии - используемый в типологии башенной архитектуры термин «полубоевая башня» не совсем отвечает функциональным и фортификационным особенностям такого рода сооружения. «Общекавказской доминирующей формой укрепленного жилища следует назвать 2-4 этажный дом-крепость, достигающий иногда 5-6 этажей. Этот тип дома называют иногда также жилой башней. Термин дом-крепость более точен, так как он характеризует основное свойство оборонного жилища, предусматривающего независимо от этажей глухой компактный безоконный объем с применением различных защитных приемов, увеличивающих безопасность».⁵

Исходя из указанных особенностей, аналогичности архитектурных сооружений рассматриваемого типа и для горной части Восточной Грузии и для Горной Ингушетии, а также учитывая саму специфику, функциональное значение и особенность - целесообразнее было бы называть данный тип – «дом-крепость». Предлагаемое определение, как мне представляется, в достаточной мере передает его основные характеристики, нежели термин «полубоевая башня», в котором усматривается незаконченное по замыслу архитектурное сооружение, при том, что это жилище отвечало всем особенностям времени его существования.

Дальнейшее изучение памятников культуры Грузии и Ингушетии, а именно жилых и фортификационных сооружений горных районов, возможно, даст свои плодотворные результаты в открытии новых фактов, понимании социально-экономического положения народов, населявших и создававших архитектуру этих регионов. Это позволит нам понять один из важнейших феноменов Кавказа, феномен башенной культуры.

⁵ М. И. Джандиери, Г. И. Лежава, *Народная башенная архитектура*, Москва, 1977, с. 110.

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Положение русской общины и русского языка в Грузии

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Цели исследования

Изучение общих тенденции развития ситуации в русской общине в Грузии за последние 20 лет.

Определение динамики изменения положения русского языка в Грузии.

Изучение состояния дел в русскоязычной сфере культуры и образования.

Методология

1. Научный доклад подготовлен на основе обзора, обработки и анализа научной литературы, статистических данных, газетного материала, электронных публикаций и углубленных интервью с представителями русской общины и экспертами.

2. На основе изучения собранных материалов предпринята попытка выработки практических рекомендаций.

Адресаты

- Исполнительные структуры в соответствии со структурой компетенции: Совет Безопасности, министерства реинтеграции, образования и науки, культуры.

- Заинтересованные, как международные организации, так и местные общественные.

Общий контекст

Согласно последней советской переписи населения 1989 года в Грузии русское национальное меньшинство по численности было на втором месте после армян и составляло 6.3 % от всего населения. Согласно последней переписи, проведенного в Грузии в 2002 г. (По понятным причинам в него не входят данные по Абхазии и Цхинвальского региона)

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численность русского населения уменьшилось на 80% и составило 1.6% от всего количества жителей страны.¹

	1926г.		1959г.		1989г.		2002г.	
	абсолютн о	в процента х	абсолютн о	в процента х	абсолютн о	в процента х	абсолютн о	%
русские	96 тыс.	3.6 %	407 тыс.	10.1%	341 тыс.	6.3 %	68 тыс.	1,6 %

По поводу такого массового оттока русских из Грузии на историческую родину можно перечислить несколько важных причин: политическая нестабильность (гражданская война, межнациональные конфликты), тяжелая социально-экономическая ситуация и вывод российских войск из Грузии. В советские времена Грузия представляло с собой приграничный рубеж со страной-членом НАТО и исходя из этого на ее территории была расположена соответственного образа военная группировка. Семьи военнослужащих составляли значительный компонент в численности русских в республике. В региональном плане русские расселены следующим образом:²

Регион	Русское население по переписи 2002г.
Тбилиси	32 580
Аджарская АР	9 073
Гурия	1 558
Имерети	4924
Кахети	3 884
Мцхета-Мтианети	2 248
Рача-Лечхуми-Квемо Сванети	109
Самегрело-Земо Сванети	4 163
Самцхе-Джавахети	2 230
Квемо Картли	6 464

¹ А. Тотадзе, *Демографический портрет Грузии*, Тбилиси, (на груз. языке) 1993, с. 272.

² Государственный департамент статистики Грузии, *Итоги всеобщей переписи населения 2002 г.* (на груз. языке) – http://www.geostat.ge/cms/site_images/files/georgian/census/2002/I%20tomi%20-%20saqarTvelos%20mosaxleobis%202002%20wlis%20pirveli%20erovnuli%20sayovelTao%20aRweris%20Se%20gebi.pdf

Основную часть оставшихся русских составляют люди преклонного возраста. Молодые, как правило, выезжает в Россию с надеждой на лучшую жизнь. Особенно этому процессу миграции дает импульс, принятые законодательными властями РФ законы, которые содействуют возвращению из стран бывшего СССР своих соотечественников и выделяемые на эти цели средства.³ Насчет этого можно привести пример проживающих в Грузии русских сектантов (духоборов, молокан). Начиная с 19 века царская Россия на окраину своей империи выселяло негодных себе религиозных раскольников. Таким образом в Грузии появились села, компактно заселенные русскими сектантами. Духоборы компактно проживали в Джавахети, в Ниноцминдском (бывшем Богдановском) районе на границе с Арменией. До 1990 года здесь было 8 духоборских сел (Гореловка, Спасовка, Ждановка, Ефремовка, Орловка, Родионовка, Троицкое, Калинино) и проживало 3 500 человек. Село Гореловка вообще считается Меккой и центром всемирного духоборства. Это община до сих пор сохранила свою яркую идентичность, религию, традиции и национальную одежду. К сожалению, сегодня духоборы остались только в с. Гореловка и их численность составляет 150 человек. В этом населенном пункте наряду с духоборами уже проживают местные армяне и грузинские экомигранты из Аджарии. Покинуть свои родные края духоборы начали с 1998г. По программе переселения, которым руководило посольство Российской Федерации в Грузии. В основном они переехали в Брянскую и Тамбовскими области, Большинство сожалели потом о переезде в виду того, что им пришлось вместо работы в сельском хозяйстве переквалифицироваться работать в производстве, выезжать на заработки в Москву и бытовые условия оказались не такими какие им обещали. Некоторые захотели вернуться назад, но в этом случае им нужно было бы возместить потраченные на них средства, что вынудило их остаться в России навсегда. Аналогическая ситуация повторилась в случае молокан, сейчас оставшиеся молокане, численность которых по всей Грузии составляет 800 человек, проживает в регионе Кахетии в селах Свободное и Ульяновка (Лагодехский муниципалитет), Красногорск (Сагареджойский муниципалитет) и Ульяновка (Сигнахский муниципалитет). Жители этих деревень в основном люди пожилого возраста.

Что касается положения русского языка и обучения на русском, можно отметить несколько обстоятельств. В советские времена русский язык как обязательный

³*Этносы в Грузии*, Тбилиси, (на груз. языке) 2008, с. 224.

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факультативный предмет в национальных школах обучался с 3 класса. На сегодняшний день в грузинских школах с первого класса в обязательном порядке преподается английский язык и только с седьмого класса ученик может выбрать как второй иностранный язык: либо немецкий, либо французский или русский язык. Последнее положение не касается частных школ. Как в Советский период, так и в период независимости русские составляли меньшинство в русских школах, а большая часть приходила на других представителей нац. меньшинств. В советское время русские школы по сравнению с другими выделялись высоким уровнем образования. По этой причине, а также из-за перспективы продолжения учебы в ВУЗ-ах за пределами Грузинской республики многие грузинские родители отдавали своих детей на обучение в русскую школу. По ситуации на 2003-04 учебный год в Грузии функционировали 168 русских школ, откуда только 55 были одноязычные, остальные были двуязычные, трехязычные (где обучение наряду с русским велось на грузинском, армянском и азербайджанском языках).⁴

Регион	Количество русских школшкол (2009г)	Количество учащихся
Квемо Картли	11	281
Самцхе-Джавахети	4	136
Тбилиси	10	337
Мцхета-Тианети	2	27
Кахети	1	12
Имерети	2	40
Всего	30	833

⁴ Ш. Табатадзе, *Реформа системы образования Грузии и негрузинские школы: рекомендации для выработки политики*, Тбилиси, (на груз. языке) 2009, с. 5.

Выводы и рекомендации

Сохранение русского населения Грузии. Надо отметить что одним из фактором заселения Грузии русскими была необходимость в квалифицированных кадрах в разных отраслях экономики. После массового оттока русского населения в Россию Грузия тем самым потеряла также необходимые ей технические кадры. Особенно болезненно это можно рассматривать в случае духоборов и молокан, носителей особенной уникальной культуры и традиции. Сейчас в с. Гореловка проживают 150 человек, отсюда молодежь составляет подавляющее меньшинство. Это означает, что через некоторое время Грузия может вообще остаться без духоборов. Исходя из сложившейся ситуации, следует содействовать возвращению духоборов и молокан в места их прежнего проживания, также сохранению и защите созданными ими памятники материальной культуры, в частности, в список культурного наследия надо занести в с. Гореловка, их молитвенный дом, который носит название «Сиротский дом» и кладбище. На местах их компактного проживания должен быть создан этнографический музей, дом культуры, в котором дети не только духоборов, но и любые желающие будут обучаться вышивке их национальных костюмов, будет функционировать ансамбль песни и танца. Такое культурное многообразие может стать объектом этнического туризма и исследования ученых.

Усиление и усовершенствование преподавания русского языка. Положение дел со знанием русского языка в Грузии печальное, особенно в молодом поколении, так как молодежь, которая уже родилась и выросла в независимой Грузии почти уже не знает русский язык. Молодые люди из Грузии со своими сверстниками из Армении и Азербайджана общаются на английском, хотя для последних предпочтителен русский язык. По этому поводу можно упомянуть фразу М. Саакашвили при личной встрече с В. Путиным, что «я буду последним президентом Грузии, который знает русский». В последнее время в Грузии в общественных дискуссиях поднимался вопрос какой язык учить английский и русский. Понятно чью пользу завершались эти дебаты, но не понятно сама постановка вопроса, почему знание английского исключает знание русского или наоборот, никто не спорит о важности знания английского как языка номер один в мире но не понятно, почему нельзя одновременно изучать и знать 2 иностранных языка. Жители такой маленькой страны как Грузия обречены знать минимум 2 иностранных языка. Чисто из прагматических соображений Грузия должно уделить должное внимание повышению уровню знания русского языка. Во-первых русский язык пока еще остается языком коммуникации с представителями национальных меньшинств, как показывают исследования 80% азербайджанцев региона Квемо Картли и 75% армян региона

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Самцхе-Джавахети не знают государственного языка. Особенно главный вопрос на каком языке молодое поколение грузин будет общаться с абхазами и осетинами, для которых русский как родной язык и знанием английского они особенно не выделяются. Тем самым в обозримом будущем грузинское общество само искусственно самоизолируется от этих людей. Также немаловажный вопрос, который касается самой перспективной и приоритетной отрасли экономики Грузии- туризма. Не секрет, что самое большое количество туристов составляют именно русскоязычные туристы. В основном это туристы из России, Украины, Армении и Азербайджана. Соответственно возникает надобность в обслуживании визитеров на понятном для них языке. Даже при найме на работу часто работодателем одним из требований к соискателю работы наряду со знанием английского ставить знание русского языка. Так что, для того чтобы ты был конкурентоспособным на рынке труда необходимо знание этих 2 языков. Исходя из выше сказанного надо отметить, что отношение к русскому языку должно исходить не из идеологических, а чисто из прагматических соображений и неоспоримо, что по своей значимости и важности после английского языка русский язык прочно стоит на втором месте. Таким образом, считаю необходимым усилить преподавание русского языка на всех ступенях образования с осуществлением следующих мер.

- В общеобразовательных школах изучение второго выборочного иностранного языка начать с 5-го класса, а не с 7-го как сейчас (Например в Литве русский язык преподается с 5-го класса).

-Увеличить количество уроков с 2 часов в неделю до 3 или 4 часов.

- В рамках программы «Учись и обучай» пригласить молодых российских специалистов по русскому языку работать в регионах Грузии по своей специальности на протяжении года, а в случае желаяния и продолжения контракта. Эта программа успешно работает для преподавателей английского языка из США и других англоязычных стран, которые обучают язык детям с первого класса. Также в рамках этой программы Китайское правительство за свой деньги несколько педагогов китайского языка, которые обучают бесплатно китайскому студентов и любых желающих. Темболее, что такая практика существует у Российской сторон, когда Мин. образование РФ отправило 200 педагогов русского языка в Согдийскую область Таджикистана. Если взять ориентировочно 500 филологов русского языка и подчитать расходы, то окажется, что не такая же большая сумма выходит. Прежне надо отметить, что в Грузии всего около 2000 школ, отсюда 200 школ приходится на Тбилиси. Особенная необходимость в молодых специалистов прослеживается в сельской местности, из-за того что

молодые люди все меньше поступает на педагогические специальности из-за низкой оплачиваемости труда, на зато в районе профессия учителя всегда пользуется особым уважением в обществе. С одной стороны в сельских школах низкий уровень образования, но с другой стороны здесь более мотивированные ученики. Если вернуться к расходом: каждый педагог приезжает работать на 10 месяцев, отсюда 1 месяц приходится на адаптацию в стране, а остальные 9 месяцев длится учебный год. Ежемесячная зарплата приглашенного специалиста составляет на руки 500 лари (300\$) плюс 200 лари (120\$), которые выплачиваются принимающей семье для обеспечения гостя жильем и питанием. Если суммировать эти затраты на 500 человек, тогда мы получим цифру 7.5 млн. лари (4.5 млн. \$). Финансирование этой программы наполовину могли бы взять грузинская и российская стороны. В виде дополнительного стимула Мин. образование Грузии может представить участникам этой программы бесплатное обучение в магистратуре в ВУЗ-ах Грузии.

Усовершенствование русскоязычных учебных программ в ВУЗ-ах Грузии для привлечения граждан России, особенно жителей Северного Кавказа, для которых Грузия более близка и по уровню цен более приемлема, чем Москва и Петербург. На данном этапе большинство учащихся на этих программах составляют граждане России грузинского происхождения, выпускники российских школ. Но главной проблемой все-таки остается отсутствие информации о возможностях получения высшего образования в Грузии на русском языке. Об этом говорит тот факт, что даже стипендии, которые покрывают все расходы, заполняются наполовину. Имеется в виду магистерская программа Университета Ильи кавказоведение, где каждый год выделяются 25 стипендии. Исходя из этого, следует проводить за пределами страны активную информационную программу для пиара возможностей получения высшего образования в Грузии. Тем более, что в Грузии для 120 стран мира существует безвизовый режим, в том числе и для граждан России, что тоже является немаловажным привлекательным фактором.

Создание русского культурного центра, где любым желающим будет дана возможность бесплатно изучать русский язык, народные танцы, песни и игру на национальных инструментах (например балалайке) и где будут проводиться разного рода культурные мероприятия.

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РАЗРУШЕНИЕ ПОЗДНЕСРЕДНЕВЕКОВЫХ МОГИЛ ИНГУШЕТИИ ПСЛЕ ДЕПОРТАЦИИ ИНГУШЕЙ В 1944 ГОДУ

Разрушение позднесредневековых могил Ингушетии после депортации ингушей в 1944 году

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В годы депортации чеченцев и ингушей репрессиям подверглись не только эти народы, но и их культурное достояние сохранившееся после них. Грабилась и разрушалась уникальная материальная культура этих народов: были разрушены великолепные образцы башенной культуры, которые попросту взрывались, разграблены средневековые усыпальницы - каменные склепы.

С 1944 года по всей территории Ингушетии включая и Пригородный район города Владикавказа методично и полностью уничтожались ингушские кладбища, сохранились только лишь некоторые, по счастливой случайности оставшиеся целыми. Надгробные каменные плиты с разрушенных кладбищ шли на строительство колхозных свинарников, конезаводов, строили из них мостовые. Таким образом уничтожались памятники надгробной эпиграфики, уникальное художественное наследие ингушского народа. Все это делалось не от отсутствия строительного материала, так как все это было сочлено с большой тратой времени и сил: надгробия приходилось срывать с могил и привозить на место стройки иногда из довольно отдаленных мест. Этот акт государственного вандализма носил целью стереть память о народе жившем на этой территории, чтобы от прошлого не осталось и следа.

В июне 2012 года во время разведочных работ работниками Археологического центра г. Назрань в селении Экажево были обнаружены разбитые могильные надгробия. Стелы находились в основании и в кладке бывшего свинарника, от которого сохранились лишь руины, а некоторые из них валялись вокруг основания свинарника. Входе разбора завалов нами было замечено, что все стелы представляли собой обломки камней, очень редко встречались целые надгробия. Это говорит в пользу замысла их уничтожения не жели просто использования как строительного материала. Стелы редствляют собой прямоугольные камни с завершением в виде треугольного фронтона или арки. Используется только арабская каллиграфия На всех камнях арабский текст, дается имя погребенного и дата погребения по

хиджре. Довольно часто встречаются мусульманские эпитафии погребенного украшены орнаментальной резьбой, почти на всех встречаются изображения северокавказских тамг и различных предметов бытовавших в это время.

Надгробия показывают половую принадлежность погребенного, если это мужчина, то изображена атрибутика характерная только для мужчины - это может быть элементы мужского костюма (газыри, часы на цепочке, пояс и т. п.) или же оружие (кинжалы, сабли, кремневые ружья и пистолеты). На женских же встречаются изображения предметов домашней утвари и элементов женского традиционного костюма (серебряный нагрудник и пояс). Кроме этого можно установить род деятельности или же социальное положение погребенного.

Как и в истории остального человечества, погребальные памятники являются ценным источником в изучении истории, культуры и быта Ингушетии. Учитывая скудность письменных источников по истории ингушей они нередко являются основным материалом для изучения его истории. Рассматриваемые стелы дают возможность установить ареал расселения ингушей на плоскости после татаро-монгольского нашествия, его культурное развитие, мировоззрение. Эти памятники таят в себе много информации о развитии ислама среди ингушей и о привнесенной с этой религией новой культуре. Однако это возможно лишь при объединении усилий историков, этнографов, археологов, исламоведов и искусствоведов.

Выявление всех разрушенных кладбищ и вывезенных с них надгробий даст возможность представить полную картину ареала распространения и культурного развития ингушского народа на период с конца XVII до середины XIX.

Следует отметить, что находки такого рода не единичны. Они встречались и раньше и находятся по сей день, особенно при проведении строительных и земляных работ. Нет никакой гарантии, что в фундаментах зданий возведенных в период высылки чеченцев и ингушей не находятся надгробия. Вот очередная находка, 23 ноября 2012 г в городе Грозном по улице Первомайской (ныне Митаева) при проведении землянных работ строители обнаружили фундамент бывшей больницы. Оказалось, что в основании медицинского учреждения были использованы надгробные стелы с чеченских кладбищ.¹

Уже в первые годы после возвращения из ссылки люди стали находить стелы во время распашки огородов, рытье траншеи для фундаментов домов, а также в основании различных построек возведенных в период высылки ингушей.

¹ Кавказ и Россия, *Vainah'sVeras\ Война в Чечне* – <http://vk.com/vainahsveras>

РАЗРУШЕНИЕ ПОЗДНЕСРЕДНЕВЕКОВЫХ МОГИЛ ИНГУШЕТИИ ПСЛЕ ДЕПОРТАЦИИ ИНГУШЕЙ В 1944 ГОДУ

По рассказу братьев Дударовых Амерхана и Вахи Халитовичей, у них в огороде, после выселения ингушей, стояла большая кузня, которая полностью была выстроена из ингушских надмогильных памятников-чуртов. «Трактористы не могли распахивать наш огород, - рассказывают братья, - и отказывались это делать, так как у них ломались лемеха плугов, которые цепляли памятники при распашке. Помним, мы с отцом вручную перерыли весь наш огород и собрали все эти надгробия. Некоторые односельчане даже приходили и узнавали памятники, стоявшие над могилами своих родственников, похороненных на сельском кладбище до нашего выселения, и уносили их...».²

Основное количество надгробий ушло при строительстве животноводческих ферм и колхозов, которые строились после высылки ингушей для новых переселенцев из соседних республик. Уже после возвращения коренного населения многие узнавали в найденных камнях надгробия своих предков. «Помню, у нас в селе Кантышево была животноводческая ферма, построенная из надгробных памятников с обоих кладбищ нашего села после выселения ингушей. Мы, будучи детьми, в обнаженных от старой штукатурки местах стен фермы видели арабские надписи на этих чуртах...».³

Однако не все переселенцы мирились с тем вандализмом проводимым над ингушскими кладбищами, хоть они и заняли чужие земли, но с уважением относились к чужой культуре. Нужно отдать должное тем, кто в отсутствие ингушей проявлял заботу и уважение к его наследию, в особенности к их умершим предкам.

«После нашего возвращения из ссылки домой в 1957 г., мы узнали о том, что в с. Долаково жили представители дагестанских мусульманских народов. Среди них жила семья муллы. Как-то по дороге, когда сын муллы проходил мимо общего ингушского кладбища жителей сс. Кантышево и Долаково, которое находилось между этими населенными пунктами, молодой человек увидел возившихся на кладбище людей. Он подошел к ним и увидел, что это новоявленные хозяева-осетины, которые сваливают кувалдой надмогильные ингушские памятники и вывозят с территории кладбища их на арбах. На просьбу остепениться и оставить в покое мусульманские ингушские чурты, ему стали угрожать. Завязалась драка, в которой дагестанский сын муллы убил из них одного...».⁴

² А-М. М. Дударов, *Надгробия – как часть ингушской истории*, 26.07. 2011– <http://gazetaingush.ru>

³ там же.

⁴ там же.

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC YOUTH CONFERENCES

За тринадцать лет проведенных в ссылке ингушский народ потерпел большой урон во всех сферах жизни, суровые условия ссылки и оторванность от родной земли повлияли на развитие культуры, ее деформацию, забыванию традиций. Однако не меньший ущерб нанесли репрессии и культурному наследию ингушей, тотальному разрушению подвергались уникальные средневековые горные поселения, были разрушены целые ансамбли мусульманских кладбищ.

Советская идеология была направлена на подавление индивидуальности народа и создание безличной массы, формирование средних, общепринятых ценностей. В чем, как мне кажется, и есть суть репрессий против целых народов и отдельных граждан Советского Союза.

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