

Georgian Orthodox Church
Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation

CAUSES OF WAR
PROSPECTS FOR PEACE

Tbilisi, 2009

On December 2-3, 2008 the Holy Synod of the Georgian Orthodox Church and the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation held a scientific conference on the theme: **Causes of War - Prospects for Peace.**

The main purpose of the conference was to show the essence of the existing conflicts in Georgia and to prepare objective scientific and information basis.

This book is a collection of conference reports and discussion materials that on the request of the editorial board has been presented in article format.

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Preface by His Holiness and Beatitude Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia Ilia II

OPENING WORDS TO THE CONFERENCE

Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is a true joy and a great privilege to greet you cordially on behalf of the Church of Georgia and in person. I would like to greet you on behalf of a country and people who have a history that counts more than 3000 years of statehood and 2000 years of Christian practice. Georgia is a small, yet multinational country and I could say that persecution on religious or ethnic grounds has never taken place in Georgia. This was first of all conditioned by the loving nature of our people, as well as certainly by the Christian faith which is confessed by the majority of the population of Georgia. I am emphasizing this particular point on account of the fact that, following the events that developed in our country in August, some people have been trying to present us as aggressors while in reality it is ethnic Georgian population who was banished from the Tskhinvali Region, and was robbed and scattered. Internally displaced persons from Abkhazia have been living in the same conditions for seventeen years and unfortunately, no efficient steps were taken to create security guarantees for them and ensure their return.

I do believe that it is necessary to recall the recent past of our country in order to be able to make a correct assessment of the current situation.

However, I would like to note in advance that I am not a politician and naturally my assessments may differ from yours. Yet religious leaders who represent an absolute majority of the population of the country, are not only spiritual representatives of their people but they carry a certain political weight too. It is for this reason that I want to share my ideas and my concerns with you.

In the 1920s, when the Communists invaded independent Georgia, they distributed some parts of our territories among the neighbouring states and without any historical or legal grounds they created the autonomous republics of Ajara, Abkhazia and South Ossetia in the remaining parts. By doing so they planted the time-bombs that were to go off as soon as the occasion arose. Now the time has come.

Even though the Soviet Union no longer exists, the ideology and fabricated history that has been instilled in the minds of residents of the above-mentioned regions for 70 years, and over 100 years of Tsarist rule before that, disposed the residents of these regions against Georgia, thereby creating an illusion that they had been invaded by the Georgian state.

In reality, these regions are ancient Georgian lands just as, for example, Novgorod, Suzdal or Smolensk are for the Russians...Besides, majority of the population in these parts of Georgia have always been ethnic Georgians.

We need the West's support to confront the anti-Georgian propaganda. If we succeed

in this, I am convinced that the attitude of these ethnic minorities towards Georgia will change radically because they, as well as other ethnicities living here, have enjoyed wonderful conditions for their own development within Georgia.

Abkhaz- and Ossetian-language universities and other institutions of higher education, schools and theatres, as well as newspapers and magazines operated both in Abkhazia and the so-called South Ossetia... That is to say, they enjoyed full autonomies and achieved considerable success too.

Indeed, the current confrontation is not a Georgian-Ossetian or Georgian-Abkhaz ethnic conflict. The truth is well manifested by the fact that, both during the hostilities and today ethnic Ossetians living in great numbers in various towns and villages of Georgia have not left their homes. Nor have they experienced any problems communicating with the Georgians. The same is true about the Abkhaz.

I am not saying that mistakes, serious mistakes, were not made on our part. However, it is also natural that Georgia, as any other country in the world, would not reconcile itself with losing its own territories.

The Georgian people and the Church of Georgia are grateful to the international community who has demonstrated solidarity with us and did not support the recognition of the independence of Abkhazia and so-called South Ossetia. However, I would also like to emphasize here that any country that supports Georgia's territorial integrity is thereby defending its borders and peace in general because the reasons that were employed for recognizing the independence of these so-called autonomies, is devoid of any grounds and is bound to create serious problems for any country, including Russia itself. It will fuel separatism, a centrifugal force that will destroy any country. It is an attempt to legalize ethnic cleansing and it should not be sanctioned. Georgia will always strive to reclaim its territories.

I categorically rule out violent methods for attaining these ends. Both before the conflict and now, our Church has opposed and still opposes bloodshed and we have said this more than once. I believe diplomatic (especially public diplomacy), economic, cultural, religious and other means will make it possible to repair the broken bridge between Georgia and Russia.

The country that gave to the world St Sergius of Radonezh, Seraphim of Sarov, St John of Kronstadt, Optina Elders, great hierarchs, martyrs, famous philosophers and writers, is culturally close to us.

What has happened should not have happened. We could have chosen another path in our relations. Now a serious crack and distrust has appeared in Russian-Georgian relations. The wall that was erected is difficult to demolish but it is necessary that we do so. We should help each other in restoring Georgia's territorial integrity.

Well-known politicians are saying that he, who possesses Eurasia, possesses the world. I believe other regions too, including the Caucasus, have a great importance for the world. It is due to this fact that the interests of great countries converge here and everybody is trying to transform it into their sphere of influence. At the same time, each of them is proposing to us a position that is favourable to them yet fails

to take into account the interests of the local population. Consequently, an attempt to partition the country into spheres of influence is evident, which, let me reiterate, poses a threat not only to Georgia.

Indeed, the recent war demonstrated that using violent methods is leading to serious confrontation in the world and is causing global problems. Therefore, I believe it is important that all of us should seek together peaceful ways of conflict resolutions. For our part we are ready to take appropriate steps.

I do not know what the outcome is going to be like but it is a fact that despite the difficult situation, our Orthodox Churches managed to preserve good relations and I hope it will be further strengthened in the future.

We wish to maintain friendly relations with everybody and we want our country, as well as the whole Caucasus, to turn into an arena of cooperation rather than the one of confrontation. However, peace without justice cannot prevail.

It is said in the bible: "Strive for the truth unto death and the Lord shall fight for you".
(Sirach, 4; 28)

May God empower us to walk on the path of truth!

Preface by Katja Christina Plate, Head of the Regional Office for Political Dialogue in the South Caucasus of the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation

OPENING WORDS TO THE CONFERENCE

Having arrived in Georgia on the first of November 2007, I have witnessed many incisive political events ever since. Violent clashes took place in the streets of Tbilisi on November 7th. The president stepped down and presidential elections were held in January 2008. In May 2008 parliamentary elections were held. In August we witnessed a horrible war on the territory of Georgia. People have died. They got wounded and traumatized. People had to flee from their homes. Some could return afterwards only to find their property destroyed or looted, others still cannot go home and have to live in refugee shelters.

The former Pope John Paul II mentioned once that each war is always a defeat of humanity. This year I learned the meaning of these words. Being born in Germany in 1978 more than 30 years after the Second World War, I was happy enough to grow up without any personal experience of a war. The Wall separating Eastern and Western Germany came down peacefully in 1989 and the Iron Curtain fell shortly afterwards. I was 11 years old at this time. I lived in a world developing from a bi-polar to multi-polar system. Nevertheless, the ethnic civil wars in the territories of the former Yugoslavia and the terror attacks of Islamic fundamentalists were happening somewhere else. None of my friends got hurt and none of my family members were involved. In August, I experienced myself how fragile peace is and how threatening a war can be. The fragility of peace and the humanitarian disaster of war request from us all to reflect on the causes of the August war and discuss the prospects of peace in order to avoid more violence.

Konrad Adenauer, the first Chancellor of Western Germany who governed Western Germany from 1949 to 1963 said once: "In my opinion, it is impossible to act appropriate if one does not learn from the past and takes what is worth being taken from the past." Some of the challenges Konrad Adenauer met in the 1950ies seem to me quite similar to the challenges in Georgia today. Adenauer had to lay down the cornerstones for the reconstruction of the war torn Germany. Hunger, inappropriate housing, unemployment, an infrastructure in decay were pressing problems. Adenauer successfully combined the free market economy with the Christian democratic principles of social responsibility. He managed to integrate millions of German refugees and displaced persons into the western German society. Konrad Adenauer consolidated democracy, freedom, peace, prosperity, social security and justice in Germany.

But Konrad Adenauer's name does not only stand for huge efforts and successes in domestic affairs. After the occupation by the western allies of World War II, Adenauer managed to grasp western Germany's sovereignty. He managed to transform Germany to such a credible and stable democracy that the country was admitted to NATO in

1955 in spite of its division in two parts. Even more important, Konrad Adenauer together with the French President Charles de Gaulle ended the centuries old mortal enmity between France and Germany. An unprecedented process of reconciliation took place. Together with Charles de Gaulle, Alcide de Gasperi, Robert Schuman and other leading Christian Democrats, Konrad Adenauer changed the face of Europe: They started the still ongoing process of the European integration. Those states which were fighting each other for centuries, started to give up state sovereignty for the sake of a peaceful, democratic and prosperous common future.

The Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation is bearing the name of Konrad Adenauer. We are committed to the Christian Democratic way of thinking, to the values and ideas that drove Konrad Adenauer. Our foundation was founded in Germany in 1955. Since that time, we promote peace, freedom, rule of law, democracy, the European idea and the idea of the social market economy. Each day we are working in Germany and in 120 countries around the world for these goals. Here in Georgia we are doing so by political education, by party cooperation, by training journalists, by supporting students with fellowships and many more activities. As the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation is committed to the Christian democratic political tradition, the opinions and thoughts of the churches and religious communities are of special interest and concern for us.

We are honoured that the Patriarchate of the Georgian Orthodox Church has held together with us the conference "Causes of War – Prospects for Peace" in December 2008. For the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation, this conference was an important starting point for learning about the explanations the Georgian scientific community provides about the historical roots of the territorial conflicts inside Georgia. Attending the conference and reading the articles added a lot to my understanding about the origins of violence and hatred which have contributed their share to the war between the Russian Federation and Georgia in August 2008. This publication should serve the purpose of providing a starting point for a much needed discussion between all sides involved in the territorial conflicts. In case you want to respond to one of the articles please send your contribution to: info.georgien@kas.de

Tbilisi, 19th of March 2008

A Historical-Geographic Review of Modern Abkhazia

by T. Beradze, K. Topuria, B Khorava

Abkhazia (Abkhazeti) – the farthest North-Western part of Georgia is situated between the rivers Psou and Inguri on the coast of the Black Sea. The formation of Abkhazia within the borders is the consequence of complicated ethno-political processes.

Humans first settled on the territory of modern Abkhazia during the Paleolithic Era. Abkhazia is the place where Neolithic, Bronze and Early Iron Eras are represented at their best.

The first Georgian state – the Kingdom of Egrisi (Kolkheti), formed in 15. to 14. century BC, existed till the 2.century BC. It used to include the entire South-Eastern and Eastern parts of the Black Sea littoral for ages. The territory of modern Abkhazia was also a part of the Egrisi Kingdom. Old Greek historical sources inform us that before the new millennium, the territory between the rivers Psou and Inguri was only populated with tribes of Georgian origin: the Kolkhs, Kols, Svan-Kolkhs, Geniokhs.

The Kingdom of Old Egrisi fell at the end of the 2.century BC and was never restored till 2.century AD. Old Greeks, Byzantines and Romans called this state - Lazika, the same Lazeti, which was associated with the name of the ruling dynasty. In 3. and 4. centuries AD, entire Western Georgia, including the territory of present Abkhazia, was part of this state. Based on the data of Byzantine authors, the South-East coastline part of the territory – between rivers Kodori and Inguri - belonged to the Odishi Duchy. The source of the Kodori River was occupied by the Georgian tribe of Misimians that was directly subordinated to the King of Egrisi (Lazeti). Tsebeli (Tsebelda), located in the central part of the Kodori River, and Apshileti, occupying the fortress and city of Traechea (Ughagni in Georgian), the same Anakopia (modern New Athos) were under the direct control of the administration of the Egrisi King. These places were located in the central part of the Kodori River. Abazgia – Abkhazia that comprised two duchies subordinated to the King of Egrisi occupied a territory till the Akenut River (now the Shakhe River) including the Traeche fortress.

At the end of 8.century, West Georgia united as a single Kingdom again. The new Kingdom was called Abkhazia after the ruling Dynasty. The Kingdom was divided into eight duchies. The Abkhazian Duchy stretched on the territory from the Nikopsia (Negogsukho) River to the Anakopia (now Psirtskha) River. The Tskhumi Duchy was located to the Southeast of it, till the Kodori River. The Source of the Kodori River (the former Misimianeti) belonged to the Svaneti Duchy. Like in the past, the Odishi Duchy was located in the South-eastern part of the Kodori River. On the verge of 10 - 11.centuries, the territory of modern Abkhazia integrated into the newly-formed Kingdom of Georgia, where the administrative-territorial division of Abkhazia remained unchanged. Here, the borders of the Duchy only changed at the beginning of 14. century, when the Tskhumi Duchy became part of the Odishi Duchy. From this time on, there existed only two duchies on the territory of modern Abkhazia. These were the Duchy of Abkhazia and the Duchy of Odishi. They were initially separated by the "Anakopia River".

The Kingdom of Georgia dissolved at the end of 15.century. All Western Georgia became part of the Imereti Kingdom, of which the territory of present Abkhazia (in the forms of the Duchies of Abkhazia and Odishi) was also a part. By that time, the Duchy of Abkhazia was situated between the Gagra Narrows and the Anakopia River. The situation of the Odishi Duchy was preserved and like in the past, it covered the littoral to the Southeast of the River Inguri. The Duke of Abkhazia was subordinated to the Duke of Odishi and the King of Imereti at the same time. During the 50s of

15. century, the littoral was no longer part of the Kingdom of Imereti. Dadiani, the Duke of Odishi, became an independent ruler, to whom the Duke of Abkhazia was subordinated.

In the 80s-90s of 16. century, with the immediate involvement of Osmalia, the border between Abkhazia and Odishi was changed and shifted to the River Kelasuri. Shortly, the Duchy of Abkhazia gained independence. The Principal of Odishi Levan Dadiani (1611-1657) gained a temporary control over Abkhazians. Yet, he failed to stop the massacre attacks. Therefore, he had to build a system of fortress constructions on the left bank of the Kelasura. These constructions are termed as "the Kelasura Wall" in history.

In the 70s-80s of 17. century, the Odishi Principality lost its power. The Abkhazian feudalists took advantage of the situation and broadened the territory of Abkhazia from the Kelasuri River to the Inguri. As a result of the subjugation, a genocide of the Georgian population took place on the territory between the River Kelasuri and the River Khalidzga. A bigger part of the Georgian people were either sold as slaves or forced to flee and take refuge in other parts of Georgia. Only a very small part of the aborigine population stayed in the place. The population got mixed with the settlers.

As a result of the developments at the beginning of 18. century major changes have been entered into the political map of Abkhazia. Zupu stretched from the River Bzipi to the River Gumista. Abzhua was formed between the River Gumista and the River Ghalidzga. "Abzhua" is the Abkhazian translation of the Georgian "mid-country". Between the River Ghalidzga and the River Inguri was formed one more Abkhazian feudal state, which was later called Samurzakano. At the beginning of 18. century, the Principal of Odishi managed to shift the borderline between the principalities of Abkhazia and Odishi from the Inguri River to the Khalidzga River. Thus, throughout almost the whole 18. century, Samurzakano was part of the Odishi Principality.

At the beginning of 19. century, the Principality of Odishi (Samegrelo) became an autonomous unit of the Russian Empire. Samurzakano was also a part of the Autonomous Principality of Samegrelo, while the border between Abkhazia and Samegrelo passed on the River Ghalidzga. The Marshania Feudal House governed in Tsebeli and Dali - the mid and higher part of the Kodori Canyon. The Pskhu Region, located at the source of the Bzipi River, was also subordinated to the Marshania Feudal House. Thus, the Principality of Abkhazia, which as one of the regions of Georgia became an autonomous unit of the Russian Empire in 1810, only included the Black Sea Littoral from the River Khalidzga to the River Bzipi. At the same time, the Principal of Abkhazia only exercised control over Zupu on this territory. With the help of Russian troops, in the 30s of 19. century the Principal of Abkhazia Mikheil Shervashidze managed to expand his power on the Black Sea Littoral on the territory from the Bzipi to the Khalidzga. Thus, Abkhazia, as a single political unit, was only established at this time.

In 1864, the Russian authorities abolished the Abkhazian Principality. In the place of the Principality and within the same boundaries there was formed "the Military Unit of Abkhazia". Two years later, in 1866, "the Sokhumi Okrug" (the Sokhumi District) was set up within the borders of the Kutaisi Province instead of the Military Unit of Abkhazia. Samurzakano - the territory between the River Ghalidzga and the River Inguri - was first to become a part of the Sokhumi District. Since the 1840s, the Russian Empire has been striving to separate the Abkhazian Territory from Georgia. The Russian authorities considered that it would be somewhat awkward to carry out the intention directly. Therefore, they embarked on the "stealing aggression" campaign. In 1903 the Russian authorities separated the Gagra Sector from the Sokhumi District and united it with the newly-created Black Sea Littoral Province. There appeared plans that were aimed at uniting other parts of modern Abkhazia with the Black Sea Littoral Province. The 1917 February Revolution put an end to

all such plans. As early as in the period before the coup d'état of October 1917, the National Council of Georgia claimed from the Russian "temporary government" to get the Gagra Sector back. At the end of the same year, after the overthrow of the temporary government, the territory was returned to Georgia and hence Abkhazia.

On May 26, 1918, Georgia declared an independent democratic republic. Abkhazia was part of the republic and was called the Sokhumi Region. The name "Abkhazeti", in an administrative political sense, joined the Democratic Republic of Georgia in March 1919, based on a special act. The constitution of the Democratic Republic of Georgia endowed the status of autonomy onto Abkhazia.

On May 7, 1920, an agreement, signed between the Soviet Russian and Georgian authorities in Moscow, determined the River Psou as a border between Georgia and Russia. This agreement, like all the other agreements concluded between Georgia and Russia, was shortly broken by the Russian side. In February-March 1921 Russia occupied and annexed Georgia.

At first, the government of Soviet Russia tried to separate Abkhazia from Georgia. However, to avoid the negative attitude of Georgian people and the world community it left Abkhazia with the name of the Union Republic of Abkhazia as an autonomous unit within the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia. However, the border moved from the River Psou to the River Mekhadiri. Only in 1929, upon the insistent demand of Soviet Georgia, the River Psou became the border between Soviet Russia and the Soviet Georgia. In 1931, the actual status of Abkhazia was also given a legal form. Abkhazia, upon its own request, gained the status of Soviet Socialist Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia. The situation was preserved till the Abkhazian Conflict of 1992-93, which was actually the second Russian-Georgian war of the 20th century.

Historical-Ethnographical Survey of Dali Svaneti/Kodori Gorge/Zemo (upper) Abkhazia

Rozeta Gujejiani

According to the historical sources (Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Georgian) today's Zemo (upper) Abkhazia was called as **Dali Svaneti, i.e. Abkhazian Svaneti**, which was later named as Kodori Gorge. Since ancient times it belonged to Svaneti and it was obvious that this territory was always an integral part of Georgia.

Svaneti (including Dali Gorge) covered the entire mountain part of Georgia **from the upper reaches of the river Kodori until the Likhi Range**, from the existence of an ancient Georgian Kingdom Egrisi (15 - 14 centuries B.C.) till dissolution of Georgia into smaller kingdom-principalities (15 - 16 centuries).

Dali Svaneti was connected to the Balskvemo Svaneti by the narrow paths (from Chuberi Community) to the Jerildi Mountain chain.

It is known that the ancient Greeks called Egrisi Kingdom as **"Multi-gold Kolkhida"**. **In plurality of gold of Kolkheti the bigger endowment was made by Svaneti**. One of the oldest places of producing the gold was considered Chuberi Community in the neighborhood of Dali Gorge and **the road leading to the Northern Caucasus (Tonghuz-Orun and Basi Chains) was situated through those two gorges** (Beradze, 1989).

Since the 4.century B.C. Svaneti (including Dali) represented one of the important regions of the entire Georgia created by the King Pharnavaz.

Later, according to the description of Strabo, in the Dali Region there lived the Georgians (Svans): near to Dioskuria, i.e. modern Sukhumi, "there are Svans. Svans are the best from the point of heroism and physical force... and **they own everything around and have conquered the Alps of the Caucasus, that are higher than Dioskuria**" (T.Kaukhchishvili, 1957, p.126).

The Greek authors (Agathios Scholasticis, Menandre Protector, Theodos Gangrian) called the Dali Gorge of the 6 - 7 centuries as the **"site of Missimians"** (Georgica, 1940, p.236). **It is evident that Missimians are Georgians, i.e. Svans**. This name comes from the dialectal title of this oldest Georgian community - Svans - which sounded as **Mushuan** (Kaldani, 1999).

Dali gorge was actively mentioned in entire early medieval history of Georgia. In the 4-7 centuries, Persia and Byzantium attempted to conquer Georgia. The wars between them were reflected more gravely on Svaneti and its part - the Dali Gorge (Misimisneti). (Stanelashvili, 1959; Muskhelishili, 2003; Gasviani, 1995; Arghvliani, 2003). **The reason was strategic situation of Svaneti**: Svaneti is bordering the North Caucasus, from were in the 4 - 6 centuries of "the big resettlement", the South Caucasus and its neighboring countries were attacked by the Huns and Alanyan tribes. Byzantium and Persia tried to get rid of their aggression and to redirect it to the other side. **In such situation the most important was to control the crossing roads of the Caucasus Chains, which was executed by Svaneti in Western Georgia. Through the Dali part, the roads from the North Caucasus were leading to the Black Sea side**. Besides, in the 4 - 6 centuries the main object of an export from the East to the West was silk. **In the second half of the 6. century, Byzantium established trade relations with the main importers of silk - China and Middle Asia, through a new "Northern Silk Road". This road led from Middle Asia to the North Caspian Sea, passed the Northern sides of the Caucasus main gorge and via the mountain chains**

of Western Georgia followed to the Black Sea. Thus, by means of conquering Svaneti, Persia could control the Northern Silk Road and could monopolize the transit trade of silk between East and West again. (Beradze, 1989, pp. 32-70). Moreover, there was a direct road from eastern Georgia to Svaneti.

In the second half of the 5. century, the Georgian King Vakhtang Gorgasali united Svaneti (including Dali) with the Kingdom of Kartli (Kartlis Tskhovreba, 1955, p.185).

"The Big Warfare in Egrisi", which started in 542, abruptly reflected on two parts of Svaneti – Misimianeti (Dali Gorge) and Balsqvemo (Lower Bali) Svaneti. At this time the Byzantine sources often mentioned the principle fortresses of Dali Gorge "**Bukolusi/Bokeri Fortress**" and "**Rkinis (iron)/Chkhalta Fortress**" (Georgica, 1940).

In 562 Persia and Byzantium signed an armistice, but the controversy around Svaneti lasted farther. In 571 the war between Byzantium and Persia started again. In 575 the Byzantine forces invaded Svaneti and in 590 - the Persians (Georgica; 1941; p.32-34).

In the 7. century the part of Egrisi was under the influence of Byzantium and it was ruled, together with the Dali Gorge/Misimianeti, by the Patricios instead of the king.

From 697 the Arabs conquered a great part of the Western Georgia. The fortress rulers, who obeyed the Arabs, governed the **Rkina (iron)/Chkhalta** Fortress too (Sanadze, Beradze, 2004).

During the Arab invasions (735-738), the Dali Gorge population obeyed the Karthli Duke Stephanoz III and his heirs. Later, in **the bigger part of historical Georgia, Leon II, the Duke of Abkhazia - one of the provinces of Georgia, established a new Georgian state which was called Abkhazian Kingdom, i.e. Egrisi-Abkhazian Kingdom (Lortkipanidze,1973).**

The Abkhazian Kingdom included the Svaneti Principality and its part of the Dali Gorge, which was ruled by the **Marushians** community. Marushians played an important role in the political life of the Abkhazians Kingdom. Adding to that, one of the strongest feudal family branches was of Svanetian origin **Shavliani**, which even competed with the royal dynasty. **Two kings from the Shavliani Dynasty are known** within the Abkhazian Kingdom (861-881).

From the 11. century the Dukes of Abkhazia are called the Sharvashidze/ Shervashidze.

Since the late medieval period, when the foreign tribes committed the persecution of the Georgians in this region, **Marushinians and Sharvashidzes** were called **Marshania and Chachba** when they "became" Abkhazians.

At the end of the 16. century, there started basic changes in ethnical groups (communities) of Abkhazia (Khorava, 1998, p. 87-100). As a result of the permanent invasions from the North Caucasus, the local Georgian population started replacement (movement) from Dali Gorge to the deeper part of Svaneti. According to the information of Arcangelo Lamberte, Jean Sardenne and Evlia Chelebis, the Abkhaz-Adygean tribes came to the Kodori Gorge from the North, from the passes of the Caucasus in the late Medieval Ages. This Fact is also given in the Latin-French map of 1654, where the extreme Eastern border of the Abkhazian expulsion is the River Kodori (Gvantseladze, 1998, 29).

The Abaz-Adygean invasions, adding to the Karachayan permanent invasions took place systematically. The story of one of such incursions reached up to this period in the form of a legend, which tells about the total destruction of two communities many generations ago, as were Sali and Fazhi that were situated in Chuberi Gorge on Dali Road. (Sali community was famous for producing copper, iron and gold. The source of wealth of Fazhi commune was mainly mining of lead and silver). The enemy entered the Kodori Gorge from Karachay, through the small path and their multiple

warriors exterminated Dali together with Chuberi villages (Iessen, Deggen-Kovalevsky, 1935, p.139-323). In other sources of ethno-demographical processes another sad history was described about the Dali Gorge, and the Georgian family name Kaldani (Prosaic essays, 1957; p.242-245). Similar tragic family history was about Gvarmianis, which described the murder of 40 Gvarmianis by the enemy that came from the North Caucasus.

In the 17 - 18 centuries as a result of the permanent invasions of the Northern Caucasians, the Chuberi Gorge was depopulated for a long time, and in Dali Gorge the Georgian (Svanetian) population was the almost destructed and they were gradually replaced by the newly come Adyghean/Abkhazian ethnical group ("afsua").

According to the ethnographical materials, a part of the survived Georgians of Dali Gorge resettled in the Balsqvemo Svanetian villages. About 10 Georgian communes in Svaneti have kept in memory their ancestors' life history in Dali Gorge (Gvarmiani and one branch of Kaldani, Gurchiani, Gerliani, Subeliani, Chkhvimiani...). One custom, which remained up to this time, provides us with an important material about demographical processes that took place in Dali Gorge. After the traditional praying ritual is finished, which is held in the churches or at home, ***the prayers turn to the North-West part of the praying place, in the direction of Dali Gorge and they pray in respect to the saint places situated in Dali (Shkheri St. George Church, Ajara St. George Church...), to which their ancestors had prayed while living in Dali Gorge*** (Bardavelidze, 1939, p.60-61). This fact reflects not only a strong religious basement of the Georgian mountain communities, but the right of Georgians to the historical-cultural heritage on Dali gorge. ***Subsequently, from the beginning of the 19. century, there started the Georgians big resettlement processes in the Dali Gorge. This was not a process of development of the new, unknown territories but resettlement of the Georgians to their historical living place Dali Svaneti*** (Kaldani, 1999, p.58). Notwithstanding the two centuries absence, the Russians and Afsuas/Abkhazians, which had occupied the Georgians historical living places, could not destroy the Georgian toponymy of Dali Gorge. The biggest part of the toponymes of this gorge can be explained by the Svan dialects of the literary Georgian language: Bokeri, Buchkuri, Budzguri, Gentsvishi, Lagvana, Lata, Dali, Chkhalta, Chakhari, Gvandra, Azara, Adzgara, Tvibrasheni, Khetskvara, Khutia, Shikeri, Nahari... (Kaldani, 1999; Mibchvani, 1989; Mibchvani, 1998).

Until the 30-40s of the 19. century the Abkhazian cattlemen and shepherds paid taxes to the rulers of the Balsqvemo (Lower Bali) Svaneti the Dadeshqelians, in order to use the productive pastures in the mountains of Dali Gorge. After the first occupation of Georgia by Russia, the Abkhazians stopped paying taxes, as a result of which, there often took place attacks between the Svanetian principality and the Abkhazians. Even after the Russian government shot a national hero of Georgia Konstantine (Murzakan) Dadeshqeliani, and ***abolished the Svanetian principality*** until the 80-90s of the 19. century, the Svaneti Chubekhevi community population demanded from the government to restore justice and to impose taxes on the Abkhazian cattlemen (because of the mountains of Teltobi, Larakvakva, Darchvichencholi and the territories around them which were used as pastures by Abkhazs) (Nijaradze, 1962; Gelovani, 2003, p.42-43).

Undoubtedly, neither the ethnical Abkhazians (Afsua, as they call themselves) were in better conditions during the Russian regime. In 1840 rebellion broke out, which was brutally defeated by the conquerors. But in 1867, Russia forcibly resettled bigger part of the Tsebeli population to Ottoman Empire, as well as the Abkhazians living in Dali Gorge, as a result of the Georgians genocide. There appeared the so called "free lands fund", where the government purposely settled only the Russians (from the middle of Russia), "this population was based (...) in Lata, Ajara, Gentuishi (...) there were founded the Russian monasteries, churches" (Aslanishvili, 1933, p.16). The government harshly opposed settlement of Georgians there. They didn't give the right to Georgians to live in the villages, therefore, Svans started cutting forests and the first residents lived in the

woods during 5-6 years. The Georgians did not have the right to cultivate free grounds for long time (Aslanishvili, 1933, p. 17-18). In spite of such difficulties by 1926 there were 29 Georgian villages in the Dali Gorge.

Georgian population of Dali gorge was deprived of opportunity to have the educational and medical establishments for a long period, people lived in unbearable conditions.

The main branches of farming were developed: cattle-breeding, agriculture, bee-farming and fruit trees were planted.

Traditional life of Dali Gorge differed a little from the ethnographical being of Svaneti. The Georgians living here kept a tradition to celebrate all the old Georgian religious days, which are met in Svaneti today.

After the second occupation of Georgia by Russians the Autonomous district of Abkhazia was divided into 5 uyezds (districts). Kodori Gorge entered into various administrative borders: e.g. in 1930 it was in Sukhumi district, under the name of Azhara Agricultural Council. According to 1977 data, Dali Gorge was included into Gulripshi district (Georgia SSR... 177, p.132). After the liberation of Georgia in 1991, Dali Gorge was within the frames of Gulripshi region, Azhara community of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia.

The Georgian cultural monuments of Dali Gorge are known to the foreigner authors of ancient ages and the historians of the later period. The most important two fortresses in this region were maintained up to this time: **Bukulusi/Bokeri** Fortress was built on the upper reaches of the River Kodori, estuary of Gvandra and Kuluchi. It controlled the main road of Egrisi, leading to Alanya. **Chkhalta campus – "Rkinis (iron) fortress"**, which is situated on the estuary of River Chkhalta and Kodori, on the way to the Qlukhori Chain, connected this region with Circassy. Such tower ruins are met along the entire road until the chain and with their help the Georgians protected their borders.

It is known that in Georgia and especially in Abkhazia and Svaneti, the Christ teaching was preached by the Apostles themselves, (Japaridze, 1996, p.20-55; Abkhazia, 2007, p.75-78). Among the Georgian Christian monuments in Dali Gorge it is worth to mention **Shikeri St. Georgia Church** (village Shikeri, high hill between the rivers Gvandra and Sakeni) and **Ajara St. Georgia Church**. Both of them have been restored and the Georgian ecclesiastic men still live there in quite bad conditions.

At this moment, there are about 2600 Georgian refugees from the Dali Gorge.

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Ethnic Processes in Abkhazia (From ancient times till present)

Bezhan Khorava

The ethnic processes in Abkhazia may be observed starting from the Bronze Age.

It is confirmed that unimpeded ethnic development is observed in Western Georgia, including Abkhazia from the early Bronze Age. By the end of the Middle Bronze Age, the second half of 2. century BC, common Western-Georgian Bronze culture was formed on the entire territory of West Georgia, including Abkhazia, known as the Culture of Colchis. In 15. century BC, the ancient Georgian state of Old Egrisi - the Kingdom of Colchis was formed on the territory of historical Georgia. It was spread to the North-East coastal area of the Black Sea, reaching the mouth of the River Kubani entering the Black sea. Due to the Georgian historical tradition as well, Egrisi was the domain of one of the Georgian ethnarch, spread from the Likhi Mountain to the river "of *minor Khazaria*", i.e. the mouth of the river Kuban, ("Karthlis Tskhovreba", (Life of Karthli) 1955, p.5); this should be the low echo of the fact, that this area was inhabited by Georgian tribes.

Based on historical data, the territory of modern Abkhazia, in the Pre-Antique and Hellenistic Era, was fully included into the composition of the Kingdom of Colchis and was inhabited by tribes of Georgian origin. The interesting fact is that the authors of 2. century AD Flavious Arian and Claudius Ptolemaios, name a geographic settlement on the North-East coast of the Black Sea (close to current Tuapse) - Lazica (meadival city of Nickopsia). It's worth mentioning that Arian calls this settlement "Old Lazica" which is the authentic proof that the Georgian population inhabited the North-East coast of the Black Sea (T. Kaukchishvili, 1976).

The tribes of Coles, Coraxes, Svano-Colchians, Colchians are mentioned in the Old Greek historical works of 6. century BC, 2. century AC (Hekataios Milleteli, Skilax Kariandi, Claudius Ptolemaios etc.) as inhabitants of the territory of modern Abkhazia. The Georgian origin of these tribes is doubtless (T.Kaukchishvili, 1976).

At the end of 2. century BC, the breakdown of the Kingdom of Colchis created an unstable situation in the East and North-East coastal area of the Black Sea, which stimulated intrusion of the North Caucasian tribes into this region. This reality, in its turn, caused migration of local tribes inhabiting the East and North-East coast line of the Black Sea. Due to this in 1. century BC the Abkhaz-Adigean tribe, the Jikks inhabitants of the North Caucasus, got settled on the North-East coast of the Black Sea, between the rivers Akeunta (Shakhe) and Nickopsia (Negophsukho).

In 1. century BC, Sanigaes resided along the Black Sea coastal area from the river Akeunta to Dioscuria (curr. Sukhumi). The Sanigaes, a West-Georgian tribe, met earlier on the North-East coastline of the Black Sea, which was formerly called Lazis. The Aphsils and Abazgs residing in the North-West parts of modern Abkhazia, as well as in the countries Aphsilia and Abazgia, are mentioned firstly in the antique sources of the 1. and 2. centuries (Plinius Secundi, Flavious Arian). The titles of "Aphsilia" and "Abazgia" from the Greek sources correspond to "Aphshileti" and "Apkhazeti", mentioned in Georgian sources of the Middle Ages ("Kartlis Tskhovreba"). In the 1. - 4. centuries West Georgia got unified with the Kingdom of Egrisi. The territory of modern Abkhazia was as well included into the boundaries of that kingdom, which was inhabited by Apshils, Abazgs, Sanigges, Misimians, Lazis. It is worth mentioning that the toponymy of this area is entirely Georgian. For example "Dioscuria" (geo: two rivers). It was called "Tskhumi" in the Middle Ages (geo. "Rtskhila" - Hornbeam); "Sokhumi" is the Arabic-Turkish equivalent for this name; the ancient Georgian name of "Bichvinta"- "Pitiunt" in Greek, originates from the Georgian "Phichvi" (pine

tree, greek "Pitios"); "Gagra" originates from Georgian "gagari", which means "the passage"; "Sochi" originates from the word "Sonch" (belonging to the Svans), etc.

As from 1. century AC, Christianity was spread all over West Georgia including Abkhazia and preached in those territories by apostles Andrew and Simon Kananeli. The latest died in Jikketi (land of Jikks) and was buried in Nickopsia. The Christian communities were numerous and there was a bishop in Bichvinta at that time. Bishop of Bichvinta Stratophile attended the first world church council held in Nicaea in 325. In 326, Christianity was announced the state religion of Egrisi.

Abazgs joined most of the territories of Sanigaes, Apshils, Misimians in 6. - 8. centuries and the term Abazgia got spread all over this territory. Georgian annals refer to this political entity as the "Abkhazetis Saeristavo" (Principality of Abkhazia; "Eristavi"- Prince in Georgian, "Archon" in Greek). The kingdom of Egrisi got dispelled in the middle of the 8. century. After two decades, the Prince of Abkhazia Leon I, who belonged to the side branch of the Egrisi Kings family and at the same time represented the heir-at-law of the throne, due to the dynastic intermarriage, united West Georgia into one principality (Saeristavo).

By the end of the 8. century the nephew of Leon I, Leon II ousted the Byzantines and declared himself as King. This kingdom was named "Kingdom of the Abkhazs" according to the name of the ruling dynasty. Some Armenian sources call it "Egrisi", its king "King of Egrisi" and its population "Egrisians" (Johanne Draskhanakerteli, 1965, p.38, 64, 109, 111, 119, 257).

After the unification of West Georgia and the creation of the "Kingdom of Abkhazs", the notion of the term "Abkhazeti" widened. As from this period onwards it meant Abkhazia proper as well as whole of West Georgia and "Abkhaz" was a name for the Abkhaz, as well as for anyone from West Georgia in general (M.Lortkipanidze; 1990; p17)

In the beginning of 11. century the "Kingdom of Abkhazs" was united into the whole Georgian monarchy. At that time, Georgia was divided into principalities. There were the principalities of Aphkhazeti, Tskhumi and Odishi on the territory of modern Abkhazia, which were under the reign of the feudal kindred of the Sharvashidzes, Amanelidzes, Dadianis. Proceeding from the fact that the Georgian kings were titled as: "the King of Abkhazs and Georgians" initially naming the term "Abkhaz", some foreign annals of the 11. - 13. centuries often applied "Abkhazeti" and "Abkhazs" for Georgia and the Georgians (Z.V. Anchabadze, 1959, p.171-177; M.Lortkipanidze, 1990, p.17).

The invasions of Jalal Al-Din and Tamer-lane, and the Mongolian Yoke of hundred years weakened the state of Georgia. As a result, the Kingdom of Georgia was fragmented into several entities by the late 15. century. West Georgia got unified with Imereti, which included the Kingdom of Abkhazeti. As from this period onwards, Georgians and not only Georgians referred to that administrative-political entity as Abkhazia and its inhabitants as "Abkhaz." The Abkhaz Princes were representing the Georgian feudal ancestry of Sharvashidzes.

The North-Caucasian mountainous people exploited the breakdown and weakness of the state of Georgia and started invading its territory. This Northeastern process known as "mountain slide" was ongoing in Georgia too: invasions of Leks in the Eastern part of Kakheti, Alan-Ossetians – in Shida Karthli and Abaza-Adigeans - in the North-West of the country. Jikks ousted themselves from obedience to king's power and were moving to the South-East under the pressure of the Adigean tribes. As a result, by late XV Georgia lost control over the North-Eastern coastline of the Black Sea, the city of Nickopsia and the adjacent territory all the way to Gagra. This facts had been reflected in the Adigean folklore, which describes how Inal the leader of Adigeans conquered Abkhazia, but died shortly after and was buried there in Pskhu (SH.B.Nogmov, 1970, p.54-55).

The flow of Caucasian people into the lowlands of Georgia was conditioned by Mongolian invasions. The native population was oppressed and thrown out of their native lands. The North Caucasian mountaineers were obliged to seek for the land for settlement. They made use of the situation when invaded and weakened Georgia couldn't resist to their flow and transmigrated to Georgia. The mountain introduced its characteristic primitive economic and social lifestyle, traditions, rites and paganism into the Georgian lowlands. The two cultures influenced each other within the process of assimilation. (B.Khorava; 1996; p.53-54)

The notable progress of the "mountain slide" in Abkhazia by the end of 15. century is evidenced by the fact, that the Abkhaz got pagan which was reflected in the masterpiece of approximately 1470-1474 "Mtsneba Sasjulo" (The Sermon of the Lord). This is the first case when we notice "alienation" of the Abkhaz from the Georgian world: "*Abkhazia fully rejecting Christianity gets distanced from Sermons of Christ*" (Masterpieces of the Georgian legislation, 1970, p.222). The credentials sacrificed to the church of Khobi at that time clearly describe the situation in Abkhazia: "*That year the Abkhaz got godless and rejected their religion*" (The Antiques of Georgia, 1920, p.26). During this period sacred relics were moved from churches located in Northwestern Georgia to safer places deeper in the country. It seems that the mortal remains of the apostle Svimon Kananeli have been carried from Nickopsia to Anakopia during that period.

As a result of "mountain slide", the North-West Caucasian tribes, which are referred to as Jikks in Georgian sources, whilst foreign sources use the general term of "Abazs", got settled in Abkhazia. The indigenous population of Abkhazia could not duly "assimilate" the "mountain slide" process, from a social and religious point of view. The mass of resettled migrants swapped away the local population, which resulted in a radical change of ethnic composition in this area.

Assimilation of mountainous migrants with the local population resulted in formation of a modern Abkhaz (Apsua) ethnos (B.Khorava, 1996, p.87). Unfortunately, Georgians called this new ethnic group "Abkhaz", according to their place of residence, whilst Abkhaz kept on calling themselves "Apsuas". Identification of ethnonyms "Apsua" and "Abkhaz," caused chaos and confusion for researchers of the history of Abkhazia; and we still reap the tragic results of it. It's worth mentioning, that the self-name of the Abkhaz "Apsua" is a phonetic variation of the ethnonym "Abaza". It is recognized in linguistics that the Abkhaz (Apsua) language together with the Abaz language form a linguistic entity, and there is only a dialectical difference between the two languages (K.V: Lomtadze, 1967, p123). Radical ethnic change that occurred in Abkhazia had been reflected in the Abkhaz (Apsua) folklore and ethno-genetic legends.

Resettlement of Abaza-Adigeans didn't always happen through wars. In most of the cases they - as mountainous people without any land - received the permit for residing on these territories from the princes, archons and land-owners of Abkhazia. The archons exploited the migrants mostly as fighters for expanding their state. By late 16. century the Abkhaz had conquered the territories of the Odishi (Samegrelo) principality, all way to the River Kelasuri, including the Georgian cities of Anakopia (later "Fsirtskha", currently "Akhali Atoni") and "Tskhumi" (currently Sukhumi) and later, by the end of 17. century they expanded their territory to the River Egristskali (Water of Egrisi), currently Galidzga. It was impossible for the Christian Church to continue functioning any longer on the territories occupied by the Abkhaz, which resulted in the closing down of Dranda and Moqvi Episcopate in 1681. The Abkhaz were looting Odishi (Samegrelo) churches and monasteries, including the cathedrals of Bedia, Tsaishi, Tsalendjikha and other churches and monasteries (B.Khorava, 1996, p.70-113). These facts are described not only by Georgian annalists, but foreign authors as well who happened to be in Georgia at that time. These were Catholic missionaries: Archangelo Lamberti, Christophoro Castelli, Giuseppe Giudicce, French businessman and traveller Jean Sharden, Patriarch of Jerusalem Dossitheos (1669-1707), Patriarch of Antiochus Macarius (1647-1672) and others. In the 70s of the

18. century, Episcopate of Bedia was as well closed down due to the expansion of the Abkhaz.

The Georgian Church documents of 16. - 18. centuries vividly reflect the process of eviction of the indigenous Georgian population from their lands. Part of the population had to flee the area between Rivers Kelasuri and Egritskali during the Abkhaz attacks. Those who survived swords, hunger and diseases were sold in slavery to Turks and Osman. The Abkhaz were getting settled in emptied places. In parallel, the process of "Abkhazification" of the remaining Georgian population was ongoing, which first and foremost was the case in the mountainous communities of Tsebelda, Dali, Pskhu. That is why the majority of the current Abkhaz population has Georgian first names and patronymic names. The ethnic changes in Abkhazia caused the changes of local names in Northwestern Odishi occupied by the Abkhaz (B. Khorava, 1996, p.140-156).

The "Abkhaz" of the late medieval centuries, represented the mountainous people of the Caucasus who couldn't adapt to feudal agriculture, feudal social structure and Christianity. With their primitive life-style and pagan religion, evidently they were not the descendants of those Abkhaz who participated in the cultural-political development of the feudal state of Georgia. This genetic line in the main mass of the population's lower layers was cut and Georgian cultural traditions remained only among the Abkhaz feudal circles. As a result of ethnic changes, new worship places were established in Abkhazia. Among those: Inal-Kuba, grave of Inal in Pskhu, sanctuary of trees and saint valleys, etc. It is noteworthy, that part of Abkhaz worship places were established on the former locations of destroyed or closed Christian churches.

In the 18. century Abkhazia came under the influence of Turks. Turkish influence could not cut the ancient historic link of Abkhazia to the rest of Georgia. Neither could the spread of Islam, which never reached important scales, impede Georgian-Abkhaz historical-cultural unity. The Abkhazians were rather indifferent towards religion. It is typical, that there existed no Islamic monuments of architecture on the territory of Abkhazia. The religion of the Abkhaz was characterized by syncretism, a mixture of Paganism and Islam in the Northwestern and Paganism and Christianity in the Southeastern parts.

Despite the sharp political dissention, during the entire late medieval period the Abkhaz archons never distinguished themselves from Georgia and recognised the supremacy of the Georgian kings. The Georgian language was a language of communication, the council of the archon was using it as a working language. Such a function of the Georgian language was a result of historical-cultural development over years. Generations inherited the traditions, in consideration of the historic conditions, as long as Abkhazia's aspiration to other parts of Georgia was never fully lost (S.Janashia, 1988, p.35).

In the 19. century the Russian empire annexed Georgian Principalities one after another. Abkhazia was added to the Russian empire in 1810. It is worth mentioning, that the petition to Russia on accepting Abkhazia under its subordination of the heir of the Abkhaz throne, Giorgi Shervashidze, was written in Georgian.

Since Georgia had been annexed, Russia started preparation for conquering the North Caucasus. The Tsar authorities wanted "*to firmly unite the Caucasus with Russia from a civilian and political point of view and turn it into its integral part*" and to convert the local population "*into Russians by their language, mentality and feelings*" (History of the USSR, 1967, p.384). Tsarism was trying to implement this plan by means of colonisation, as it was considered to be one of the most important ways to get its hands on this area.

Tsarism aimed to colonize and assimilate the conquered country. A famous Russian historian, V.Kliuchevski, considered colonisation as "*main factor of the Russian history*" (V.O. Kliuchevski, 1956, p.30). The Russian emperor Nikolai I (1825-1855) was fully

understanding the necessity of colonial policy in the Caucasus as he considered that colonisation would support *"enforcement of the Russian possessions, ensure full obedience of the local population and finally merging of the area with the Empire"* (The Acts, 1881; p381). Even the "Dekabrists" (Decembrists) who represented the most loyal and democratic forces of Russia at that time shared this position. P. Pestel who was leader of the "Southern Society" of the "Dekabrists", in his work "Russkaia Pravda"(The Russian Truth), distinguished among the people of the Caucasus the tribes that were turbulent and disobedient and others calm and docile. In his mind, it was necessary to resettle the first one into internal Gubernia (province) and for the others to facilitate gradual assimilation with the Russian population, resettled to the Caucasus and their full integration (P.Pestel, 1906, p.48). Later, Tsarizm implemented this plan exactly that way.

The process of colonisation in the Caucasus was followed by the long lasting Caucasian War (1817-1864). At the last stage of this war, Tsarizm started forced resettlement (exodus) of disobedient mountainous people of the Caucasus. This process was known as "Mohajiroba".

Mohajiroba (arab. "Muhajeret" - resettlement), i.e. forced resettlement of indigenous Caucasian population in the Turkish Empire in the 19. century, was linked with wars in the Caucasus. A series of military actions conducted by the Tsarist Russia in the 18. - 19. centuries. By forcing exodus of disobedient people of the Caucasus to Turkey, Russian authorities wanted to achieve political stability in this area and exploit the emptied land for the purposes of wide colonisation due to strategically important location of this area. At first sight, religious factor seemed dominating in the process of "Mohajiroba." However, the political one still appeared important: Russia's politics as that of a conqueror. Russia's colonial politics gave a decisive push to exodus of mountainous people.

In 1859, after Russia conquered the North-East Caucasus, meaning Chechnya and Dagestan, Dagestanians, Chechens and Ossetians migrated to Turkey – a 100 000 persons in total. However, mountainous people of Western Caucasus continued the fight against Russia. In May 1864 Russia conquered West Caucasus and the Caucasian War was finished by that. The long process of linking the Caucasus to Russia was over.

At the last stage of the war, in 1858-1864, Adigeans living on the North-East coastline of the Black Sea and North-West Caucasus - Jikks, Shapsughs, Natkhvajis and the major part of Abazic communities resettled to Turkey. Some people like the Ubikhs migrated entirely. There were almost none left from Adigeans and Abazs on the North-East coast of the Black Sea, only a small part was resettled in Kuban. According to the official data, the total number of population migrating from the Caucasus to Turkey equalled 470 000, those moved to Kuban - 90 000 (B. Khorava, 2004, p.62).

There was a big noise in Europe due to forced migration of the Caucasians to Turkey. The Russian authorities tried to justify themselves by saying that the migration was not their will or desire and all had happened without their interference. Famous publicist, General R. Fadeev mentioned that the purpose of the Russian authorities in the Caucasian War was *"to get rid of mountainous people from the East coastal line of the Black Sea and settle it by Russians. This measure was necessary for our possessions' security"*. As he mentioned cynically, there was no need to compel local population to Turkey. Russia had enough territories to resettle them on the left bank of the River Kuban, but there was no reason to make them stay against their will (R. Fadeev, 1865, p.146-147). Fadeev, who was voicing an official opinion, openly mentioned that *"this land was needed for the state"* as for the local population. According to Fadeev *"there was no need in them"* (Fadeev, 1865, p.147).

After completion of the Caucasian War, Tsarizm acquired vast territories for colonisation. In 1861-1864, 111 Stanitsas (14 239 families, 85000 individuals) were settled in the West Caucasus (G.A. Dzidzaria, 1982, p.208). In parallel, these areas

were settled by Russians and Ukrainians from inner Gubernias of Russia and Greek and Armenian migrants from Turkey.

Once it conquered the West Caucasus, when half of the population was killed in fights and the other half had migrated to Turkey, the Tsarist Russia felt secure and stable in the Caucasus. There no longer existed a need for maintaining the autonomous principality of Abkhazia and the autocracy started setting military-administrative structure in the conquered territories and its colonisation. Russia had elaborated a special plan for the East coastline of the Black Sea, which presumed creation of Kazak settlements on the territory between the Rivers Kuban and Enguri. This plan required "cleaning" of the mentioned territory from indigenous population.

In July 1864, Tsarism had annulled the Principality of Abkhazia and introduced direct Russian administration. In parallel, the Russian army units occupied the mountainous community of Pskhy, the upper part of the River Bziphi and resettled the local population of 3500 people to Turkey. As a result, the territory around the upper part of River Bziphi was fully emptied (B.Khorava, 2004, p.61). Upon the annulment of the Principality of Abkhazia, Sukhumi military department was established and the commander of the Russian army stationed in this area was appointed as the head of department. The last prince of Abkhazia, Mikheil Shervashidze, was resettled to Russia where he died in 1866. His mortal remains were transferred to Abkhazia and buried in the church of Mokvi. The epitaph on his tomb stone is in Georgian, which clearly speaks for the cultural-political orientation of the Shervashidze principal's clan.

According to statistic data of 1865 (Kavkaz, 1866) the population of Abkhazia districts was as follows:

Sukhumi "okrug"	2 826 families	16 475 persons
Bziphi "okrug"	3 726	20 090
Abzhui "okrug"	5 049	32 182
Tsebelda "okrug"	1 436	10 443
Total	13 037	79 190

In 1866, the Abkhazians rebelled against colonial politics of Tsarist Russia, which was severely repressed by the authorities. After repression of the rebellion, the authorities decided to get rid of Muslim and pagan Abkhazs who were extremely hostile towards them, first of all from Kodori Ravine and of the Black Sea coastline. Along with that, the Tsarism conducted a new administrative reform in Abkhazia in 1866. As there was a decision to colonise the East coast of the Black Sea to the confluence of the River Enguri by Kazak-Russians, the Georgian district of Samurzakano (current Gali region) was added to Abkhazia.

In 1867, the Tsarism conducted forced migration of 3 358 families, a total of 19 342 persons. According to statistic data of post-Muhajiroba period (1867), the population of Abkhazia made 64 933 out of which 22 000 represented the Georgian population of Samurzakano (Okumi district). Tsebelda and Dali - the middle and upper part of Kodori River - were almost emptied. The population of 15 000 of these communities was expelled from their homeland to abroad. Based on the data of 1868, there lived only 13 families in Tsebelda and none in Dali Ravine (Compendium, 1869, p.39).

In April 1877, the new Russo-Turkish War started, which covered the territory of the Caucasus as well. Dissatisfaction with the Tsarist colonial regime topped its peak in Abkhazia by that times and a rebellion broke out. In such difficult time the Turkish troops landed in Abkhazia, which was mostly composed of Abkhaz Muhajirs. By

May, the Turks had occupied almost the entire territory of Abkhazia. The rebelled Abkhazians joined the Turkish troops but soon, in July, the Russian Army advanced and fully cleaned the territory from Turks by August. While fleeing from Abkhazia, Turks were joined by part of Abkhazians on their own will but the majority and also a little amount of Christian Georgians and Greeks were forced to flee. In total 32 000 persons were in Muhajiroba at that time. If earlier mountainous communities of Abkhazia - Pskhu, Tsebelda and Dali - were emptied, by then the coastline was almost emptied as well. (B. Khorava, 2004, p.79-82).

Muhajiroba represented an ethnocide, the continuation of the politics of genocide, conducted by the Tsarist Russia in the Caucasus and led to radical changes of the ethno-demographic reality in that area. The Abkhazians actually were facing the danger of physical extermination. The closest neighbours of Georgians the Jikks and the Ubikhs, could not avoid this danger and disappeared from the historical arena. The Georgian society was very compassionate to the tragedy of the Abkhazians and Caucasian mountainous people. Famous Georgian writers and public figures of the 19. century such as Gr. Orbeliani, I. Chavchavadze, Ak. Tsereteli, Z. Chichinadze, P. Charaia, N. Janashia, I. Meunargia, T. Sakhkokia and others expressed their sincere compassion towards the Abkhaz and the mountainous people of the Caucasus for Muhajiroba.

Tsarism tried to settle Russians in Abkhazia but the population was reluctant to do so. It was not an easy decision to move, they were scared of process of resettlement, natural climatic conditions etc. Meanwhile, population from West Georgia, who suffered because of the lack of land, was migrating to Abkhazia. They dried marshes, cut bushes and started agriculture. The Georgian society considered that the contingent to reside in emptied Abkhazia were inhabitants of West Georgian regions of Samegrelo, Guria, Imereti, Racha and land-owners of Lechkhumi; this was considered resurrection of the historic fairness: Georgians returning to their historic lands. Despite opposition of the authorities, the Georgians still managed to reside back in Abkhazia: Megrelians in coastal line, population from Racha and Lechkhumi in hills, Svans in mountainous areas in the upper part of Kodori. Authorities worried about Georgians' resettlement in Abkhazia, and as Russian population was reluctant to move, they chose upon foreigners: Slavs, Armenians, Greeks and others.

Policy of Tsarism in Abkhazia was directed against Abkhazians and Georgians. It tried to avoid the return of Abkhazians into the Georgian ethno-cultural space. Because of the 1877 anti-Tsar rebellion, in 1880 the Abkhazians were given the status of "guilty people". They were deprived of their right of land possessing and were restricted to residing in the coastline area. The status of "guilty people" was removed from the Abkhaz only in 1907. In 1879, authorities allowed a 3 year partial repatriation of the Muhajirs. As a result, in 1881, about 15 000 Muhajirs returned to their homeland (G.A. Dzidzaria, 1982, p.384-385). The process of repatriation continued in the following years as well.

In 1886, the family lists of the South and partially North Caucasus populations were established upon the decree of the Russian State Council. According to registration, the population of Abkhazia constituted 67 371 people, among those 28 320 Abkhazians and 34 078 Georgians. It is interesting to mention that only 3 Abkhaz nationals lived in Sukhumi at that time: 2 female and 1 male. (Svod, Compendium, 1893) According to the first registration of population of all Russia in 1897, there lived 106 179 people in Abkhazia, out of them: 39 600 Abkhazians and 44 800 Georgians ("Pervaja" The First).

In the early years of Soviet rule, Georgians were forced to register themselves as Abkhazians under rude administrative pressure in order to increase the percentage of Abkhaz population among the general number of population of Abkhazia. According to data of all-Soviet Union registration of population in 1926, the population of Abkhazia made 201 016. Among those: 67 494 Georgians, 55 918 Abkhazians, 12 553 Russians, 14 045 Greeks and 25 677 Armenians. It is worth mentioning that, 9000 Abkhazians

acknowledged the Georgian language as their native, however none of them registered themselves as Georgians. (A. Totadze, 1995, p.88)

In 1937-1953, resettlement of population, from those regions of west Georgia with limited land massive, was ongoing due to collectivization in Abkhazia. However, it never had a character of infiltration. The Georgians were resettled to useless land massive. The process was accompanied by an influx of Russian, Ukrainian, Armenian, etc. migrant populations. This fact was caused by the objective reality: need to implement industrialization policy - creation of industry, upturn of natural resources, first of all exploitation of Tkvarcheli coal mines and required influx of qualified technical-engineering personnel from outside. All that drastically decreased the coefficient of the Abkhazians among the population of the autonomous republic.

The main changes in the national composition of the population of Abkhazia occurred in 1926-1959. The coefficient of Georgians and Abkhazians decreased immensely whilst Armenians increased 3 times and Russians - 6 times. A similar tendency was observed during following years as well (A. Totadze, 1995, p.104).

During the war of 1992-1993, the Abkhaz separatists organised genocide of the Georgian population. As in the late medieval period, ethnocide took place in this area. About 300 000 persons from Abkhazia, among those 240 000 Georgians, had to flee. Besides that, other nationalities such as Greeks, Jews, Estonians and Russians had to flee their homelands as well because of economic and political chaos of war and post-war times and social hardships. Some 30 000 Abkhazians also had to flee their homeland and migrated to CIS countries (mostly to Russia and the Ukraine). Current population of Abkhazia makes approximately 200 000, out of which 55 000 Abkhazians, 40 000 Georgians (mostly in Gali region), 35 000 Russians, 70 000 Armenians (T. Nadareishvili, 2002). The Georgian population remained in post-conflict Abkhazia mostly in the upper part of Kodori Ravine and Gali Region. The population of Gali has been living under permanent terror and violence from the separatists. During the war in August 2008, Russian army units and Abkhaz separatists occupied upper part of Kodori Ravine - Upper Abkhazia (historically "Dali" ravine). Local population (approx. 2 600) had to leave the Ravine and became IDPs.

Hence, the radical changes of the ethno-demographic situation in Abkhazia occurred in late medieval centuries, then under ruling of Tsarist Russia and the Soviet regime and finally in the result of genocide and ethnocide carried out by the Abkhaz separatists.

National composition of Abkhazia in XX c

	1926		1939		1959		1970		1979		1989	
	Absolute	%	Abs	%	Abs	%	Abs	%	Abs	%	Abs	%
Georgian	67494	35,8	91967	29,5	158221	39,1	199595	41,0	213322	43,9	239872	45,7
Abkhaz	55918	25,6	56197	18,0	61193	15,1	77276	15,9	83097	17,1	93267	17,8
Armenian	25677	1,6	49705	15,9	64425	15,9	74860	15,4	73350	15,1	76541	14,6
Russian	12553	1,8	60201	19,3	86715	21,4	92889	19,1	79730	15,4	74914	14,3
Greek	14045	3,1	34621	11,1	9101	2,2	13114	2,7	13642	2,8	14664	2,8
others	25329	12,6	19194	6,15	2583	6,19	29225	6,0	22941	4,71	25803	4,9
total population	201016	100,0	311885	100,0	404738	100,0	486959	100,0	486082	100,0	525061	100,0

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Political-Legal Status of Abkhazia in 1917-1937

Jemal Gamakharia

After the democratic revolution of February 1917, the situation in the entire Russian empire changed. Accordingly, there were certain changes in the Caucasus too. There was created a local body – Special Committee of Trans-Caucasus of the Russian temporary government - which was headed by the selected member of the 4. State advisory Body of Russia, from Sukhumi, Batumi and Karsi districts. Akaki Chkhenkeli was a local representative from Abkhazia (Samurzakano). Sukhumi District (Abkhazia), as an administrative entity, stayed in composition of Trans-Caucasus. It was governed by the Temporary Social Security Regional Committee (Chairman Al. Sharvashidze), established at a Summit of the Region Population Representatives on March 10, 1917. On July 2, 1917 there were held the Sukhumi Advisory Body elections. Out of 30 mandates the Social-Democrats received 18. Considering the election results, at first, the Regional Advisory Committee was reorganized and then on October 12, 1917 the elections of the executive authority, the Regional Committee, were held. The Chairman of the Committee became V. Sharvashidze (Essays..., 2007, p.285).

Different from a big part of the local population of Abkhazia, majority of the Abkhazian political leaders themselves supported the North Caucasus mountaineers uniting movement. In may 1917 the Union of Mountaineers and its government, the Central Committee, were established. The same year, on October 20th, the Mountaineers Union founded the South-East Union together with the Kazakh Rada within which the „Mountain Population of Sukhumi District (Abkhazians)“ were also named (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.389).

Due to the advices and attempts of the representative of the Union of Mountaineers, A. Sheripov who was sent to Abkhazia, the Abkhazian People’s Congress was held in Sukhumi on November 7-8, 1918. In the adopted declaration it was stated that “the Abkhazian people entered the Mountaineers Union, uniting the North Caucasus, Daghestan and Abkhazia” (Abkhazian..., 2004, p.11). The Congress elected a Public Council of Abkhazia and ratified its constitution. The Public Council represented a national-political body, demonstrating the will of the Abkhazian people (and not of Abkhazia). The Council sent its own representative to the government of the North Caucasus Mountaineers Union. It should be mentioned that setting the political contacts with the mountaineers on behalf of the Abkhazian people did not mean uniting of Abkhazia with the North Caucasus at all. As an administrative entity, Sukhumi district still remained a part of Trans-Caucasus and owing to that fact, the Constitution of the Public Council of Abkhazia declared the competence of the local governmental structures and demanded that the activities of those structures were led „in close contact with the Public Council, aiming to achieve the interests of successful results“(Abkhazian... 2004, p.9).

The Mountaineers Union and its government did not express any complaints against Abkhazia. That was clear from the Decree #1 of December 3, 1917 of the government, which stated that „a temporary government of the mountaineers has an authority towards Zakatala and Sukhumi districts in the national and political issues. As for exercising its authority immediately and through these districts entirely, the issue should be ordered to resolve to the Public Councils of Zakatala and Sukhumi districts“(J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.397).

Neither in 1917, nor in the later years the Public Council of Abkhazia, as a real government of the region, had not received any decisions the mountaineers to

exercise their authority towards Abkhazia.

On November 7, 1917, the Bolshevik overturn (coup d'état) was followed by reorganization of the governmental structures in the Trans-Caucasus. On November 11, 1917, the Trans-Caucasian Special Committee was changed by the temporary government called Commissariat. E. Gegechkori became head of the new government. After forced overthrow of the constituent assembly by Bolsheviks on January 18, 1918, the Trans-Caucasian Commissariat took a course for independence. On February 10, 1918, the Russian constituent assembly members from the Caucasus established the Trans-Caucasian Sejm (Parliament), which declared independence on April 9 of the same year and created a new government with A. K. Chkhenkeli as a Chairman. At this time, Abkhazia still represented a part of the independent Trans-Caucasian state.

In parallel to the process of state arrangement of the Trans-Caucasus, the self-determination process of the Caucasian peoples started among which were the Georgians, the Abkhazians and other nations. On February 9, 1918, within the frames of those processes, the meeting of the representatives of the National Council of Georgia (which was elected on the 1st National Congress on 19-23 November, 1917) and the Public Council of Abkhazia was held in Tbilisi. At this meeting the issue of "establishing relations among Georgia and Abkhazia", was discussed and the following agreement was achieved:

To restore the entire indivisible Abkhazia within the frontiers from the River Enguri till Mzimta, in composition of which Abkhazia and Samurzakano – now Sukhumi district - were included" (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.402).

The future form of political arrangement of Abkhazia on democratic bases was to be solved by the elected constituent assembly of Abkhazia. Reinstatement of Abkhazia was to be carried out within the framework of the agreement, only under the provision that would become a part of Georgia. Otherwise, according to the Samurzakano representatives' declaration „Samurzakano, as a part of Abkhazia, will not follow the Abkhazians without having the moral-political union (ties) with Georgia" (Abkhazian..., 2004, p.14).

In case Abkhazia joined Russia as a separate entity, it would be also impossible to fulfill those resolutions (Trans-Caucasian Special Committee Decision of October 30, 1917 and Trans-Caucasian Commissariat document of December 17, 1917) in regard of returning the taken away Gagra zone on December 25, 1904 from Sukhumi district within the composition of Abkhazia (Abkhazian..., 2004, p.7-8, 13).

The Agreement of February 9, 1918 served as a step toward uniting Abkhazia with Georgia. The following step was made by the Sukhumi District Peasants' 2. Congress (On March 4-9, 1918), which decided that, Abkhazia would enter a common family of Trans-Caucasian nations, as an equal member and it would connect its future with the democratic state of Georgia (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, Abkhazia..., 1997, p.409).

The Bolsheviks, who came to the power of Russia, did not favor the peaceful political processes in Abkhazia. Due to that, during the winter of 1918 and then during the spring they twice attempted to occupy the region and establish the Soviet governance here but without any results. Following the decisions of the Trans-Caucasian Sejm and the Government on May 17, 1918 and the following days, the Georgian National Guards released Abkhazia from the Bolshevik occupation and restored the Public Council of Abkhazia, which was broken down forcibly by the conquerors. On May 20, 1918 the Public Council adopted a Resolution „according to which it was categorically ascertained the Decision of March 4-10 of the Public Council of Abkhazia and the District Peasants' Council, that Abkhazia was included in the Trans-Caucasian people's common family as its equal member. This decision was to be reported immediately to the Batumi Peace Conference" (Georgia, 1918, 23). Necessity to adopt such resolution was caused by the condition that on May 11, 1918 there was declared independence

of the Union of Mountaineers of Republic in Batumi. Together with Trans-Caucasus and Turkey, the Union participated in a work of the Batumi Peace Conference. Few Abkhazian public figures, who were high-handedly visiting Batumi, (Al. Shervashidze and others) demanded to unite Abkhazia with that Republic of Mountaineers. It was important to introduce the true will of Abkhazia and not of private persons, as it happened to be, to the Conference. On May 20, 1918 "on behalf of the own delegates", the Public Council expressed exactly that will.

In spite of all the above mentioned facts, the separatist historiography still claims that the independence day of the Mountaineers Republic - May 11, 1918 - is also the „Abkhazian Government Reinstatement Day.“ By reason as though Abkhazia was a component of that Republic (O. Bgazhba, S. Lakoba, 2006, p.297-298). First of all, Abkhazia was neither mentioned, nor meant within the frame of the 2nd paragraph of the Independence Declaration of the Mountaineers Republic, which referred to the newly established state frontiers. It was only mentioned that the border "details of a Republic to the South, would be determined by the agreement with the Trans-Caucasian government"(Abkhazian..., 2004, p.15). No agreements have been made among the Mountaineers Republic and the Trans-Caucasian governments, regarding the revision of the existed border by May 11. Secondly, it is unclear how Abkhazia could reinstate its governance by May 11, 1918 as being under the Bolshevik occupation regime. It is evident, that all this is a usual lie invented by the separatists ruled by Russia.

During May, 1918| due to the escalation of the internal conflict, regarding the International issues, the Trans-Caucasian state was broken down. On May 26 of the same year the Georgian National Council declared the independence, and Germany acted as a main guarantee of it. A representative of Germany, Von-Lossov, mentioned in his secret letter of May 28, 1918 addressed to the Georgian Government that Sukhumi District, including Gagra, was a part of Georgia until Georgia would be an independent state within the frames of the Caucasus. In case of establishing the Caucasian Peoples' Confederation with participation of Georgia, due to Von-Lossov's opinion, the population of Sukhumi district was to be given an opportunity to determine its status within the frames of that confederation (A. Menteshashvili, 1998, p.17-18).

On June 11, 1918, the Georgian government and the Public Council of Abkhazia signed an agreement which served as a base of return of Abkhazia to the Georgian state sovereignty. The Agreement foresaw participation of the Abkhazian ministers in the Georgian Government, on the bases of recommendations from the Public Council of Abkhazia, also passing responsibility of the regional inter-ruling processes to the Public Council, provision of proper sources for Abkhazia by the Georgian Government, sending of the Red Army troops under command of the Public Council and holding of the social reforms in Abkhazia on the grounds of the Georgian laws but in consideration of the local peculiarities. Under this agreement, in the nearest future it was planned to organize the congress of the Abkhazian population on democratic bases, "in regard of final determination of the structure of Abkhazia" (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.414).

On the base of the agreement of June 11, 1918, Abkhazia became an autonomous entity of de-facto Georgia. According to the mentioned agreement, R. Chqotua, who was appointed as a Minister of Abkhazian Affairs in the Georgian government in September 20, 1918, wrote to the Chairman of the Public Council of Abkhazia V. Sharvashidze: "If the Abkhazian people connect their fate with the Georgian people on autonomous bases, than it would be necessary to elaborate more clear and non-double shift provisions on relations with the Georgian government". The same day R. Chqotua submitted a letter to the chairman of the Georgian government N. Zhordania in which he wrote that in spite of the signed agreement (on June 11, 1918), the particular state "agencies and officials consider Abkhazia not as an autonomous part of the Georgian Republic, but as its province" (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.753).

In many official or non-official documents of that period, Abkhazia was mentioned in the status of autonomy of Georgia that really conformed to the legal relations that were factually established among the sides of the agreement of June 11, 1918.

The Russian chauvinists and the separatists, who were ruled by Russia, were much concerned about establishing peace and harmony in Abkhazia. In June 1918, the Russian Bolshevik troops invaded Abkhazia from Sochi's side once again. By request of the Public Council and the decision of the Georgian Government, the armed forces headed by the General G. Mazniashvili not only released Abkhazia but on July 26, 1918 occupied Tuapse as well and in August they stepped back to Sochi.

The separately incited groups properly used the situation and on June 27, 1918, the same day when G. Mazniashvili army launched an attack, the Turkish troops were landed in Abkhazia (those were the successors of Abkhaz Mohajires serving in the Turkish army). The Georgian army and the Russian Kazakhs fleeing from the Bolshevik massacre defeated the landing party. Loosing every hope for victory, the separatists sounded the alarm that Abkhazia was occupied by the General G. Mazniashvili. A thesis about "occupation" was highly admitted by the separatist historiography too (O. Bgazhba, S. Lakoba, 2006, p.307-308). It has a Bolshevik origin. In May 1918, when the Georgian Guards kicked Bolsheviks out of Abkhazia, the Bolsheviks started "slandering as if the Georgians intended to conquer Abkhazia" (Georgia, 1918, 1).

The separatists meant under the term "occupation" and still mean the fact of appointing of G. Mazniashvili as the General-Governor, as if he misappropriated authority entirely. It is true that the General had some mistakes. Therefore, the Public Council strictly pointed him on it but there is not a single fact certifying misappropriation of political authorities by G. Mazniashvili. Notwithstanding the mentioned mistakes, the Public Council supported G. Mazniashvili Staff and categorically disagreed with the demands of separatists or Bolsheviks' supporters, about withdrawal of the Georgian army from Abkhazia. E.g. on July 17, 1918, the Public Council discussed the issue of trust towards G. Mazniashvili Staff and almost unanimously (only two abstained from voting) it was decided: "to certify once again decision of the Council and to declare the necessity of the Georgian army's presence there" (J. Gamakharia, 1991, p.62).

Representative of the Georgian government I. Ramishvili raised the issue of the Georgian army withdrawal from Abkhazia at the Public Council on July 18, 1918 in order to avoid provocations from the anti-democratic forces (separatists, Bolsheviks, Pro-Turks). "It is better to withdraw the troops in time, than to expect massacre," he said (J. Gamakharia, 1991, p.62-63). I. Ramishvili's suggestion was not approved by any of the members of the Public Council. Discussions about this issue lasted at the meeting of July 19-20 as well, where D. Marshania made the following statement: "betrayal steps from our side should not exist, because the Georgian troops were called in the hardest minutes to help us. Generally we always lived in peace and friendly with the Georgians. There are some people who wish to cause us to quarrel with Georgians but we do not want it" (J. Gamakharia, 1991, p.65). This was the real situation by that time. The "occupants" wanted to leave Abkhazia but the "occupied" ones made series of decisions, about the stay of Georgian troops in Abkhazia. Public Council of Abkhazia which, as if it was deprived of the political authority by G. Mazniashvili notwithstanding a slight misunderstanding, still supported the issue of the presence of Georgian troops in Abkhazia, as they served as a main guarantee of peace, stability, regional unity and autonomy. That was why S. Chervonnaya evaluated the separatist-chauvinistic theory of "occupation-annexation" meaningless and strange (S. Chervonnaya, 1993, p.39).

In July-August 1918, the stopping of adventurous actions of Bolshevik and separatist forces, created certain preconditions to strengthen the local authority in Abkhazia. An important step towards this direction was to include the representatives of other Abkhazian acting councils (Georgian, Greek, Armenian, Russian, Estonian, etc.) in the Public Council of Abkhazia and thus, increase the degree and influence of legitimacy.

Reorganization of the Public Council, which was finished by August 15, 1918, was estimated by the separatists as a fact of expelling the Public Council. This deception is repeated by the Abkhazian historiography up to these days (O. Bgashba, S. Lakoba, 2006, p. 314).

From August 1918, the separatists took aim against the anti-Bolshevik military forces – White Guard standing close to Sochi (M. Alekseev, A. Denikin). With their inciting and support on October 9, 1918, the separatists caused a political overturn and tried to discharge the Public Council authority by force. The attempt was useless. Due to requirements of the Chairman of the Public Council V. Sharvashidze and the other members, the Georgian Government discharged the Public Council on October 10, 1918, called elections and imprisoned the conspirators. Before electing a new Public Council democratically, the entire power was delegated to B. Chkhikvishvili, who was appointed as commissar of Sukhumi District (Essays..., 2007, p.296-297).

On December 27, 1918, the Georgian Parliament ratified the Election Statute of Abkhazia, which was drafted by the Election Commission chaired by V. Sharvashidze. For the first time in the history of Abkhazia, there were held the “public, equal, proportional” elections on “secret voting bases”. Those persons could participate in elections who had received a residence permit till July 19, 1914 (i.e. before beginning of the World War I). The passive election right was given to those non-residents, who were the vassals of Georgia (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.426).

The pre-election campaign coincided with the armed attacks in Sochi and Gagra against the invaded Russian White Guard, when the enemy managed to fortify their positions on the River Bzipi. In spite of this, on February 13, 1919, the Public Council elections were held in the organized manner. One more fact indicated, that these elections were democratic. Even Sukhumi October 9 conspiracy organizers participated in elections, as they were released from imprisonment before that time. 40 delegates were elected in the Public Council of Abkhazia, among which 27 were Social-Democrats, 4 independent Socialists, 3 Essers and 3 the Righters. Each delegate was elected from the Social-Federalists, the National-Democrats and the Colonists. The Constituent Assembly elections of Georgia were held simultaneously (on February 14-16, 1919). Members of the higher legislative body became those from the Social-Democratic party list: D. Emukhvari, V. Sharvashidze, V. Ghurjua, D. Zakharov and I. Pashalidi (Essays..., 2007, p.299).

The first session of the newly elected Public Council of Abkhazia was held on March 18, 1919, when the Chairman (D. Emukhvari), a Deputy-Chairman (M. Berulava) and the First Secretary (V. Koroliov) were selected. In March the next session was held and a historical document was adopted: “the Act on Autonomy of Abkhazia”. In the first paragraph was stated: “Abkhazia is a part of the Democratic Republic of Georgia, as its autonomous entity; notify this fact to the government of the Republic of Georgia and its Constituent Assembly” (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.433-434, 772-774). By adoption of this document occurred the self-determination of the region. By the will of a big majority of the population, the oldest part of Georgia still returned in composition of Georgia, in spite of multiple attempts of the foreign enemies to invade it.

On April 8-10, May 13 and 20 of the year 1919, at the sessions of the Public Council, there were adopted the most important decisions about establishing the ruling bodies, and first of all - the Commissariat, the chairman of which became Dimitri (Arzakan) Emukhvari. The Sukhumi District gained back its true name: Abkhazia. The administrative areas (districts) were called uyezds and the Public Councils became the Abkhazian Public Council. Since May 20, 1919, the head of the Council again became V. Sharvashidze.

The 1919-1920s were the years of formation of Abkhazia's autonomy in practice, strengthening of the governmental structures, flinging out the White Guard from Gagra (on April 1919), depriving Bolsheviks from degrading activities and admitting the Georgian borders on the international scene. A rather difficult period for drafting

the constitution.

In order to maintain the unity of the country, it was very important to admit Georgia de-facto in the Higher Council of the Allies (the Entente). On January 12, 1920, this happened under the initiative of the Foreign Minister of Great Britain Kerzon. The most important was recognition of independence of Georgia by the Soviet Russia on May 7, 1920. According to the agreement signed by both parties in Moscow, Russia recognized Sukhumi district as indisputable territory of Georgia, which formerly entered the Empire's frames. Russia also recognized Gagra zone that had been subordinated to the Sochi Governance in 1904-1917. "The state border between Georgia and Russia is lead from the Black Sea along the River Psou to Akhakhcha Mountain..." – was stated in the agreement (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.458-459). The Russian-Georgian Agreement of May 7, 1920 served as a legal guarantee for the state independence and strengthening of the territorial unity. Though very soon it became evident that Soviet Russia had almost opposite purposes.

The biggest disagreement in the Public Council and the Abkhazian society was an issue of adoption of the constitution. The constitution commission had been working since March 30, 1919. On May 23 it was divided into two sub-commissions and consequently two drafts of the document were prepared. The reconciling third project was drafted by the legal department of Abkhazia Commissariat which was headed by G. Sidamon-Eristavi. None of these documents could receive the proper number of voices in the Public Council, but the most favorite one was the reconciling version (20 voices). Minister of Interior of Abkhazia, M. Ubiria, reported before the Public Council on November 15, 1919 that while working on the Constitution, from the beginning, two directions were estimated that differed on the bases of the attitude towards the historical and political-economic aspects. One of these directions, based on the moment requirements, considered important, that Abkhazia united with Georgia as soon as possible, as it would serve as the security guarantee and a preface of the region's economic-cultural development. The second direction also admitted necessity of uniting Abkhazia with Georgia, but from the historical perspectives. They thought more expedient to establish a weak union in order to obtain more independence. In case the situation changed, it would give opportunity to make other decisions. One part of the separatists (the "Internationalist" fraction) did not hide, that in future they would support unification of Georgia and Abkhazia with Russia, though they did not make the provisions ahead about their political arrangement in composition of Russia. That was why in reality the fight around the constitution served for the destabilization of situation within the country, than for the concerns to achieve a true self-governance. As the Public Council member M. Tarnava said, participation in negotiation with the Georgian government, regarding the autonomy and the constitution issue, only aimed at frustration the agreement and criticism of the government (Essays..., 2007, p.306).

In spite of the destructive aims of the separatists, working on the Constitution had not stopped. In September and October 1919, when Abkhazia Public Council delegation visited Tbilisi, it was managed, together with the Constituent Assembly Commission of 5 persons, to prepare a draft for the Constitutional Agreement among the Republic and the Autonomy ("Regarding Principle Provisions of Abkhazia Governance") in which the truly established relations among the centre and its regions were reflected (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.451-452). In spite of the fact that the mentioned document was not ratified, it regulated the legal relations between Tbilisi and Sukhumi. According to the document, Abkhazia was declared as the autonomous part of Georgia with its legislative (Public Council) and executive (Commissariat) bodies. The Public Council was authorized to adopt the laws independently on every issue, except those as were the foreign policy, army (defense), management of ports, financial, monetary, tax and customs systems, common court system and senate (higher court), civil, criminal and common law legislation, post, telegraph, state importance railways and roads.

After a long period of work and consultations with Tbilisi (Summer 1920) the Public Council managed to approve the own draft of the constitution on September 16, 1920 which was based on the above-mentioned project- "Regarding Principle Provisions of Abkhazia Governance". On November 4 of the same year, Abkhazian Public Council delegation visited Tbilisi with the aim to discuss the constitutional issues. In spite of the fact that neither the Constituent Assembly nor the government suspected about the autonomous status of Abkhazia, the centre did not hurry to adopt the constitution of the region before the constitution of the Republic was not adopted. The constraining condition was also the fact that the Constituent Assembly did not agree with the establishment of a parity constitutional commission by the assembly and the Public Council. As was foreseen by the Act of March 20, 1919 and the Mandate of the delegation. The Abkhazian delegation, being discontent with the created situation returned to Sukhumi with a promise of N. Zhordania that Abkhazia would be legally given autonomy after adoption of the common constitution. If adoption of the state's principle law was delayed, then a provisional law regarding governance of Abkhazia would be issued. That would, in the meantime become a particular chapter of the state constitution. The provisional draft regarding governance of the autonomous Abkhazia was approved by the small constitutional commission of the Constituent Assembly on December 21, 1920. The draft constitution adopted by the Public Council of Abkhazia on October 16, 1920 served as its base.

On February 21, 1921, when Russia occupied the Georgian territories, the Constituent Assembly ratified the Constitution of Georgia according to the 107th article of which "indivisible parts of the Georgian Republic – Abkhazia (Sukhumi District)", Achara and Zakatala were given "autonomous governance in internal affairs". Article 108 set the rule of "adoption of the autonomous government provisions by a separate law" (Abkhazian..., 2004, p.64). "Statute of Abkhazian Autonomous Governance" was adopted by the Constituent Assembly together with the constitution of Georgia. It was mentioned in it that Abkhazia "is an indivisible part of the Republic of Georgia" and that its own territory "can autonomously lead its domestic affairs". Legislative body of the Autonomous Abkhazia, the Public Council, was elected "for two years term on the base of public, direct, equal, and proportional election system". Within the competence of the autonomous governance were the following issues: the local finances, public education, cultural development, local self-governance, mediatory court, private and public security, public order, administration, health care, medicine, veterinary, roads of local importance, approval of budget, confiscation of public and cultural real estate of private persons for the public and cultural needs, land of local importance, woods, waters with medical features. The state language was Georgian but at schools and in the state agencies the local language was also permitted. Human rights protection was ensured by the constitution and the law of the Republic. Abkhazia had the status of a separate district during elections of the legislative body of Georgia and the Public Council approved the executive authority: the Commissariat of Abkhazia (Abkhazian..., 2004, p. 61-62; J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.466-469, 787).

Though the Constitution was ratified on February 21, 1921 and the "Statute of the Abkhazian Autonomous Governance" had not been carried in effect, the Autonomous Abkhazia, on de-facto grounds, exercised all these rights according to the above-mentioned document ("Regarding Principle Provisions of Abkhazia Governance"). Almost different situation was created during the Soviet period.

In February and March of 1921, Soviet Russia occupied Georgia with its further annexation. The 9. Army coming from Sochi side occupied Sukhumi in March 4. After this, the authority was passed to the occupying body: the Revolutionary Committee. The RevCom was composed of E. Shamba (Chairman), N. Lakoba and N. Aqirtava of the Caucasus Bureau (CauBureau) of the Russian Communist Party Central Committee. Immediately, the issues of a political-legal status of Abkhazia and its relation with Georgia were arisen.

At the Batumi Summit of the occupation bodies, meaning the CauBureau, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia and representatives of the RevCom of Abkhazia (March 28, 1921), it was agreed to leave the issue of federating Abkhazia with Russia or Georgia and declare it a Socialist Soviet Republic until the Congress of Abkhazian Unions. That decision of the Summit became the ground of recognizing Abkhazia as Soviet Socialist Republic on March 31, 1921. The central governmental structures of Russia had never discussed the issues relating the Status of Abkhazia and no decisions had been made on it. This issue never was a topic of debate for the Soviet leaders (among them was V. Lenin). All the issues were solved in Tbilisi at the CauBureau meetings by oral agreement among its speakers G. Orjonikidze and the Public Commissar of Nations Affairs of Russia, I. Stalin, based on the interests to strengthen the Soviet authority, undermine the will striving towards independence and nations' right to self-determination. Therefore, the issue of independence of Abkhazia was a pure fiction and was expressed so that the regional governing figures were appointed not by the Georgian government but by the CauBureau. Exactly in that period was developed a plan of final detachment of Abkhazia from Georgia. E.g. a former military attaché to the Democratic Republic of Georgia, P. Sitin who still continued his spy activities in Tbilisi during the Soviet period, suggested a plan of weakening "the Georgian chauvinism" and its "territorial and material" sources to Moscow on April 22, 1921. Together with certain measures (as were, landing the Russian troops on the border of Turkey, autonomous development of Samegrelo Region, support and activation of the Russian population, passing of Trans-Caucasian railway to Russia), the plan also foresaw to take the Russian Federation borders to the River Bzipi, to hold the plebiscite in Abkhazia and to unite it with Russia (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, Abkhazia..., 1997, p. 470-472). As it has been shown, this plan has never been taken from the agenda; though in that period the real talks, about the independence of Abkhazia, had never existed at any level. The leaders (E. Eshba, N. Lakoba) of the Soviet Abkhazia understood properly, that on March 1921 the "independence" was declared provisionally "for one minute", that this fact was just a "signboard", etc. (J. Gamakharia, Georgian..., 1991, p.118). Considering that circumstance, the first Congress of the Abkhazian Workers made a decision on May 28, 1921 regarding setting of the closest contacts with the workers of the Soviet Republics and "first of all, with the workers and peasants of Soviet Georgia, as being very close with Abkhazians, with their culture, economy and geographical situation". As to the forms of this union, it was to be defined by the 1st Session of the Georgian and Abkhazian Councils (Consolidation..., 1957, p.44-51).

Particular forms of the state relations (the budget related as well) among Georgia and the "independent" Abkhazia still existed after becoming Soviet republics. E.g. the Soviet governmental structures of Georgia, including RevCom and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, sent their decrees in Georgian language to the Abkhazian RevCom, e.g. the "note and guidelines", "to be implemented correctly", made decisions about the credit issues, about registering Bzipi wood concessions and also Tkvarcheli mines etc. Real status of Abkhazia seemed to be lower than the of Daghestan and other Mountaineers Autonomous Republics meaning Nakhichevan and Kabardino. Different from them, Abkhazia was not directly included in the Economical Union of the Caucasus (which was founded in August, 1921). "The independent Abkhazia was not included in the Economical Bureau either. This was established by CauBureau on August 16, 1921, and united Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan" (J. Gamakharia, 1991, p.118-122). Abkhazia was considered within the frames of Georgia in this concrete case and in all other circumstances. Abkhazia was discussed as a part of Georgia even by the Public Commissariat of the Nations Affairs of Russia. On September 1, 1921 its Chairman I. Stalin informed the Central Executive Committee of all Russia (the acting legislative body between the Congresses of the unions): "Abkhazia is part of independent Georgia. For this reason it has no independent representatives to Russia and will have none. Consequently, it cannot receive any credits from RSFSR (Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic)" (A. Menteshashvili, 1998, p.67).

As the status of Abkhazia was absolutely clear to Moscow, Tbilisi and Sukhumi, on July 5, 1921 the CauBureau made a decision to lead the party activities in a way that Abkhazia would become part of Georgia as an Autonomous Republic. On July 23 of the same year, the Summit of the Responsible Staff on Abkhazia Issues listened to the report of N. Lakoba and expressed its faith regarding the establishing the federal union with Georgia in the nearest future (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.475, 792). On November 1, 1921 the CauBureau considered important to work out a draft agreement among Abkhazia and Georgia and for that founded a special commission. On November 16, the CauBureau made the following decision:

To consider inexpedient, from the economical and political points of view, the existence of an independent status of Abkhazia.

To put in charge comrade Eshba of representing his final report, based on the agreement of Abkhazia in becoming of component of the Georgian Federation or of RSFSR on the ground of Autonomous district (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.481-482).

Abkhazia was refused to be included in the Trans-Caucasian Federation by the CauBureau, being in formation process at that time. This decision was also important because it gave a definition of the status of Abkhazia, due to the criteria of Soviet Russia– as was the autonomous district. But being in composition of Georgia, Abkhazia had a higher status in order to serve as an effective instrument for Russia against the disobedient Georgia.

On December 16, 1921, Georgia and Abkhazia signed an agreement about setting the military, political and financial-economical union. With this agreement, Abkhazia became part of Georgia and was included in every regional (Trans-Caucasian) organization, yet with the help of Georgia (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.483-484). The 1st Congress of the Abkhazian Unions held on February 17, 1922 approved the agreement with Georgia. Uniting of the Abkhazian SSR (Soviet Socialist Republic) with Georgia was confirmed by the first Georgian SSR constitution, adopted on February 28, 1922 at the 1st Congress of the Georgian Unions. It stated: "In the Soviet Republic of Georgia those Republics are included on a free self-determination bases as are: Achara Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic, South Ossetia Autonomous District and Abkhazia Socialist Soviet Republic; the last was connected with the Georgian Socialist Soviet Republic on the base of a special Treaty of Alliance signed among these Republics." (Georgian..., 1983, p.73).

Practically and legally the Abkhazian SSR was an Autonomous Republic. With this status Abkhazia was noted in the Resolution of the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party adopted on February 27, 1922. This also concerned the mandate distribution in the Central Executive Committee: "to give 35 mandates to the Centre and 3 seats each to the Abkhazia and Achara Autonomous Republics" (Z. Papasqiri, Essays..., 2007, p. 98).

On the 3rd Congress of the Communist Party of Georgia held on May 1924, was discussed the question of removing the words, "Contracting Republic", from the Georgian Constitution. N. Lakoba, in his speech made at the Congress (May 28, 1924), stated that he had talked with a secretary of the Central Committee, Beso Lominadze, about this issue. The Abkhazian leader from his side mentioned: "We say, that we are a contracting Republic and I have enough courage to declare, that the Abkhazian peasants would remove these words in two years." N. Lakoba also talked about the Abkhazian people: "From a historical point of view, the Abkhazians could not have any role in the history of humanity, as these people have had no own history, no written language and no literature." (L. Toidze, 1996, p.29-30).

The real political-legal status of Abkhazia was stated in the first constitution of the Soviet Union (1924). In the 4th chapter (Article 15) it was clearly written: "the Autonomous Republics of Achara and Abkhazia and the Autonomous District of South

Ossetia, Mountainous Karabakh and Nakhichevan will send one representative to the Nations Council" (History..., 1957, p.229). It was meant that "independent" Abkhazia in fact was considered as an Autonomous Republic and it was represented on the autonomous district level at the USSR higher legislative body. The Georgian and the Abkhazian Constitutions were obviously adversarial with the USSR Constitution, because Abkhazia was still mentioned as a "Contracting Republic" in those Constitutions.

An unsuccessful attempt to adopt the first constitution of the Abkhazian SSR took place on April 1, 1925, when the Unions' 3rd Congress ratified the Constitution without any debates. By means of absolute ignoring the Constitutions of the USSR, the Trans-Caucasian Federation and Georgia, Abkhazia was declared as a sovereign state, which had the right to leave the Trans-Caucasian Federation and the USSR (there was no statement in the constitution about leaving Georgia or abolishing the signed agreement with this state). Article 4 of the 1st chapter of the constitution regulated relations with Georgia: "the Abkhazian SSR unites with the Georgian SSR on the base of a special treaty of alliance with the help of which it unites in composition of the Trans-Caucasian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic..." (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997. p.490-491).

The Constitution of Abkhazia of 1925, which was even called "a constitutional nonsense" by N. Lakoba, had not been published due to the instructions of the higher organs and consequently it had not entered into force. Besides, in a bulletin of the Unions 3rd Congress, which was issued by the Central Executive Committee of Abkhazia, it was stated: "the Congress decided to finish work on a submitted draft-project and to bring it to conformity with the constitutions of the Georgian SSR and the Trans-Caucasian SFSR" (Sessions..., 1964, p.673). Thus, the Abkhazian Central Executive Committee recognized the 1925 constitution only as a project. The issue of the review of constitution was studied by the Trans-Caucasian Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Russia (September 6, 1925), the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia (6, 31 July, 27 September, 1925) and the Bureau of Regional Committee of Abkhazia of the Communist Party of Georgia (September 11, 1925). Working process on the constitution of Abkhazia had been finished by 1926. The same year in June 11-16, the 3rd session of the Central Executive Committee of all Georgia, held in Sukhumi, added a new chapter 5 to the constitution of Georgia: "The Ally Abkhazian Socialist Soviet Republic". Without any changes it was added to the first constitution of Abkhazia on October 27, 1926, which was adopted at the 3rd Session of the Abkhazian Central Executive Committee as its 2nd chapter. It was finally ratified by the 4th Congress of the Abkhazian Unions (March 5-10, 1927). There was twice stated (in the articles 2, 17) that the Abkhazian SSR "by force of the special agreement" was united in the composition of Georgia and by this status in the Trans-Caucasian Federation. The state languages were declared to be Abkhazian, Georgian and Russian (Article 8). The authority among Tbilisi and Sukhumi was defined by the Article 21. Minister of Interior of Abkhazia, Public Commissars of justice, education, health-care, agriculture and social insurance (Ministries) acted independently from the proper Commissariats of Georgia. The Higher Council of the Abkhazian Public Economy was under double subordination. Trustees of the inspections on financial, labor, workers and peasants' issues had a decisive voice in the government of Abkhazia (about this the Abkhazian Central Executive Committee made a decision); they represented the organs of the Georgian proper commissariats, but they submitted the reports regularly to the Abkhazian Central Executive Committee and to the government. Those codes, decrees and regulations having force on the entire territory of Georgia had a compulsory force on the territory of the Abkhazian SSR as well as they were adopted by the Georgian Central Executive Committee. The Georgian Unions Congress or the Central Executive Committee sessions were given the right to abolish those resolutions that were issued by the Abkhazian Union Congresses, Central Executive Committee sessions and the government if they confronted with the Constitution. According to Article 125, the Abkhazian SSR budget after its ratification

became part of the Georgian budget (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.498-500). In spite of a formal character of the Soviet Constitutions (because of concentrating the entire power in the party organs) it could be said that the authority among Tbilisi and Sukhumi was clearly demarcated. At the same time, the Trans-Caucasian and the USSR constitutions did not miss even a single sphere of the state life of Abkhazia (and even of Georgia), without putting under the special governance regime.

Strengthening the Soviet authority in Georgia, when the Empire official figures considered that there was no threat to re-achieve independence, the Abkhazian SSR containment function was considered to be exhausted. Besides, in the 20-30s started the process of reorganizing the autonomous republics within Russia. Those nations that were more developed than the Abkhazians received the status of autonomous district and in better cases the autonomous republic status or maintained it. It should be taken into consideration also that the Agreement of December 16, 1921 among Georgia and Abkhazia did not correspond with the constitutionally strengthened relations. In the existed situation, absolutely naturally, the issue of bringing the legal status of Abkhazia in conformity with the USSR Constitution was raised. On April 17, 1930 the 3rd Session of the Abkhazian Central Executive Committee discussed the agreement revision issue about relations among Georgia and Abkhazia. The session removed from the constitution the words "Contracting Republic" and replaced it with the words "Autonomous Republic". On February 11, 1931 these changes were approved by the 6th Congress of the Abkhazian Unions. N. Lakoba, making a speech at that event, mentioned in this regard: "the relation issue among the workers of Georgia and Abkhazia has been entirely resolved" (J. Gamakharia, B. Gogia, 1997, p.503-504). One circumstance ought to be noted: renaming the title of Abkhazia in 1931 had no influence on its authority as defined by the 1926 Constitution.

In the 30s, through the entire Soviet Empire, were held the government centralization and the ruling totalitarian system formation process. This process required the unification of the allied and Autonomous Republic constitutions and legislations. In such case, the totalitarian system could not make any exceptions. The 7th Congress of the Abkhazian Unions ratified a new version of the constitution on January 7, 1935 and the articles that demarcated the authority among Tbilisi and Sukhumi, disappeared in it. Following to the authority entire centralization, every Public Commissariat of the Autonomous Republic was subordinated to the proper agency of Georgia (Article 42) (Sessions..., 1964, p. 766-773). Only such attributes of governance were left in the new edition of the constitution as were, the own state emblem and flag (Article 83, 84). Proper changes were made in the constitution of Georgia as well, which was ratified by the Unions' 7th Congress held on May 10-14, 1935 (Entirely..., 1935, p.247).

The totalitarian political system formation process in the Soviet Union was finished at the Allying Unions' 7th extraordinary congress held on December 5, 1936, by means of adopting the "Stalin Constitution". The Trans-Caucasian Federation was abolished. Georgia officially became a part of the USSR. The new constitution of the Republic was adopted at the 7th extraordinary congress of the Georgian Unions on February 13, 1937. On the base of the Georgian constitution, the Abkhazian Unions' 8th Congress listened to the report of the Chairman of the Central Executive Committee A. Agrba and on August 2, 1937 approved the new constitution of the Autonomous Republic. The entire centralization of the sphere of governance was maintained in this document. Certain changes have been made to the symbols as well. The Georgian flag and the state symbol were declared to be the flag and the state symbol of Abkhazia (Articles 111, 112) (Essays..., 2007, p.322). The state languages of Abkhazia still remained Abkhazian, Russian and Georgian. This provision differentiated the Abkhazian constitution from the autonomous constitutions that were in composition of the Russian Federation, while Russian language was declared as state language in them.

During the 20-30s Abkhazia, having either the Soviet Socialist or the Autonomous

Republic status, represented not a sovereign, independent state creation equal to Georgia but a part of the Georgian SSR. Its real authority (similar to the authorities of all Allying and Autonomous Republics) was reduced temporarily, because of the establishment of the totalitarian ruling system in the USSR. After adoption of the 1937 Constitution it went down to the minimum.

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Ethnographical Life of Abkhazia

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Abkhazia, similar to other historical-ethnographic regions of Georgia, *historically represented an indivisible part of Georgia. The Abkhazians were Georgians like other representatives (Karthlians, Megrelians, Klarjs, Taos, Svans, Pkhovs, Dvalis and others) of historical-ethnographic regions.* Exactly this common origin became the ground to create the entire ethnic-Georgian culture throughout the whole country for many centuries. Often Abkhazia served as the basement and the initiator of the Georgian political unanimity.¹

Since ancient times, the Abkhazians and Abkhazia were considered within the frames of the Georgian cultural-political area (D. Berdzenishvili, 1990; M. Lortkipanidze, 1990; G. Alasania, 2004), but *after the dissolution of Georgia into the kingdoms and principalities, the social-cultural life in Abkhazia gradually gained different character: as a result of intensive resettlement of the Abaz-Adyghean tribes from Western Caucasus on the territory of Georgia, the ethnic-demographic situation drastically changed. That finally caused a regress of the social-cultural development of this region. Besides, the Abkhazian (Apsua) ethnic group's organic participation was radically impeded from the point of the Georgian state and cultural development* (B. Khorava, 2000).

In the result of assimilation of the resettled Abaz-Adyghean tribes with the local Georgian population there was established **a contemporary Abkhazian (Apsua) ethnicity² which did not identify itself as Georgian from the ethnical or cultural-political points of view.** Gradually, the term "Abkhazian" for the native residents was used in regard of this ethnic group (Putkaradze, 2005, p.140-141), though their original name remained "Apsua" (Khorava, 2000, p.39-40; Gasviani, 1998, p/113-137). The situation was harshly worsened after the Russian Empire had conquered Georgia. The purposeful alienation policy of particular parts of Abkhazia from the Georgians and ruled by Russia (Russian Empire, the Soviet Russia) lasted during the entire 19. - 20. centuries (Tsintsadze, 1998) and it came to an end **by genocide of the native ethnic Georgians of the oldest region of Georgia and by expulsion of those rescued Georgians and anti-Russian ideologist, Abkhazians and other ethnic groups from this region.**

The given work represents the materials reflecting ethnographical life of contemporary Abkhazians (original name "Apsua") living on the territory of Abkhazia, where influence of traditional Georgian being on Abkhazians'

1 Sh. Inal-Ifa correctly remarked that Abkhazia less resembled the remote provincial region of Georgia; on the opposite, even the King Bagrat III founded a political residency of the united Georgia here in Bedia, with the magnificent palace and the church (Inal-Ifa, 1965, p.135).

2 Anthropological data give a very interesting picture. Sh. Inal-Ifa referred to V. Bunak's opinion, who had discussed the distinguished anthropological likeness of the Abkhazians and the Georgians that is also proved by many parameters (Bunak, 1947, p.39). From his part Inal-Ifa added that the contemporary Abkhazians belonged to the Western Caucasian type, who have certain similarities with the West Georgian population on one hand (Megrelians, Guruls, Ajarians...) and on the other hand with Circassians. However, the similarity of Abkhazians with Western Georgians is more sharply expressed in comparison with the Circassians, notwithstanding the fact that the Abkhazians linguistically are united in one language group with Circassians (Inal-Ifa, 1965, p.50). Besides, according to the contemporary anthropological data, Abkhazians are included into the West Georgian (as are Ajarians, Guruls, Megrelians, Lazs, Abkhazians). Based on anthropological researches the Abkhazians, due to factual data, are more alike Georgians especially Megrelians than their language relative non-Georgians – Abazs and Adygheans (M. Abdushelishvili, 2004; L. Bitadze, 2007, p.173-177).

(Apsua) moral, social and material culture is shown.³ Such materials are many and refer to almost every sphere of life, but in this work only one part will be presented.

In the second half of the 20. century, one and the same element of Georgian and Abkhazian (Apsua) culture, due to political grounds, was named as ethnographical parallels. Factually, these are not parallels but the entire, original ethno-cultural world in which the ***influence of Georgian ethnos with the original, oldest agricultural traditions over the gradually resettled mountaineer Abaz-Adyghean tribes is evident.***

Ethnological material determines the major stages of the Abkhazians' (Apsua) migration. "Majority of the Abkhazian ethno-genetic and genealogical legends explicitly and indubitably recognizes the fact of resettlement of the Abkhazians from the North Caucasus to the Western part of Georgia, as well as the ethno-genetic and cultural union with the Caucasians of Circassian origin. This opinion was admitted by the "Abkhazian Mixed Epos", in which the original residence site of the Abkhazians was considered the River Kubani Gorge (S. Bakhia, 2000, p.3-4). ***From this point of view, the history of Apsua ancestral sacred (praying) places is extremely important, which evidently shows that almost every Abkhazian ancestral legend connects the family descend to the North Caucasus*** (S. Bakhia, 2000).

It is known that the economic and material culture is one of those primary spheres in which unanimity of being was evidently reflected. It is also known that before the Georgian big plough ("gutani") was applied in agrarian processing, the resting cycle of three-years in land works was settled. According to the Georgian materials "once in 7 years a plough-share must get gold from the ground", i.e. on the seventh year while the land was resting for this period, the harvest was mostly productive. Such material was recorded in the village Chlou in 1949, which reflected the land resting habit that was characteristic of Karthli and Abkhazia and is referred to an entire agrarian processing system. It is clear that such coincidence is impossible to be occasional (Chitaia, 2000, p.123).

There were ascertained three kinds of ploughs in Abkhazian being which refer to one major type of plough tools. This category was characterized by a long, rounded and fixed shoulder in heel with a heel and shaft.

Puling force of this instrument was one yoke and with its function it could only scratch the ground. Such kinds of instruments are widely met in the mountains and valleys of Georgia, though they have different titles: Kavi, Agapha-Ogapha, Oqoqa, Achacha, Kharsaragi and others (Chitaia, 2000, p.123).

Absolutely identical are the Georgian and the Abkhazian cultural-economic traditions in reference to viticulture and wine-making. Abkhazian vineyard production, vinery cultivation and wine-producing public rules are similar to viticulture and wine making Georgian traditions. Similarity in this sphere is so complete that it can be proved not only from a material point of view, but due to the belief-imaginings related to economy. For example, all the major rituals and habits related to the wine are similar: place of wine donation, particular wine-type care methods, prayers, types of the donated wine, etc. (Chitaia, 2000, p.125). Resemblance in of the wine producing-keeping methods is also evident. Usually wine was kept in the pitchers placed deeply in the ground. This tradition was identical to Georgian tradition, as this habit was obtained from local Georgians by the Abkhazians.

The same influence could be noticed in cattle-breeding: the names of dairy products, methods of its producing and the necessary instrument-remedies, often are Georgian. Methods of cattle-breeding were of that type: cattle-rearing in summer, winter and

³ It is obvious that in Abkhazia, together with the Georgian ethnicity, there lived not only Abkhazians (Apsua) but other ethnic groups as well: Russians, Armenians, Greeks, Estonians, etc., a big majority of which are the refugees from Abkhazia now.

autumn in mountains or in lowlands, friend-making of the stock-breeders when going to the mountains; choosing of the experienced cattle-breeder, whom all others obeyed; using cow, goat or sheep stomach (called "Atsa/Natsi") in producing cheese. Here, similar to other Georgian communes, the best "source" of cheese producing was considered "Dvrita", which was produced with the same method as in other regions of Georgia.

The type of settlement and households in Abkhazia was sparse similar to the rest of West Georgia. Dwelling and farming buildings are presented separately and horizontally. In the centre of the household there is an ordinary dwelling house, in front of which there is a yard covered with well-groomed grass. And behind the dwelling-house there is the so called "black yard" for farming building on it.

The oldest type of the wooden house, which is signified with its laconic forms and beauty, is a plaited building called Patskha⁴ which was spread in the area of Western Georgia (Achugba, 1978: 132).

Ten meters far from the Abkhazian major dwelling there was built a smaller Patskha - Amkhara - which was used for new-married couples and represented an indivisible element of the Abkhazian household. It was specially built for the wedding-day (Malia, Akaba, 1982, p.159). Choosing the special place for newly-weds was characteristic of other parts of Georgia (Svaneti - "Machvibi", Meskhetia - "Ajilaki in darbazovani"). But in Racha or Abkhazia, there existed special dwelling-granary ("Santiobo" house) for this purpose.

A more developed type of the Abkhazian household was "Ajarguali" - the log-house. Later the logs, chopped in the middle, were used for building the houses. Such dwellings were widely spread in Georgia and even nowadays they can be met in mountainous areas of Samegrelo, Racha, Svaneti, Achara and Imereti Gorges. According to Sulkhan-Saba's interpretation: "Jarguali is a combination of tight logs in square form." (Sulkhan-Saba, 1949). This word in Megrelian dialect of the Georgian language means a rounded wood (Ji/Ja corresponds to the log and "rguali" means round, i.e. built with a rounded wood) (Javakhishvili, 1946). Certainly the term "a-jargual" prevailing in the Abkhazian folk-dialect was assimilated from Megrelian dialect of the Georgian language.

The mostly developed type of traditional dwelling building in Abkhazia was a classical Georgian (Kolkhic) wooden house, "oda", which was widely spread in entire Western Georgia. "Oda" based on piles or the stone foundation had several balconies with the ornamented wooden curtains or balusters. The walls were mainly made of chestnut wood. The masters were non-residents. In Abzhuan Abkhazia, that was Ochamchire-Tkvarcheli region, the Georgian masters mainly came from Racha (Malia, Akaba, 1982, p.188). Such "oda" type house was called "Akvaska" in Abkhazia⁵. Its living area was separated into the rooms with particular functions. In Abkhazia they were called "aotakhi" (a-room), among which the isolated one was for the younger members under marrying age. This room replaced the wedding "Amkhara" separately situated in the Abkhazian household (Malia, Akaba, 1982, p.188).

The Abkhazian farming buildings "Maraka", for goats, cowshed, corn storehouse placed on logs, etc, were the ordinary round or square wicker buildings, made of rhododendron materials similar to Samegrelo, Guria or Imereti. The ladder in Western Georgia was a widespread log with cut footsteps.

⁴ This term was certified even by Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani. The plaited house according to Sulkhan-Saba's interpretation is a braided cottage (hut) (Sulkhan-Saba, 1949). This type of houses was widely spread in Abkhazia ("Apatskha") and in Megrelia. The earlier form of such house was a round shape wicker, which was called "Patskha-kunchula" in Samegrelo. Later the house received the shape of a squared form skeleton building but maintained the name.

⁵ One of such forms of Akvaska, which is dated back to the second half of the 19. century, in 1997 was brought from Tkvarcheli to the G. Chitaia Ethnographical Museum of the National Museum of Georgia.

On the present-day territory of Abkhazia, due to the changes in the ethnic-demographical picture since late medieval centuries, by the 19. century there had been created a social situation different from other parts of Georgia. The feudal relations in its classical form had remained only in the Abkhazian part of Odishi Principality. As to the western Abkhazia and its mountainous regions, where the Abaz-Adygean tribes had been resettled from the Northern Caucasus, there were established the communal-generic relations. It was proved by linguistic researches that the Georgian social terms introduced into the Abkhazian language (as are a-tauad – “tavadi” - a duke, a-upshil – “uplistsuli” – a prince, a-shnakima – “shinakma” a bondman and others) described the late-medieval situation (T. Gvantseledze, 1998, p.46-49), i.e. the period when occurred their settling in Georgia – Abkhazia.

Family structure of the Abkhazians was patriarchal. In parallel to the big families of two-three generations since the 19. century there had already existed small monogamous families. A head of family unanimously ruled the family's property, he solved every problem. While dividing the property, certain privileges were given to the elder and younger sons. The younger son stayed in the parental house and he took care of his old parents. A senior housewife had some privileges in the family, though women's rights in comparison with men were less.

In marital relations there existed the relative and the status (title) bans. Exogamy was spread towards the relatives of paternal and maternal lines. Marriage within the artificial (not blood) relatives was also inadmissible. Mixing of blood (incest) (“Amakhaga”) was strictly punished. “Levirat” and “Sororat” were widespread in Abkhazia. Purchase of a woman with livestock or money, engagement in a cradle (by means of putting sign on the cradle; by putting the bullet in a girl's cradle), also kidnapping (“Amtsarsa”) were admitted there. Men referred to these forms if they feared to receive refusal or if a bride's family would break her word. Kidnapping, as a rule, ended with reconciliation in order to avoid blood revenge, also in order to protect the kidnapped person from obtaining the name of a “disgraced girl”. One of the major provisions for marriage was a tax (“Achma”) which was to be paid by the bride's parents. “Achma” was mainly paid in form of livestock. The marriage was agreed upon negotiations of the bride and bridegrooms' relatives. At the engagement ceremony the elderly relative of the boy together with several accompanying persons visited the bride's house with presents. As a sign of consent, the bride's family also sent presents to the bridegroom. On the wedding day the bride was given the presents and she was taken to “Amkhara”, where she stayed for two-three weeks. During this period the bridegroom spent the daytime with his friends and at night in secret he visited his fiancée. Following to that, there took place the ritual of taking bride and bridegroom from “Amkhara” and bringing them to the big house. After the ritual of bringing water, the bride took part in a family housekeeping. Before the first birth giving, she returned to her parents' house for several months, and than moved finally to her husband's house.

In the family they were protected and followed the so- called habit of evading, i.e. relations were regulated according to the gender-age status. The new-weds from engagement till their marriage and afterwards till the ritual of leading them into the big house, refrained from contacting the older relatives. The spouses did not speak to each other in presence of other people, they did not call each other by names and even did not mention these names, neither did they mention their mother and father-in-laws' names. There was spread the tradition of putting out the baby to nurse (“Aadzara”). Besides, the nanny was always from a lower social class. Parents of the child provided her with proper equipment, dish and milking cattle.

The forms of neighborly and family mutual assistance were spread in Abkhazia e.g. unification of stock-breeders (“Agup”), farming (“Keraz”), etc. and also such customs as hospitality, blood revenge (“Ashaura”) and respect of elderly people. Usually blood revenge was directed against alien families. In case of a murder within the patronymic, the murderer was just canceled from the family. The aging of the crime didn't influence the blood revenge and necessity of vengeance passed to the next

generations. One of the reconcile means was adoption of a child ("Atalikoba"), in that way the relation links were strengthened among two families and blood revenge was inadmissible. Reconciling was also possible if the murderer managed to touch with his teeth the breast of any woman from the family of the killed person, or if a woman from the murderer's family could manage to imitate the nursing of a baby of the family of the killed. In such case it was considered that the ritual of making relatives artificially was executed and the blood revenge was not allowed.

According to observations of some ethnomusicologists, the base of the Abkhazian polyphony was bi-voice singing and tri-voicing referred to the following epoch. I.e. polyphony was established in Abkhazia under the influence of Georgian (Megrelian) polyphony that was connected with Apsuas' settlement in Georgia from late medieval centuries. The Abkhazian bi-voice singing does not seem to have been developed independently. It is natural that the ethno-cultural links of the Transcaucasian and the North Caucasian people influenced the singing culture of these nations (Akhobadze, 1957; Argun, 1977; Kortua, 1959; I. Khashba, 1967; M. Khashba, 1983; N. Maisuradze, 1989; M. Shilakadze, 2007).

The Abkhazian musical folk-instruments have been created under the influence of the Georgian culture: Apkhiartsa, Aiumaa, Abik, Achamgur/Achangur and Acharpin/Acharpan. Acharpin/Acharpan was a long pipe open on both sides. It was produced from a stem of plant, called Acharpin/Acharpan. Besides the stem of the plant Acharpani, this instrument was also made from the stem of a pumpkin, hazelnut and persimmon. In Abkhazia, Acharpani was famous among the shepherds. The instrument was also considered to have magic power (I. Khashba, 1967, p.80-86; M. Shilakadze, 2007, p.105).

Abkhartsa is a two-string bow musical instrument. Among the bow instruments spread in Georgia, it is distinguished only due to its shape. In the folk-music practice "abkhartsa" is an accompanying instrument on the solo and chorus songs. The player (mainly male) is author of the text and song performer at the same time. The main themes of the songs are heroic epos. Expressing of regret for died persons was performed by singing in accompaniment of Abkhartsa. This instrument also carried the suffer-alleviating function. On Abkhartsa there were performed the habitual songs (e.g. for hunters, the rain-causing rituals and the sole relief habits of the deceased in accidents (I. Khashba, 1967, p.31-39; M. Shilakadze, 2007, p.37).

The Abkhazian signal instrument is an "abik". With the help of this instrument, alarm was aroused and the commune meeting was summonsed. It is natural that "abik" comes from the Georgian "buki" (a clarion) and is absolutely identical to the clarion that is met in Svanetian traditional being (I. Khashba, 1967, p.78-79; M. Shilakadze, 2007, p.108).

The Abkhazian musical instrument "aiumaa" reminds of a harp. "Aiumaa" was laid on the right knee during playing. The strings were sounding with the help of the second and the middle finger-tips of both hands. The instrument was mainly used as a song accompaniment and usually the historical and heroic songs were performed. The title "aiumaa" means "bi-hand". According to I. Khashba's opinion this name is analogous to the Svanetian "shimekvshe", which could be interpreted in a literary Georgian as a broken hand (I. Khashba, 1967, p.54-76).

"Achamgur/achangur" got accustomed in Abkhazian language from Georgian one. This four-string instrument is a Georgian "chonguri". In I. Khashba's opinion, this musical instrument and the playing manner of the Abkhazians is similar to the one spread in Guria-Samegrelo (I. Khashba, 1967, p.77).

The huge influence of Georgian folklore on Abkhazian folk-songs is evident: manner of accompaniment, structure of the instrument, rhythmic-intonation picture and chords-system. This is also valid for important features underlining the quarter division in accompaniment, dotted (punctuated) and syncopated rhythm, the characteristic

form and multiple repeated phrases and sentences. Common signs of instrumental music are reflected in a melodic-intonation sphere of Georgian folk music (e.g. intonation similarity of "acharpani" melody with "larchemi" voice); in cadence forms (especially the presence of quarter cadence); "achanguri" accompanying figure as of the instrument taken in the Abkhazian musical culture from the Georgian one; metric-rhythmic and finally intonation waves and chords (M. Khashba, 1983, p.5; M. Shilakadze, 2007, p.141).

The popular medical culture of Abkhazia embraces the surgical, therapeutic and other treating traditions, which stand very close and are often analogous to the popular medical traditions observed in other parts of Georgia.

In mountain region of Abkhazia, as well as in other mountainous parts of Georgia, treatment of injuries was highly developed. The local "professional" physicians treated the injuries with effective methods and skills. Mainly in Abkhazia and Svaneti is ascertained a wonderful tradition of treating the badly wounded by spending the night, called "night breaking" (M. Khashba, 1983, p.59), which implied entertaining of the injured persons with music and the stories told by present persons, which had the purpose of relieving his condition. It is known that the night spending tradition for the seriously ill patient was spread in other parts of Georgia as well.

The Abkhazians used dry blood as an effective mean of stopping the bleeding (Shablovski, 1886, p.38), which is also proved in medical treating practice of the other regions of Georgia. This method was described in the Georgian medical manuscript of the 16. century titled "Iadgar Daud" (Davit Bagrationi, 1985, p.535).

The same could be said regarding the treatment practice of the internal throat-ear-nasal diseases by naturopathic, plant, animal or mineral means. The Abkhazians were well-aware of flora, of the plants' medical features. That, probably together with other factors, influenced long life of the Abkhazians. The recipes of medicines based on natural ingredients were kept secret and, similar to other parts of Georgia, were handed over from one generation to the next.

Special attention should be paid to the believes-imaginings and magic-religious medical remedies spread in Abkhazia connected with illnesses. The magic-religious medicine had a syncretic character. There were distinguished the signs of influence of heathen, Christian and Moslem religions. Here, like in other regions of Georgia, for recovery of the mentally diseased people prayed the Saint George in Ilori Church. At the same time, in case of different serious diseases, they applied to the mullah and attempted to treat with a written amulet – a list.

In Abkhazia there are many medical remedies still kept from the heathen religion as are praying or other ritual acts. It is worth mentioning that the oldest forms of ritual system are shaped in the treatment of children's infectious diseases, which can be connected with the cult of a "Big Mother Nana". During periods of infectious diseases, series of ceremonies were followed in the family. Various restrictions, also laying the table for "batonebi" (infection) are similar to the habits spread in other regions of Georgia. In the result of retrospective analysis carried out by the Abkhazian scholars, the genetic union of the Georgian "lullaby of batonebi" and the Abkhazian "flower song" was stated (M. Khashba, 1983, p.53-54).

The archaic medical ritual of various illnesses maintained in Abkhazia often supplements the weakly preserved rituals in different regions of Georgia. Thus, in Western Georgia there was a widely spread illness called "uzhmuri" – a fever form. To treat this illness, the local population referred to the magic ritual which meant sacrificing a human figure molded from pastry or loam to the "land soul", though this ritual was not admitted everywhere. More complete description of the ritualistic "treatment" of "uzhmuri" in Abkhazia was proved and described by M. Janashvili. In this ritual, together with oblation of the puppet to the ground, people also made cookies of millet, then put its pieces on a crossroad, lighted candles and offered up a prayer to the "ground mother" etc.

There have been marked out the archaic as well as the Christian religious elements in habits-imaginings and folk-materials linked with hunting in Abkhazia.⁶ Obviously, in the Abkhazian hunting habits and terminology there could be also observed the great trace of influence of the Georgian hunting epos and ritual practice.

In general, the Abkhazian folklore is rich in hunting poem-songs and this material is closely connected to the Georgian and especially to the Western Georgian (Svanetian, Megrelian) folklore. Besides, many parallels could be made with the Eastern Georgian hunting imaginings.

In Abkhazia, similar to all other historical-ethnographic parts of Georgia, hunting was considered to be a sacred deed. There existed strictly defined rules (habits) of conduct and restrictions. It was regulated how the hunter had to behave before, during and after hunting. Lots of hunting prohibitions have been maintained, protection of which was considered as a precondition of successful hunting. The mentioned type of Abkhazian and Georgian rules totally coincide with each other.

Before going for hunting, the Abkhazian hunter was obliged to follow a complicated system of tabooing in order not to violate the sanctity of hunting. A man, before going for hunting, had no right to have any kind of relations with his wife, nothing to say about alien woman. The travelling ration was strictly defined. It was determined which animal the hunter could shoot and what part of the hunted was to be sacrificed to the hunting deities. As the hunting and the hunted animals were considered divine, the hunter's family did not have the right to throw or burn the hunted bones. It was necessary to dig it into a clean place, like it was stated in Svaneti. The mentioned belief is connected with a legend that the animal-herder "azhveipshaa" owned the animal herds, out of which a certain amount was given to the hunter according to the divine will. After killing the animal its bones were given back to the animals' patron, as all the bones were necessary for resurrection. Similar kind of belief-imaginings existed among the Georgians as well (E. Virsaladze, 1964). In the Georgian and Abkhazian folklore many legends are maintained saying how the animals' patron lacked one bone and inserted wood in the resurrected animal, similar to the Svanetian material. Generally, the Abkhazian material has particular similarity with the Svanetian one. This is conditioned by the fact that the North Caucasian tribes after settling in Abkhazia and especially in Upper Kodori Region had to live with ethnic Georgians among which was this (Svanetian) historical-ethnographical community. Accordingly, lots of parallels have been signified in their traditional being. In order to evoke good attitude of the hunting divine, the hunter donated certain pieces of the hunted animal to the divine. It was defined which piece should be sacrificed and such organs were considered innards both in the Abkhazian (S. Zukhba, 1988, p.83) and Georgian (E. Virsaladze, 1964, p.27) hunting traditions.

In the rich Georgian ethnographical material, those beliefs and imaginings that are related to hunting, also habits, folklore and the three protectors of hunting – "Animals' patron", "Ochopintre" and "Animal herd" – are figured out with particular variations in various parts of Georgia. The Abkhazian and Georgian hunting "divine" system coincide with each other. In Abkhazia, "**azhveipshaa**" was considered to be the main protector divine of hunting and wood. In Abkhazians' opinion, without "azhveipshaa's" favor no one could shoot the animal. This belief-imagination in fact repeats the opinion of Svanetian "Apsati", Ajarian "forest man", Megrelian "Ochokochi" and Eastern Georgian "Ochopintre/Ochopinte" (Iv. Javakhishvili, 1960, p.85).

The Abkhazians believed that "**azhveipshaa**" had **daughters** who chose the best hunters. The hunters could not reveal a secret or have love affairs with other women. The hunter ought to stay faithful to "azhveipshaa's" daughter until the end of his life. **The mentioned belief-imagination precisely repeats the common Georgian**

6 Hunting caused a great interest in Georgia since ancient times. It is one of the oldest "trades", a traditional branch. In feudal Georgia hunting was almost twisted with military service and represented one of the forms of military taxes. The rules, methods and arms of hunting are of different types. There exist some significant nuances in various ethnographic sides of Georgia.

opinion regarding the "animals' patron" and its local variations – Svanetian Dali and Megrelian "tkashi mapha". The oral materials, referred to the forest protector divinities absolutely correspond with each other and carry one and the same meaning.

It is also interesting that in Abkhazia together with the common literary language there was the special hunting language and only the hunters were aware of it. In the Abkhazian's belief, it was forbidden to speak in common language while hunting, as the animal could hear about the hunter's intention to shoot it and the animal could escape (Gulia, 1926, p.14). The exact analogue is met in Svaneti: different speech was used during hunting – as was the hunters' secret language (A. Kaldani, 1978, p.45).

Rather often the Abkhazians used the name "**Airgi**" in parallel to "azhveipshaa" that meant **a warrior on a white horse**. The man going for hunting was addressed by the people whom he met on the road with the following words: "Let Airgi support you in hunting" (Gulia, 1926). **It is clear that "Airgi" is a popularized version of Saint Giorgi.** As by the influence of Christianity, Saint Giorgi was considered to be the protector of hunting and the hunters everywhere, including Abkhazia. From the Abkhazian materials it was clearly shown that talk is about St. Giorgi, though "Airgi" is met in the Abkhazian epos too, where it represents the thunderstorm divinity. According to D. Gulia's statement, contemporary Abkhazians used to mention that the Ilory icon of Saint Giorgi looked at the devil from heavens and from time to time threw lances to the trees in form of thunder, as the devil tried to hide in branches of the trees (Gulia, 1926, p.6). Apparently, in the Abkhazian mythology the ecclesiastic sayings about Saint Giorgi changed into folk legends; the scene depicted on the icon of St. Giorgi of Ilori became public legend and the Saint's name was replaced by the name familiar to them. It is known that the hunters in Svaneti also prayed to the Saint martyr Giorgi to assist them in hunting.⁷ This notifies that addressing to "Airgi" by the Abkhazian hunters was not accidental, caused by phonemic similarity of the heathen divinity and Saint Giorgi names. It is known that converting the part of Abkhazians to Christianity took place after their settlement in Georgia (in late medieval), when the weakened Georgian state was dissolved into kingdoms and principalities. Finally it caused the Abkhazians' expansive migration to Abkhazia which was populated by the Christian Georgians before (among them were the ancient Abkhazians composing the Georgian ethnicity). Presumably the settled Abkhazians have assimilated the Greek Christian terminology from the local Georgian population (T. Gvantseladze, 1998, p.43). Later, the Abkhazians preserved the Christian sayings exactly in this form. But more lately, when Christianity was extended wider in the Abkhazian part by Tsarist Russia, the Christian sayings about Saint Giorgi, which existed in the Abkhazians' habits, were put on its place and "Airgi" and Saint Giorgi were differentiated from each other.

Parallels to the present syncretistic imaginations about Saint Giorgi in the Abkhazian mythology could be met not only in the immediate neighboring Georgian ethnographical groups (Abkhazians, Svans, Megrelians), but in mountain regions of Eastern Georgia as well. One of the clear examples is the Khevsurian Khakhmati Cross (sacred place) where the people prayed to Saint Giorgi. History of founding this sacred place, Khakhmati Cross represents the folk version of one episode from the life of Saint Giorgi (Ochiauri, 2001, p.60).

The Abkhazians, which were settled gradually on Georgian territory (in Abkhazia) obtained many other elements from mythology and religious beliefs from the resident Georgians (N. Abakelia, 2000; T. Gvantseladze, 1998, p.42-46; T. Gvantseladze, 2000).

⁷ After the successful hunting a hunter in Svaneti said such thanking words: "Glory to God, thank to God, to the Lord of the universe, Patron of the world, the hunted and the hunter all are born by you, any time I shall apply to you, always bless me, it would be your mercy and honor. Jesus Christ! Glory to Thee... Glory to Thee, You have mercy on us, follow me from the right side days and nights, protect me from the evils and demons, Glory to the merciful God... Glory to Dali in rocks!.." (B. Nizharadze, 1964, p.36-37).

It is known that Christian terminology has been taken from the literary Georgian or from Megrelian dialect in the Abkhazian language (we mean the contemporary and not late-medieval Abkhazian). The following terminologies have been created under the influence of literary Georgian as are: ajar – jvari (cross), asakvma – sakmeveli (incense), aber – beri (monk), azareba – ziareba (Eucharist), agalaba – galoba (choir singing), asarkial – sarekeli (bell). From the Megrelian dialect of the Georgian language there have been derived the following words: qirsa – qriste (Christ), Christmas, Nativity, qirsian – qristiani (Christian), auakhvama – eklesia (church, ecclesia), targáaz – mtavarangelozi (Archangel), achkvandat – Chkondideli (bishop from Chkondidi), tskalkurtkhia – tskalkurtkheva (blessing of the waters), amqamgaria – praying ritual on the name of Michael-Gabriel, etc. (T. Gvantseladze, 2000, p.57-66).

Thus, various elements (anthropological, historical, linguistic and ethnographical data) of traditional being of ethnic Abkhazians (Apsua) – representing one part of ethnographical Abkhazia - evidently show the ancient existence of Abkhazia in the Georgian cultural-political sphere, as well as the significant influence of the Georgian culture and life-style on the culture created in Georgia (Abkhazia) in the resettlement place of Abaz-Adyghean tribes since the late medieval centuries. Two strata could be marked out in this culture. One is a substrate layer that was distinctive to the cultural-economic being of the Georgians (Abkhazians) assimilated from the Abaz-Adyghean tribes. The second is a super stratum layer – which the Abkhazians (Apsua) took from the neighboring Georgians, i.e. Megrelians and Svans.

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Cause Factors of the Abkhazian (Georgia) Conflict and the Russian Policy Motivation Aspects in Conflict Regulation Process

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Preface

The existing situation in Georgia was caused not only by the lately developed events but originates from olden times. Geopolitical and geo-economical significance of Georgia, reasoned by its geographical situation, was always in the sphere of various empires' viewpoints.

The mentioned issue is so huge, from the historical point of view, that it can be divided into several stages. This time, it will be discussed the motivation aspects of the Russian policy in the conflict regulation processes.

Representatives of the Russian elite started the historical estimation of the Georgia-Russian relations, from the moment of signing the Georgiyevsk Treaty, which represented a disfigured form of the history of these relations. It should be also mentioned that the effusive policy of Russia towards Georgia and the history of violation of the agreed treaties had started long before the signing of the Georgiyevsk Treaty.

Before moving to the main part of the report, it's worth noting, that the Georgiyevsk Treaty that was so hardly appealed by the Russian political society foresaw maintenance of the Georgian governance, the Church autonomy, the Georgian monarchy and delegation of the crown. All the mentioned promises had been broken. The monarchy was overthrown, the autonomy of the Georgian church was abolished, as well as the Georgian state system and its kingdoms and principalities were forcedly included in the composition of the Russian Empire.

Exactly since this period originates a long list of Russian effusive policy towards Georgia and violation acts of achieved agreements.

Causes of the Abkhazian Conflict

In order to determine the main causes of the conflict of 1992 in Abkhazia (Western Georgia), it is important to make a short excursion in a "Big Soviet" period, regarding the Kremlin attitude towards Georgia.

After the dethronement of Tsarism in Russia, there started a gradual expansion of the so-called "red terror" on former territories of the Empire. After the October Revolution, Georgia declared its independence. As Georgia was entirely annexed before, it was not obligatory to list the particular regions of the country as were: Abkhazia, Achara, Guria, Samegrelo, Imereti, Tskhinvali Region (latter the so-called the Autonomous District of South Ossetia), Svaneti, etc. By the time the declaration of independence was announced, these regions had been indivisible territories of the country, similar to the period of Georgian government. Furthermore, if we follow the "logic" of the separatists and the representatives of Russia regarding leaving the Russian Empire frames by Abkhazia, than it should be also said that Achara, Guria, Svaneti, Samegrelo, Imereti and any other regions of Georgia had not left the Russian Empire composition. It comes out that only Tbilisi declared independence.

Allegation about Abkhazia that it has not left the Russian Empire composition (that

already did not exist by that time), softly speaking, is an attempt to mislead the society and has nothing in common with reality.

Russia could not adapt itself to the loss of Georgia and tried to return Georgia in composition of the Soviet Empire at that time. Government of independent Georgia attempted to set normal diplomatic relations with Bolshevistic Russia. On May 7, 1920, a Treaty of Alliance and Peace was signed among Bolshevistic Russia and independent Georgia in Moscow. Though Russia, similar to the Georgiyevsk Treaty, violated that treaty and annexed Georgia.

On February 12, 1921 the Soviet Army invaded Georgia and took course on Tbilisi. Meanwhile, the 8th army of Russia broke into the territory from the side of Sochi. The Russian military divisions moved from the North, South and even from the East. On February 25, the 11th Red Army entered Tbilisi. After two weeks of unequal fighting, Georgia was defeated and Russia annexed independent Georgia for the second time.

After setting the soviet regime in Georgia our country lost about 17 000 km² of its territory: **in 1925 the Central Executive Committee of the USSR passed Pilenkovo district (Part of Abkhazia) and a part of Dusheti uyezd to the Russian Federation.**

After establishment of the Soviet Regime in Georgia, i.e. to be more precise, after the second annexation of Georgia, Russia put far-ranging missiles in Georgia. From the political point of view, by means of granting the status of the Autonomous Republic to Abkhazia and the title of the Autonomous District to South Ossetia (the historical Samachablo).

The Russian Soviet empire has not lost the desire to include Abkhazia into the composition of the Russian Federation by means of its removal from Georgia. Several plans have been elaborated in Moscow in this direction. A few circumstances are interesting here.

In 1945, one of the higher authorities of the Central Committee of Russia, being in Abkhazia for vacation, introduced an intention of the Central Committee, to Mgeladze, the First Secretary of the Abkhazian Communist Party Regional Committee: **"There is an opinion about uniting the Abkhazian resorts and Sochi in one resort district under the subordination of Moscow."**

In 1949, Poskrebishev, who was visiting Sukhumi for vacation, still referred to the issue of making the entire resort district in obedience of Moscow: **"How will the Abkhazian and the Georgian comrades estimate the issue of uniting Sukhumi, New Athens, Gudauta and Gagra with Sochi in an entire resort district but under subordination of Moscow?"**

At the beginning of the 1960s, Nikita Khrushov summonsed the first Secretary of the Abkhazian Communist Party Regional Committee and required to convoke the Abkhazian Regional Committee Party activists. This aimed at processing an appeal to the Central Committee, regarding joining Abkhazia with the Krasnodar Territory.

"If the Georgians do not behave wisely, I will address the Abkhazians against them... **Bring the carriages and resettle all the Georgians from Georgia...**" This threat was coming from Nikita Khrushov.

The most evident fact was the secret report of the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, maid by the main ideologist Mikheil Suslov in 1961:

"...Today or tomorrow Georgians will start struggling against communism. We must start fighting against the Georgians from Abkhazia. **We should give the autonomous status to Samegrelo and Svaneti.** In each of these regions, we should develop the regional-nationalistic feelings. We should ensure everyone that Abkhazia is inhabited by Georgians. Eastern Georgia will be confronted with Western Georgia. After this we should act as a mediator and conciliator..."

The active work with the aim to develop the separatist relations in Abkhazia towards the Georgians started immediately after Suslov's report. The Georgian history was very actively rewritten in a "favorable way" to Kremlin. Facts having historical, ethnographical and archeological importance were falsified. The results of such work were achieved in the 1970s. Since then, there started an active phase of development of the separatist movements in Abkhazia.

If we make parallels to the present situation, it would not be difficult to guess that conflicts in Georgia were not spontaneous events. The so-called "ethnic" confrontations actually were well organized actions of Kremlin.

Before moving to the main topic, it should be noted that the conflict in Abkhazia had not started in 1992. The first conflict took place in March 1989. A group of Georgians traveling by bus from the Russian-Georgian border (River Psou) towards Sukhumi, was stopped by armed groups of Abkhazians in Gudauta. The bus was robbed, the passengers were wounded. But fortunately, the driver of the bus managed to escape from the place and saved the people. If not for his adroitness, the attack would have finished with bad results. The next attack took place on July 15, 1989 and unfortunately, at this time it ended with heavy sacrifice. The armed groups, who were purposely brought from Gudauta, assaulted the unarmed Georgians holding peaceful rally on one of the squares in Sukhumi. More than 20 Georgians were killed during this attack. Among them was a leader of the national movement Vova Vekua, who was killed with unbelievable severity by weapons specially made with nails.

In spite of ethnic origins, the national self-consciousness in Georgia was on high level. Consequently, Russia could not provoke mass confrontation of Abkhazians and Georgians. First of all, the biggest part of ethnic Abkhazians did not pursue Russian provocations.

Thus, conflict in Abkhazia has started not in the beginning of the 1990s but much earlier. In spite of that, the starting period of conflicts in Abkhazia is considered August 14, 1992. Accordingly, we shall start to overview the conflicts regulation processes since this time.

Process of Conflict Regulation

The first agreement about the cease fire and non-resort to the use of military activities was signed in Moscow in two weeks (September 3, 1992) after the conflict started officially (annex #1).

Here should also be mentioned that from the very beginning all the official documents were signed only by Georgia and Russia. The Abkhazian representation, which included the separatists and the legitimate structure officials, acted on behalf of those persons who acceded to the achieved agreements, i.e. **from the beginning Georgia and Russia were registered as the conflict sides.**

In the preamble of the Moscow Agreement of September 3, 1992, it was clearly noted that **"the President of the Russian Federation and the Chairman of the State Council of the Georgian Republic, together with the authorities of Abkhazia (here were meant the separatists and the representatives of the legitimate structures – G. G.), find inadmissible any forms of violation of the state territorial and border integrity, as declared by the universally admitted principles, also creation of the extent conditions for political regulations in Abkhazia, have agreed..."**

As we see, the Russian Federation and the separatist government representatives, from the very beginning, did not even put under suspicion the territorial integrity and its international borders.

While discussing this agreement it would be enough to read the title of its first paragraph, in order to have opinion about the content of the rest of the document:

“territorial integrity of Georgia is ensured”.

As we see, not only Russia, but the separatist government representatives as well, have agreed about the title of the first paragraph, which set the **guarantees for the territorial integrity of Georgia**.

The reality we are facing today is that if Russia provided assistance to the separatist regimes in undeclared form before, the present position of Russia notifies that it does not only violate the achieved agreements and the UN Resolutions but ignores the international norms and efforts to set its own force-based methods in the world.

While analyzing the Moscow Agreement of September 3, 1992 the following issues were figured out:

- 1. Territorial integrity of Georgia is indisputable.** It is considered that **“any form of violation of the universally declared principles about the state territorial and border integrity is inadmissible...”**;
- 2. Agreement has been achieved “about cease fire and non-resort to the use of military activities among the sides”**;
- 3. With the aim to ensure the cease fire and non-resort to the use of force, to suppress invasion of the illegal military formations into Abkhazia, also to disintegrate the existing illegal groupings and to withdraw them from Abkhazia, there was established a Commission by the Georgian governmental structures, composed of the appointed representatives of Georgia, Abkhazia and Russia**;
- 4. The Georgian armed forces were imposed responsibility “to protect the trunk-railways and other important objects”.**

In spite of the fact that such a Commission was established, indeed different from the separatist regime representatives which had an opportunity to bear responsibilities over the conflicting territories (as well as over the part controlled by the Georgian side), the Georgian representatives did not have such possibilities. The Russian side, which acted as guarantor for the agreement’s implementation, did not assist the Georgian side to exercise their duties, nothing to say about the pressure on the separatist regime representatives in order to oblige them to fulfill the agreed provisions.

Furthermore, a month after, right after signing the agreement of September 3, 1992, on 3-5 October the illegal armed forces of the Abkhazian separatist regime, Kazakh divisions, mercenaries from the Northern Caucasus and the Arab states set complete control on Gagra. After this military operation, ethnic cleaning of the Georgian nationals took place. **Since that period, first appeared the refugees (displaced persons).**

As we see, the representatives of the Abkhazian separatist regime and the Russian side (*different from the separatists, Russia acted as a guarantor and one of the sides in the mentioned agreement - G. G.*) broke each paragraph of the achieved agreement that would have ensured conflict settlement.

Certain paragraphs of this agreement are also interesting. It is for instance that “the Georgian armed forces carry responsibility **“to protect the railway lines and other particular objects”**. As we can see, the need of protection of the trunk-railways and other important objects was declared with the mentioned formulation, in the result of which, due to the agreement with Ardzinba, the Georgian government dislocated the limited contingent of the internal armed forces and military divisions in Abkhazia, namely in the Western parts of Georgia. In addition to this, Ardzinbas’s words expressed at the end of the 1980s, as to **“I will force the Georgians to shoot the Abkhazians”**, the allegations of separatists as if the conflict in Abkhazia was started by the Georgian side, seems unreal.

In concern of the Gagra affair in 1992, the Chairman of the United Nations Security

Council made a special statement on October 8 **"regarding the occurred situation in Georgia"** (annex #2), where on behalf of the UN Security Council (Russia is a permanent member of this division and has a veto right). He made an appeal to the conflicting sides about to stop the armed contradiction and follow the Moscow Agreement of September 3, 1992. This agreement **"...certified the integrity of the Georgian territory, foresaw stopping of the military operations and obligations of the sides to cease fire and served as a base for wide-scale political regulation of the conflict..."**

Here should be also noted that, as the mentioned statement was made on behalf of the UN Security Council, it would have been agreed with each member of the Security Council and signed by them. It means that Russia totally agreed with the formulation of this statement.

In spite of this, the next Moscow Agreement of September 3, 1992, the further achieved agreements and the UN resolutions were systematically violated by the separatist regime and the Russian side. The Russian side, via supporting the separatist regime, helped to the conflict escalation instead of settling it.

Chronology of the Abkhazian (Georgia) conflict military actions

Below we will provide chronology of the military actions that followed the Moscow Agreement of September 3, 1992.

October 3-5, 1992 – The illegal armed forces of the Abkhazian separatist regime, Kazak divisions, mercenaries from the Northern Caucasus and the Arab states set complete control on Gagra zone. After that military operation, ethnic cleaning of Georgian nationals took place.

November 3, 1992 – Mercenaries from the Northern Caucasus and the Arab states attempted to occupy the strategic heights around Sukhumi in the direction of Shroma-Akhalsheni villages (Northern area around Sukhumi). During that attack Georgians captured a Syrian citizen. Later it was found out that he was a professional military intelligence officer.

January 5, 1993 – The illegal armed forces of the Abkhazian separatist regime attempted to break through Gumista frontage.

March 16, 1993 – The full-scale offensive action was launched in the direction of Gumista and Ochamchire and reconnaissance actions were committed in Shroma-Akhalsheni villages' direction. In this full-scale military operation participated not only separatist regime armed forces but also hired militants from the Northern Caucasus and the Arab nations, armed groupings from Dniestr region and Russian landing troops (directly subordinated to the Minister of Defense Pavel Grachov). The Russian air forces first took part in the mentioned military operations; its aircrafts launched attacks on Sukhumi. Tens of houses were destroyed in various districts of Sukhumi and in the results the peaceful population died.

July 1993 – The separatists' armed forces and the Russian landing divisions started attacks in the direction of Gumista, Shroma-Akhalsheni and Ochamchire. The navy troops were used for the first time. In spite of big losses, the separatists still managed to take the strategic heights in Sukhumi surrounding, as it was their main goal in this military operation.

September 16, 1993 – with the help of an immediate participation of the Russian regular army divisions (as they already did not hide their involvement in those actions and displaced on the armored equipment with the Russian flags on them) the separatists started the wide-scale operation in Sukhumi direction. By this time, the armed forces on Georgian side, standing in Sukhumi, were practically disarmed due to the Sochi Agreement of July 27, 1993. They could not protect Sukhumi and thus, the active phase of the conflict in Abkhazia came to an end. By September 30, the separatists managed to set complete control on the territory of Abkhazia, except Kodori Gorge

(Upper Abkhazia).

It should be noted that the Moscow Agreement of September 3, 1992 was not the only document, during all this period, which was broken by the separatist side with an active support of Russia.

There have been adopted several so-called "Gentleman" and official agreements during the military actions. Series of statements and Resolutions were accepted by the UN Security Council, as were:

September 3, 1992 – The Moscow Agreement **S/24523** (Annex #1)

September 10, 1992 – Special statement **S/24542** of the UN Security Council Chairman (this statement was figured out in the Resolutions as well).

October 8, 1992 – Statement of the UN Security Council Chairman **S/24637** (Annex #2)

January 23, 1993 – Statement of the UN Security Council Chairman **S/25198**

March 14, 1993 – By the Russian mediation the so- called "Gentleman" agreement was set about non-resort to fire and prohibition of use the military forces against each other (on March 16, the Russian aviation started the wide-scale attacks on Sukhumi).

May 5, 1993 – Letter of the UN Secretary General to the Security Council Chairman regarding the occurred situation in Georgia **S/25756** (this document was figured out in the resolutions).

May 14, 1993 – Agreement about non-resort to fire and prohibition of use of the military forces against each other (the document was figured out in annex #5).

July 1, 1993 – Report of the UN Secretary General in regard of the created situation in Abkhazia (Georgia) S/26023 (the document was figured out in the resolutions).

July 2, 1993 – Statement of the UN Security Council Chairman **S/26032** (the document was figured out in the resolutions).

July 7, 1993 – Report of the UN Secretary General regarding the created situation in Abkhazia (Georgia) **S/26023/Add.2** (the document was figured out in the resolutions).

July 9, 1993 – Resolution of the UN Security Council **849 (1993)** (Annex #4)

July 27, 1993 – By the Russian mediation, there was signed the agreement in Sochi about cease fire and setting controlling mechanisms on its implementation (the document in annex #5 is discussed in the form of the attachment).

August 6, 1993 – Report of the UN Secretary General in regard of implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution **849 (1993) S/26250** (Annex #5)

August 6, 1993 – Resolution of the UN Security Council **854 (1993)** (Annex #6)

August 24, 1993 - Resolution of the UN Security Council **858 (1993)** (Annex #7)

September 17, 1993 – Statement of the UN Security Council Chairman in regard of renewal of the military operation **S/26463** (Annex #8)

It's worth noting that with this statement, the Chairman of the UN Security Council called upon cease fire, as well as he demanded from the conflicting sides to return to those positions that were fixed by the July 27 Agreement.

In all the above listed documents there was figured out:

1. Territorial integrity of Georgia within the internationally admitted frames;

2. **Obligation (demand) of the sides about cease fire and disuse of force against each other;**
3. **Need of the conflict political wide-scale settlement;**
4. **And most important – all agreements and the UN Resolutions were based on the Moscow Agreement of September 3, 1993.**

Unfortunately, all the mentioned documents were left only on the papers and have not been fulfilled. It is also a pity, that the will to assist Georgia and to settle the conflict peacefully from the side of the international organization, had just an avowed character. No acting sanctions have been used against the separatists and especially against Russia when they neglected the achieved agreements and the adopted UN Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, Russia didn't fulfill its mediator function.

Considering the ethnic cleaning of Georgian nationals in Abkhazia (held by the separatist regime armed groupings, the hired North Caucasian combatants, the terrorists from Arab states and also by Kazaks and the Russian Federation regular army in 1992-93), also in regard of more than 400 000 (out of 530 000 population of Abkhazia) homeless people, a certain responsibility ought to be taken by the international organizations as well.

Conclusion

In 1993 by finishing the military activities in Abkhazia (Georgia) there ended an active phase of the conflict, its regulation process was transformed into diplomatic shape. Yet, the conflict still remains unsettled up to now. During the entire process of conflict regulation, Russia patronized the created "separatist" regime, intentionally violated the UN resolutions and the agreements achieved during various international negotiations of different formats.

Lots of the processed negotiations have been frustrated with the Russian provocations, while Russia accused Georgia in each such case. In spite of announcements, made by the Georgian side and addressed to the international commonwealth, still the reaction from their side bore just a declarative character.

Since Russia was convinced of the effectiveness of its plan, first it dislocated its army in the historical parts of Georgia – Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region - and thus got control over them and then, by means of breaking all the international norms, individually recognized the Georgian sides as independent Republics in the name of the satellite regimes. By this action, Russia officially declared annexation of Georgian territories. In parallel, the Russian military mechanism conducted ethnic cleaning of Georgians in these regions: ***out of 530 000 people living in Abkhazia, more than 400 000 became refugees (displaced persons); among them were ethnically Abkhazians, Russians, Estonians, Jews, etc. They were forcedly deprived of their rights on property and free movement in their homeland.***

The policy of Russia today is as follows: if Russia acted under the shield of the separatist regimes before, today it obviously occupies the Georgian territories. Besides, Russia not only breaks its undertaken responsibilities as mediator but, by means of the forced, blackmailing policy, ignores the **Medvedev-Sarkozy Plan** on conflict regulation. Even though it has participated in the elaboration of particular paragraphs and has signed this document.

It is also evident that the recognition of independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia was supported only by Nicaragua and the terrorist organizations Hamas and Hesbola.

It is important that the world society acknowledges this fact properly, in order to make adequate conclusions towards Russia.

It is doubtless that Russia was preparing for the August events seriously: the Ministry

of Defense of Russia had worked out military actions plan beforehand. We can refer to one more fact to certify this:

Since March 2008 the situation in Abkhazia (Georgia) tensed. Concentration of Russian Ministry of Defense armed landing troops was carried out by means of rough violation of the existing agreements and the UN resolutions. Naturally in such situation relations among Georgia and Russia were complicated.

With the aim to improve the situation, **the German Minister of Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeier, was the first representative of the west** who not only responded to the existing situation in the conflicting regions of Georgia, but also visited Abkhazia with a concrete plan. But it should be mentioned that this plan still remains unknown for a wide society. The Abkhazian separatist authority, while deciding nothing without agreement with Kremlin, simply blocked the plan and thus frustrated a probable new stage of negotiations. It comes out clearly that Russia did not want to break up the planned military campaign against Georgia. Because of this, in the name of the separatist regime, Russia blocked an attempt of Germany to make peaceful negotiations real already at the start.

Epilogue

As we saw, the conflict of Abkhazia (Georgia) that started in 1992 appeared to be a reasonable ending of the well-planned conspiracy of Russian military and political elites against Georgia and which was elaborated for decades.

Since 2003, an accurate realization of the conflict's peaceful settlement plan by the Georgian government, clearly showed to Russia that the conflict solution turned more realistic, though it was not included in their plans. This was evidently shown by the events of August 2008. Unfortunately it should be stated that Georgia had applied to the international society before these events, while claiming that Russia planned destabilization in the region by means of provocations. Still the reaction of the international society was of the declarative character.

To date, by means of regulating the conflicts settlement processes in Georgia, the West can show to Russia that in the 21. century civilized world, it is inadmissible to annex territories of other states by means of creation of so-called separatist regimes. The civilized society also ought to assure Russia that the achieved agreements must be implemented on unconditional bases.



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ПИСЬМО ВРЕМЕННОГО ПОВЕРЕННОГО В ДЕЛАХ ПОСТОЯННОГО ПРЕДСТАВИТЕЛЬСТВА
РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ ПРИ ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ОТ 8 СЕНТЯБРЯ
1992 ГОДА НА ИМЯ ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЯ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

Имею честь настоящим препроводить текст Итогового документа Московской встречи Президента Российской Федерации В. Н. Ельцина и Председателя Государственного Совета Республики Грузия Э. А. Шеварднадзе от 3 сентября 1992 года.

В соответствии с просьбой Министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации А. В. Козырева и Министра иностранных дел Республики Грузия А. Д. Чикваидзе прошу Вас принять меры к его распространению в качестве официального документа Совета Безопасности с учетом того, что в статье 12 содержится обращение Сторон к Организации Объединенных Наций с просьбой поддержать изложенные в Итоговом документе принципы урегулирования и оказать содействие в их реализации, включая направление миссий по установлению фактов и наблюдателей.

Валентин В. ЛЮЗИНСКИЙ
Исполняющий обязанности Постоянного
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при Организации Объединенных Наций

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Приложение

[Подлинный текст на русском языке]

Президент Российской Федерации и Председатель Государственного Совета Республики Грузия,

обсудив при участии руководителей Абхазии, северокавказских республик, краев и областей Российской Федерации положение, сложившееся в Абхазии,

стремясь к скорейшему прекращению огня, преодолению чрезвычайной кризисной ситуации и созданию условий для полномасштабного политического урегулирования в Абхазии, которая стала зоной вооруженного конфликта,

подтверждая приверженность духу и букве Устава ООН, принципам Заключительного Акта СБСЕ, Парижской Хартии для Новой Европы, Хельсинкской Декларации 1992 года,

считая недопустимыми любые посягательства на общепризнанные принципы территориальной целостности государств и неприкосновенности их границ,

уважая права и свободы человека, а также права национальных меньшинств,

договорились о следующем:

Статья 1

Обеспечивается территориальная целостность Республики Грузия.

Все участвующие в конфликте вооруженные формирования с 12 ч. 00 м. 5 сентября 1992 года прекращают огонь и любое применение силы друг против друга. При этом участники конфликта обязуются до вступления в силу прекращения огня воздерживаться от каких-либо наступательных действий.

Одновременно создается Комиссия по контролю и инспекции из представителей, назначаемых органами власти Грузии, в том числе Абхазии, и России. Комиссия обеспечивает соблюдение прекращения огня, выполнение других положений данного соглашения в соответствии с разработанными ею процедурами.

Для выполнения возложенных на нее задач участники Комиссии придают ей соответствующие подразделения, осуществляющие разоружение, расформирование и удаление из Абхазии, а также недопущение в Абхазию незаконных вооруженных формирований и групп, с тем чтобы обеспечить строгий контроль по всему периметру зоны конфликта.

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Комиссия осуществляет наблюдение за тем, чтобы после прекращения огня и передислокации войск вооруженные силы Республики Грузия в зоне конфликта не превышали согласованного уровня, необходимого для достижения целей настоящего соглашения (охраны железной дороги и других определенных объектов).

Рекомендации Комиссии незамедлительно рассматриваются властями всех уровней.

Статья 2

До 10 сентября 1992 года производится обмен задержанных лиц, заложников, пленных и других, по принципу "всех на всех".

Статья 3

Стороны запрещают и не допускают любые террористические акты и захват заложников и принимают эффективные меры по привлечению к ответственности виновных.

Статья 4

Принимаются незамедлительные меры к устранению помех на путях движения товаров, услуг и лиц, занимающихся законной деятельностью. Будет обеспечиваться бесперебойное и безопасное функционирование соответствующих наземных, воздушных и морских путей сообщения, охрана границы.

Особое внимание будет уделяться обеспечению безопасности соответствующих участков Закавказской железной дороги, в том числе путем создания совместного механизма.

Комиссия по контролю и инспекции представит необходимые рекомендации по этому вопросу.

Статья 5

Обеспечиваются условия для возвращения беженцев в места их постоянного жительства. Им оказываются необходимое содействие и помощь.

Принимаются меры по розыску лиц, пропавших без вести, и по эвакуации желающих выехать из Абхазии.

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Статья 6

В зоне конфликта принимаются эффективные меры по прекращению и недопущению насилия и грабежей, привлечению к ответственности виновных.

Статья 7

Стороны примут меры по восстановлению пострадавших районов и оказанию гуманитарной помощи, в том числе на международной основе, населению, пострадавшему в ходе конфликта. Определение порядка доставки и распределения такой помощи возьмут на себя организации Красного Креста в координации с Комиссией по контролю и инспекции.

Статья 8

Стороны подтверждают необходимость соблюдения международных норм в области прав человека и национальных меньшинств, недопущения дискриминации прав граждан по признаку национальности, языка и религии, обеспечения проведения свободных демократических выборов.

Статья 9

Вооруженные Силы Российской Федерации, временно находящиеся на территории Республики Грузия, в том числе и в Абхазии, соблюдают строгий нейтралитет и не участвуют во внутренних конфликтах.

Все органы государственной власти и управления в Республике Грузия, в том числе и в Абхазии, обязуются уважать нейтралитет дислоцированных там Российских Вооруженных Сил и пресекать противоправные действия в отношении военнослужащих, членов их семей и военного имущества.

Статья 10

Стороны будут содействовать возобновлению к 15 сентября 1992 года нормальной деятельности законных органов власти в Абхазии.

Статья 11

Органы власти и управления республик, краев и областей Северного Кавказа в составе Российской Федерации примут эффективные меры по пресечению и недопущению любых действий с их территории, расходящихся с положениями настоящего соглашения. Они будут содействовать его выполнению и установлению мира в регионе. Они предпримут усилия по разъяснению положений настоящего соглашения среди населения.

Статья 12

Стороны обращаются к ООН и СБСЕ с просьбой поддержать изложенные выше принципы урегулирования и оказать содействие в их реализации, включая направление миссий по установлению фактов и наблюдателей.

Москва, 3 сентября 1992 года

ЗА РОССИЙСКУЮ ФЕДЕРАЦИЮ

ЗА РЕСПУБЛИКУ ГРУЗИЯ

Согласились:

Г. С. ХИЖА
А. В. КОЗЫРЕВ
П. С. ГРАЧЕВ
А. М. МИРЗАБЕКОВ
М. М. МАГОМЕДОВ
В. М. КОКОВ
Х. М. КАРМОКОВ
В. Н. САВЕЛЬЕВ
В. И. ХУБИЕВ
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А. А. ДЖАРИМОВ

В. Г. АРДЗИНБА
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Т. К. КИТОВАНИ
А. Д. ЧИКВАИДЗЕ

А. Х. ТЛЕУЖ
В. Н. ДЬЯКОНОВ
Е. С. КУЗНЕЦОВ
В. Ф. ЧУБ



Совет Безопасности

Distr.
GENERAL

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RUSSIAN
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

ЗАПИСКА ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЯ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

После консультаций, состоявшихся 10 сентября 1992 года, Председатель Совета Безопасности сделал от имени Совета следующее заявление для средств массовой информации:

"Члены Совета Безопасности, заслушав информацию, представленную Генеральным секретарем, и изучив Заключительный документ московской встречи между Президентом Российской Федерации и Председателем Государственного Совета Республики Грузии, состоявшейся 3 сентября 1992 года, выражают свое удовлетворение усилиями участников встречи, направленными на достижение немедленного прекращения огня, преодоление кризисной ситуации и создание условий для всеобъемлющего политического урегулирования в Абхазии, ставшей районом вооруженного конфликта.

Члены Совета, подчеркивая настоятельную необходимость политического урегулирования конфликта мирными средствами путем переговоров, вновь подтверждают недопустимость любого посягательства на принцип территориальной целостности и на международно признанные границы Грузии и необходимость уважения прав всех людей, представляющих все этнические группы в регионе. Они приветствуют возобновление нормальной работы законных органов власти в Абхазии.

В этой связи члены Совета приветствуют принципы урегулирования, содержащиеся в вышеупомянутом Заключительном документе, и дают высокую оценку предусмотренным в нем конкретным мерам, направленным на урегулирование в Абхазии. Они призывают все стороны, участвующие в конфликте, и все другие заинтересованные стороны строго соблюдать достигнутые в Москве соглашения.

Члены Совета принимают к сведению намерение Генерального секретаря направить миссию доброй воли и просят его периодически информировать Совет о событиях в Абхазии".



Совет Безопасности

Distr.
GENERAL

S/24633
8 October 1992
RUSSIAN
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

ПИСЬМО ГЕНЕРАЛЬНОГО СЕКРЕТАРЯ ОТ 7 ОКТЯБРЯ 1992 ГОДА
НА ИМЯ ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЯ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

Имею честь сослаться на заявление Председателя Совета Безопасности от 10 сентября 1992 года (S/24542) по вопросу о конфликте в Абхазии. В этом заявлении, в частности, отмечалось мое намерение направить миссию доброй воли в Грузию. В нем также содержалась просьба в мой адрес периодически информировать Совет о развитии ситуации в Абхазии.

Миссия доброй воли под руководством г-на Густава Фессела, Директора Департамента по политическим вопросам, была совершена 12-20 сентября 1992 года. В Тбилиси миссия встретила с г-ном Эдуардом Шеварднадзе, Председателем Государственного совета Республики Грузия, г-ном Александром Чиквадзе, министром иностранных дел, и г-ном Сандро Кавсадзе, заместителем премьер-министра, а также с представителями Государственного совета и нескольких политических партий. Миссия также посетила Сухуми, столицу Абхазии, где ей удалось провести беседы с представителями Верховного совета Абхазии, в частности с его первым заместителем Председателя. Кроме того, миссия посетила город Гудауту, в котором в настоящее время находится правительство абхазской группы в Верховном совете. В Гудауте миссия имела продолжительные беседы с Председателем Верховного совета г-ном Владиславом Ардзинбой. В ходе своего пребывания в Сухуми и Гудауте миссия также встретила с представителями Международного комитета Красного Креста (МККК). По возвращении в Тбилиси миссия вновь имела беседу с г-ном Шеварднадзе и встретила с представителями дипломатических кругов.

По возвращении в Нью-Йорк миссия представила мне подробный доклад, содержащий ее наблюдения и выводы. Для сведения членов Совета имею честь приложить к настоящему письму резюме этого доклада.

Как Вы знаете, положение в Абхазии значительно ухудшилось в последние дни. Вновь вспыхнули жестокие бои, угрожающие миру и безопасности региона. Совет был информирован о том, что я вчера получил письмо заместителя Председателя Государственного совета Грузии, в котором подчеркивается серьезность ситуации и содержится просьба об оказании поддержки со стороны Организации Объединенных Наций (S/24626).

Учитывая серьезное ужесточение абхазского конфликта, я намерен в срочном порядке направить в этот район новую миссию Организация Объединенных Наций, возглавляемую заместителем Генерального секретаря.

Эта миссия сообщит сторонам о серьезной озабоченности международного сообщества в связи с боевыми действиями, вспыхнувшими в Абхазии и угрожающими поддержанию международного мира и безопасности в этом регионе. Она подчеркнет насущную необходимость скорейшего и полного осуществления соглашения от 3 сентября. В этой связи миссия изучит средства, с помощью которых Организация Объединенных Наций сможет обеспечивать осуществление этого соглашения, в том числе направление в район гражданских и/или военных наблюдателей. В состав миссии будут входить несколько наблюдателей, которые останутся на месте в целях обеспечения первоначального присутствия Организации Объединенных Наций.

Бутрос БУТРОС ГАЛИ

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Приложение

РЕЗЮМЕ ДОКЛАДА МИССИИ ДОБРОЙ ВОЛИ, НАПРАВЛЕННОЙ В ГРУЗИЮ
(12-20 сентября 1992 года)

[Подлинный текст на английском языке]

Положение в Абхазии

1. Причинами нынешнего кризиса в Абхазии можно считать широко распространившиеся с начала текущего года саботаж и мародерство в Абхазии и Западной Грузии, которые, как было сообщено миссии, причинили материальный ущерб на сумму приблизительно 11 млрд. рублей и практически перерезали пути сообщения между Грузией и Российской Федерацией - ее основным торговым партнером; а также действия руководства этнических абхазов, связанные с провозглашением ими бывшей Абхазской Автономной Советской Социалистической Республики независимой республикой.
2. На положение в Абхазии значительное влияние оказывают усилия бывшего президента Гамсахурдия по дестабилизации правительства Грузии, присутствие в Абхазии значительного числа боевиков с Северного Кавказа и поставки из этого региона в целях поддержки абхазской стороны, а также легкодоступность оружия, значительная часть которого, по-видимому, поступает из расположенных здесь подразделений вооруженных сил Содружества Независимых Государств (СНГ). Наличие грузинских полувоенных формирований и отсутствие дисциплины в грузинских вооруженных силах еще более обостряют данную проблему.
3. Абхазия расположена в северо-западной части Грузии, и ее население составляет около 540 000 человек, из которых лишь около 18 процентов являются абхазами. Большинство населения составляют грузины (около 47 процентов), другие группы населения включают армян (около 18 процентов) и русских (около 13 процентов).
4. Отношения между грузинами и абхазами были более или менее напряженными на протяжении многих десятилетий (следует отметить, что абхазы этнически связаны с горными племенами Северного Кавказа, а не с грузинами. Значительная доля абхазов исповедует ислам, как и жители Северного Кавказа). Совсем недавнее внешнее проявление этой напряженности имело место в 1978 году, когда абхазами была организована кампания за отделение Абхазской Автономной Республики от Грузинской Советской Социалистической Республики и включение ее в состав Российской Советской Федеративной Социалистической Республики. Пойти на это отказались как Российская Федерация, так и Грузия, однако абхазам были предоставлены существенные льготы, включая непропорциональное представительство в Верховном Совете Абхазии. Эти льготы в свою очередь привели к тому, что среди грузин все шире распространялось, как стало совершенно очевидно в настоящее время, мнение что абхазы пользуются несправедливо установленным преференциальным режимом. В 1989 году вновь

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выдвигались требования об отделении Абхазии от Грузии и предоставлении ей статуса полноправной союзной республики, который она имела с 1921 по 1930 год. Отрицательная реакция Грузии привела к первой вспышке инцидентов с применением насилия, в результате которой погибло значительное число людей.

5. События, приведшие к дезинтеграции Советского Союза и независимости Грузии, еще более вдохновили сторонников абхазской независимости. В августе 1990 года Верховный Совет Абхазии, в отсутствие представителей грузинского населения, объявил Абхазию суверенной республикой в составе Советского Союза, независимой от Грузии. Это решение сразу же объявил недействительным Верховный Совет Грузии.

6. В тот период, когда на посту президента находился г-н Гамсахурдия, между абхазским руководством и правительством Грузии было достигнуто согласие о принятии нового закона о выборах, в соответствии с которым абхазам, составляющим 18 процентов населения, предоставлялось 28 мест в Верховном Совете Абхазии, грузинам, составляющим 47 процентов населения, - 26 мест, а остальным 35 процентам населения (главным образом армянам и русским) - 11 мест. Закон гласил, что важные решения должны приниматься большинством в две трети голосов. В декабре 1991 года на основе этого закона о выборах был избран новый состав Верховного Совета. Однако этот новый закон не ослабил политической напряженности. Напротив, в течение первого полугодия 1992 года Верховный Совет Абхазии раскололся на две противостоящие фракции (грузинскую и абхазскую, 11 представителей армянского и русского населения почти поровну разделялись между этими двумя фракциями), и Верховный Совет полностью прекратил функционировать как единое целое.

7. Когда в середине 1992 года правительство Грузии пришло к выводу, что полиция не в состоянии контролировать продолжающийся саботаж и мародерство, оно приняло решение направить в Абхазию 2000 грузинских военнослужащих, при этом было объявлено, что они направляются с целью защиты железной дороги и других путей сообщения. Г-н Шеварднадзе подчеркивал, что передислокация войск в пределах своей территории является суверенным правом Республики Грузия. Он сказал членам миссии, что он по телефону сообщил об этих мерах г-ну Ардзинбе.

8. Когда грузинские войска вошли в Абхазию 14 августа 1992 года, разразились ожесточенные боевые действия, в ходе которых около 200 человек погибли и сотни людей были ранены. Г-н Шеварднадзе указал, что, стремясь ограничить масштабы конфликта, он приостановил продвижение грузинских вооруженных сил через всю территорию Абхазии, и за это решение подвергся критике со стороны различных политических лидеров в Грузии. С началом боевых действий абхазское руководство покинуло Сухуми и переехало в Гудауту, где оно базируется в настоящее время. В результате актов насилия до 40 000 человек различного этнического происхождения в Абхазии стали беженцами и перемещенными лицами.

9. Признавая, что у абхазского народа есть законные претензии, г-н Шеварднадзе в то же время подчеркнул, что нападение на грузинские войска не было спровоцированным, и он считает, что оно было запланировано заранее. Он заявил, что северокавказские боевики прибыли в Абхазию до начала боевых действий. Он добавил, что несколько ранее в текущем году, когда правительство

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Грузии было занято проблемами положения в Южной Осетии, абхазское руководство неоднократно провоцировало власти в Тбилиси, предпринимая такие шаги, как создание национальной гвардии в составе 400-500 человек, сформированной только из этнических абхазов.

10. Г-н Ардзинба утверждал, что объявленная причина ввода грузинской армии в Абхазию была для правительства Грузии лишь поводом, чтобы "подавить" народ Абхазии. Он отрицал, что перед вступлением грузинских войск на территорию Абхазии с ним связывался по телефону г-н Шеварднадзе. Г-н Ардзинба заявил, что распад Советского Союза, независимость Грузии и принятие ее конституции 1921 года привели к образованию правового вакуума, который Абхазия имела право заполнить путем провозглашения своей независимости.

Соглашение от 3 сентября

11. В соглашении, подписанном 3 сентября в Москве Президентом Ельциным и Председателем Государственного Совета Шеварднадзе, с положениями которого согласились абхазские лидеры, включая г-на Ардзинбу, в частности, обеспечивается территориальная целостность Республики Грузия, с 5 сентября 1992 года вступает в силу прекращение огня, создается Комиссия по контролю и инспекции в составе представителей Грузии, Абхазии и Российской Федерации для обеспечения соблюдения положений данного соглашения, предусматривается разоружение и удаление незаконных вооруженных формирований, проникших на территорию Грузии из-за пределов республики, предусматривается сокращение численности вооруженных сил Грузии в Абхазии до согласованного уровня, необходимого для охраны железных дорог и других определенных объектов, содержится призыв произвести обмен задержанными лицами, заложниками и пленными до 10 сентября 1992 года, содержится призыв устранить помехи на путях свободного движения товаров и лиц, обеспечить условия для возвращения беженцев в места их постоянного жительства и принять меры по розыску лиц, пропавших без вести, предлагается обеспечить возобновление к 15 сентября 1992 года нормальной деятельности законных органов власти в Абхазии и содержится обращение к Организации Объединенных Наций и Совещанию по безопасности и сотрудничеству в Европе (СБСЕ) с просьбой поддержать принципы этого соглашения.

12. Г-н Шеварднадзе подчеркнул важность соглашения от 3 сентября и призвал к полному осуществлению его положений. Он обвинил абхазскую сторону в продолжающейся практике нарушения положения о прекращении огня, в частности вдоль реки Взыбь в Северной Абхазии. Было отмечено, что положение о прекращении огня сохраняется вдоль реки Гумиста, где трехсторонней Комиссией удалось дислоцировать между двумя сторонами российские войска. Он подчеркнул, что вопросы прекращения огня и вывода северокавказских нерегулярных формирований неразрывно связаны, и подтвердил готовность Грузии сократить численность своих войск до согласованного уровня, необходимого для охраны железных дорог и других объектов. Он призвал в срочном порядке созвать парламент Абхазии в Сухуми или другом городе Абхазии и провести тайное голосование по вопросу о том, должно ли нынешнее руководство оставаться у власти.

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13. Г-н Шеварднадзе согласился с необходимостью обеспечения автономии Абхазии и сохранения ее самоуправляющегося статуса. Вместе с тем он подчеркнул, что решение этого вопроса должно предусматривать сохранение территориальной целостности Грузии и быть приемлемым как для абхазов, так и для грузин.

14. Г-н Ардзинба подчеркнул, что он был вынужден подписать соглашение от 3 сентября, которое он назвал прогрузинским документом. Он заявил, что Абхазия не является частью Грузии и что положение соглашения об обеспечении территориальной целостности Грузии не имеет никакого отношения к Абхазии. Он обвинил Грузию в продолжающейся практике нарушения положений этого соглашения и заявил, что грузинские войска по-прежнему осуществляют нападения на гражданских лиц и занимаются массовыми грабежами.

15. Г-н Ардзинба заявил, что необходимо обеспечить вывод всех грузинских войск с территории Абхазии, прежде чем можно будет осуществить другие аспекты данного соглашения, включая вывод северокавказских боевиков и возобновление деятельности абхазских властей. Он призвал провести прямые переговоры с Тбилиси для установления конфедеративной и федеративной структур в том или ином виде.

Замечания

16. Ситуация в Абхазии по-прежнему остается крайне напряженной и взрывоопасной и чревата последствиями, которые легко могут выйти за пределы национальных границ Грузии. Положения соглашения от 3 сентября по-прежнему в основном не выполнены. Правопорядок в Абхазии в значительной мере подорван. Если позволить этой проблеме еще более обостриться, то она может приобрести этнический и религиозный аспекты и привести к вовлечению в конфликт соседних стран.

17. В основе возможного мирного урегулирования данной проблемы путем переговоров по-прежнему должно лежать оперативное осуществление соглашения. Оказание международным сообществом помощи могло бы способствовать тому, чтобы побудить обе стороны к соблюдению условий соглашения и выработке политического урегулирования абхазского вопроса, которое было бы справедливым для всех участвующих в конфликте сторон.



Совет Безопасности

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ЗАПИСКА ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЯ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

После консультаций с членами Совета Безопасности Председатель Совета сделал следующее заявление от имени Совета на его 3121-м заседании 8 октября 1992 года в связи с рассмотрением Советом пункта, озаглавленного "Положение в Грузии":

"Совет Безопасности с озабоченностью принял к сведению доклад Генерального секретаря о положении в Грузии от 7 октября 1992 года (S/24633). Он благодарит Генерального секретаря за полезную информацию, содержащуюся в этом документе. Он выражает свою серьезную обеспокоенность в связи с ухудшением в последнее время положения в Грузии. Он призывает все стороны немедленно прекратить боевые действия и соблюдать условия соглашения, заключенного 3 сентября 1992 года в Москве, которое подтверждает, что обеспечивается территориальная целостность Грузии, предусматривает прекращение огня, обязательство сторон не прибегать к применению силы и составляет основу для полномасштабного политического урегулирования.

Совет поддерживает решение Генерального секретаря направить, в ответ на просьбу правительства Грузии, еще одну миссию в Грузию, которую возглавит заместитель Генерального секретаря, в сопровождении сотрудников Секретариата, некоторые из которых останутся на месте. Он утверждает мандат, предложенный Генеральным секретарем в его письме от 7 октября. Совет ожидает представления Генеральным секретарем доклада после возвращения его миссии из Грузии и выражает готовность рассмотреть рекомендации, которые Генеральный секретарь намеревается представить ему относительно того вклада, который Организация Объединенных Наций могла бы внести в осуществление соглашения от 3 сентября.

Совет отмечает, что нынешний Председатель СБСЕ намеревается в ближайшее время направить миссию в Грузию и подчеркивает необходимость обеспечения координации между усилиями Организации Объединенных Наций и усилиями СБСЕ, направленными на восстановление мира."

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Совет Безопасности

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ПИСЬМО ГЕНЕРАЛЬНОГО СЕКРЕТАРЯ ОТ 10 НОЯБРЯ 1992 ГОДА
НА ИМЯ ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЯ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

Имею честь сослаться на заявление Председателя Совета Безопасности о положении в Грузии от 8 октября 1992 года (S/24637). В этом заявлении Совет поддержал решение Генерального секретаря направить еще одну миссию в Грузию, утвердил предложенный для нее мандат, отметил, что он ожидает представления Генеральным секретарем доклада по итогам этой миссии, и выразил готовность рассмотреть его рекомендации относительно того вклада, который Организация Объединенных Наций могла бы внести в осуществление соглашения от 3 сентября 1992 года.

Миссию, которая находилась в Грузии с 13 по 16 октября 1992 года, возглавлял г-н Антуан Бланка, Генеральный директор Отделения Организации Объединенных Наций в Женеве, в ее состав входил также г-н Густав Фессел, Директор Европейского отдела Департамента по политическим вопросам.

Я рассмотрел доклад, представленный мне миссией, включая содержащиеся в нем выводы и замечания. В приложении к настоящему и с удовлетворением препровождаю для сведения членов Совета резюме этого доклада.

Спустя три недели после посещения Грузии первой миссией Организации Объединенных Наций положение там резко ухудшилось. После возобновления боевых действий 1 октября и прекращения соблюдения соглашения от 3 сентября (S/24523, приложение) Грузия оказалась на грани конфликта, в который могут быть втянуты соседние страны. Если положение не улучшится, велика вероятность разгорания крупного конфликта. Последние события, по-видимому, отрицательно сказались на отношениях между Грузией и Российской федерацией и поэтому подорвали усилия президента Ельцина по содействию урегулированию. Настоятельная необходимость проведения между соответствующими сторонами встречи на высшем уровне для возобновления действия соглашения от 3 сентября является очевидной.

В ответ на предложение Совета о том, чтобы Генеральный секретарь представил рекомендации относительно того, каким образом Организация Объединенных Наций могла бы содействовать осуществлению соглашения от

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3 сентября, я хотел бы высказать мнение, что Организация Объединенных Наций, в рамках поддержки усилий президента Ельцина, могла бы оказать сторонам помощь в восстановлении взаимного доверия, устранении препятствий на пути мирного процесса, начатого на встрече в Москве, ослабления явной подозрительности в отношениях между сторонами и в пресечении очевидного все большего стремления полагаться больше на силу, нежели на урегулирование путем переговоров.

Совет, возможно, пожелает призвать стороны провести, не выдвигая предварительных условий, встречу на самом высоком уровне в целях обеспечения действенного прекращения огня и возобновления мирного процесса в соответствии с соглашением от 3 сентября. Он мог бы рекомендовать, чтобы, если стороны того пожелают, Организация Объединенных Наций приняла участие в такой встрече в качестве наблюдателя, выполняя функции свидетеля и посредника, и таким образом оказала сторонам содействие в восстановлении доверия в рамках процесса, который они сами разработали, и тем самым помощь в обеспечении действенного прекращения огня и достижении путем переговоров такого урегулирования, которое было бы справедливым для всех соответствующих сторон. Такая встреча могла бы также предоставить идеальную возможность для обсуждения вопроса о возможном направлении наблюдателей Организации Объединенных Наций для контроля за осуществлением соглашения.

Тем временем, в соответствии с предложением, содержащимся в моем письме от 7 октября (S/24633) и поддержанным в заявлении Председателя (S/24637), в Грузии остались два сотрудника Организации Объединенных Наций для обеспечения первоначального присутствия Организации Объединенных Наций. В их функции входит обеспечение присутствия Организации Объединенных Наций в Грузии, поддержание непрерывных контактов со всеми соответствующими сторонами, представление Центральным учреждениям Организации Объединенных Наций ежедневных докладов о развитии положения и обеспечение двусторонней связи между Организацией Объединенных Наций и сторонами.

В настоящее время присутствие Организации Объединенных Наций в Грузии дополнительно расширяется с открытием в этом месяце в Тбилиси объединенного временного отделения, которое будет также уделять особое внимание помощи в области развития и информационной поддержке.

Вутрос БУТРОС-ГАЛИ

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Приложение

Резюме доклада миссии в Грузию

1. По прибытии в Тбилиси 13 октября 1992 года миссия встретила с Председателем Государственного совета Республики Грузия г-ном Эдуардом Шеварднадзе, премьер-министром Тенгизом Сигуа, министром обороны Тенгизом Китовани и заместителем премьер-министра Саидо Кавсадзе. Она также встретила с членами дипломатического корпуса. 14 октября участники миссии прилетели в столицу Абхазии Сухуми, где г-н Джаба Иоселиани, заместитель Председателя Государственного совета Грузии, и другие лица провели для них брифинг о положении в данном районе; была также организована встреча с представителями Верховного Совета Абхазии, в том числе с первым заместителем Председателя. В тот же день участники миссии прилетели в Гудауту, где они встретились с Председателем Верховного Совета Абхазии г-ном Владиславом Ардзинбой и рядом его коллег. Во время нахождения в Сухуми и Гудауте участники миссии также встречались с представителями Международного комитета Красного Креста (МККК). Затем участники миссии вернулись в Тбилиси, где 15 октября состоялась вторая встреча с г-ном Шеварднадзе, в ходе которой были рассмотрены последние события и обсуждены выводы миссии и возможные последующие меры. Миссия отбыла из Грузии 16 октября.

Нынешнее положение

2. Со времени проведения первой миссии Организации Объединенных Наций в Грузию в сентябре (см. S/24633) положение в Абхазии серьезно ухудшилось. Имели место ожесточенные столкновения, шло наращивание военного потенциала, обе стороны обвиняют друг друга в самых серьезных нарушениях прав человека, и представляется, что все в большей степени закрепляется психология, характерная для военного времени. Кроме того, ухудшились отношения между Грузией и Российской Федерацией, которая выступала в качестве посредника при заключении соглашения от 3 сентября, что подрывает мирный процесс. В том случае, если существующее положение не будет исправлено, в ближайшее время Грузия может оказаться на грани более крупного конфликта, в который, возможно, будут втянуты соседние страны.

3. Положение в Абхазии, описанное в предыдущем докладе, оставалось практически без изменений, и какого-либо прогресса в деле осуществления соглашения от 3 сентября не было достигнуто вплоть до 1 октября, когда абхазские силы при поддержке боевиков с Северного Кавказа захватили город Гагру и за короткое время установили контроль над районом, простиравшимся от северной линии прекращения огня вдоль реки Бзыбь до границы с Российской Федерацией на севере и западе. В то же время также возобновились столкновения на южной линии прекращения огня вдоль реки Гумиста, всего лишь в трех километрах к северу от абхазской столицы Сухуми. Кроме того, абхазские и северокавказские силы совершили нападение на город Очамчир, расположенный приблизительно в 55 км к юго-востоку от Сухуми. Если абхазцам удастся захватить Очамчиру, это может привести к падению Сухуми, и таким образом под контролем абхазцев окажется около 80 процентов Абхазии. По-прежнему существующая опасность такого развития событий, не говоря уже о возможности

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реального падения Сухуми, может подтолкнуть к началу крупных военных действий, которые могут вовлечь весь регион в крупный конфликт, возможно, с участием соседних стран.

Положение с осуществлением соглашения от 3 сентября

4. Предыдущая миссия Организации Объединенных Наций уже подчеркивала, что в значительной степени соглашение от 3 сентября так и осталось практически неисполненным. После этого соглашение, по-видимому, перестало соблюдаться полностью. Соглашение о прекращении огня, которое должно было вступить в силу 5 сентября и которое никогда не было полностью осуществлено, окончательно перестало соблюдаться после нападения абхазских и северокавказских сил, совершенного 1 октября. Кроме того, не были обеспечены, вопреки положениям соглашения, разоружение, расформирование и вывод незаконных северокавказских вооруженных формирований и групп. Фактически их численность, по всей вероятности, возросла, и они по-прежнему беспрепятственно передвигаются через границу. Также оказалось невозможным осуществить положение, предусматривавшее, что после вступления в силу соглашения о прекращении огня численность вооруженных сил Грузии, присутствующих в районе конфликта, не будет превышать согласованного уровня, необходимого для защиты железной дороги и некоторых других объектов в Абхазии.

5. Возобновление военных действий привело к возникновению новой волны беженцев и к взаимным обвинениям обеих сторон в актах жестокости, совершаемых в отношении гражданского населения. Обе стороны призвали, чтобы эти обвинения расследовала международная комиссия. Грузинские власти заявили, что захват Гагры вынудил приблизительно 30 000 грузин, русских и армян искать спасения в Российской Федерации. Кроме того, возможность падения Сухуми обусловила значительный отток населения из этого города.

Попытки восстановления действия соглашения от 3 сентября

6. В первой половине октября президент Российской Федерации Борис Ельцин пригласил г-на Эдуарда Шеварднадзе, Председателя Государственного совета Грузии, и представителей других сторон соглашения от 3 сентября, включая г-на Ардзинбу, встретиться в Сухуми 13 октября в целях обеспечения возобновления соблюдения данного соглашения. В этой связи министр иностранных дел Грузии Чиквадзе прибыл в Москву для обсуждения вопросов подготовки этой встречи с министром иностранных дел Российской Федерации Козыревым. Эти обсуждения не привели к каким-либо результатам, так как участники не смогли преодолеть разногласия. Продолжают предприниматься усилия на рабочем уровне.

Позиция правительства Грузии

7. Председатель Государственного совета г-н Шеварднадзе заявил, что Грузия по-прежнему выступает в поддержку полного осуществления соглашения от 3 сентября, однако при этом он призвал к восстановлению статус-кво, существовавшего до возобновления военных действий, т.е. до 1 октября. В этой связи он добавил, что Организация Объединенных Наций могла бы сыграть важную роль в поддержке осуществления упомянутого соглашения посредством направления

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наблюдателей, а также обеспечения своего присутствия в качестве наблюдателя на будущих встречах, в частности таких, как встреча, которую предлагает провести президент Ельцин.

8. Г-н Шеварднадзе заявил о том, что Грузия была обманута в том, что касается соглашения от 3 сентября. По его мнению, другие стороны не выполнили свои обязательства по этому соглашению. Он особо отметил тот факт, что возобновление военных действий абхазской стороной 1 октября ограничило возможности политического урегулирования конфликта. Он подчеркнул, что один из ключевых вопросов заключается в том, признаёт ли международное сообщество территориальную целостность Грузии, а значит и ее право размещать войска в пределах своих собственных границ.

9. Г-н Шеварднадзе выразил глубокую озабоченность враждебными намерениями противозаконной "Конфедерации горских народов Кавказа", созданной в северокавказском регионе Российской Федерации, в том числе ее намерением сделать Сухуми своей столицей. Он сказал, что его особенно беспокоят намерения лидера Чеченской Республики генерала Дудаева, под командованием которого, по сведениям г-на Шеварднадзе, находятся подразделения военно-воздушных сил в составе порядка 150 самолетов. Он заявил о том, что для обеспечения вывода из Абхазии незаконных северокавказских формирований, численность которых уже достигла порядка 3000 человек, не принимается никаких мер. Он подчеркнул необходимость обеспечения эффективного контроля на границе между Российской Федерацией и Грузией.

Позиция Абхазии

10. Председатель Верховного совета Абхазии г-н Владислав Ардзинба согласился с тем, что соглашение от 3 сентября должно выполняться. Однако он отметил, что существует проблема его толкования. Он напомнил о том, что 3 сентября на встрече в Москве он настаивал на том, чтобы все грузинские войска были выведены из Абхазии. Это не сделано. В этой связи он указал, что он предпочел бы заключить новое соглашение, в котором содержалось бы недвусмысленно сформулированное положение о выводе всех грузинских войск из Абхазии.

11. Г-н Ардзинба заявил, что он отнюдь не добивается отделения Абхазии от Грузии, и подчеркнул необходимость прямых переговоров между двумя сторонами с целью достигнуть согласия по вопросу об их взаимоотношениях. Он заявил, что он признает принцип территориальной целостности, однако считает, что следует также уважать и право на самоопределение.

12. Г-н Ардзинба признал, что его сторона получает помощь извне, в частности от так называемой "Конфедерация горских народов Кавказа".

13. Г-н Ардзинба напомнил о том, что Абхазия заявила о своем собственном "суверенитете" еще до принятия Республики Грузии в Организацию Объединенных Наций, и с сожалением отметил, что эта международная организация не обратила на этот факт никакого внимания. Он заявил, что в Абхазии Организация Объединенных Наций могла бы сыграть весьма важную роль, если бы она проявила беспристрастность в решении вопросов, затрагивающих абхазскую сторону.

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Замечания

14. Весьма неустойчивая и потенциально взрывоопасная ситуация, о которой сообщала предшествующая миссия Организации Объединенных Наций, явно ухудшилась. Грузия оказалась на грани серьезного конфликта, в который могут быть втянуты соседние страны. Если такое развитие событий не обратить вспять и не восстановить доверие к мирному процессу, начало которому положено соглашением от 3 сентября, это, по-видимому, неизбежно приведет к крупномасштабным военным действиям.



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ДОКЛАД ГЕНЕРАЛЬНОГО СЕКРЕТАРЯ О ПОЛОЖЕНИИ
В АБХАЗИИ, РЕСПУБЛИКА ГРУЗИЯ

ВВЕДЕНИЕ

1. В заявлении Председателя Совета Безопасности о положении в Грузии от 10 сентября 1992 года содержалась просьба о том, чтобы я периодически информировал Совет о событиях в Абхазии (см. S/24542). Настоящий доклад был подготовлен в соответствии с этой просьбой Совета Безопасности.
2. Настоящий доклад содержит обновленные данные о событиях, связанных с Абхазией, за период после представления моего письма от 10 ноября 1992 года, в которое было включено резюме доклада о деятельности последней миссии Организации Объединенных Наций в Грузии (S/24794). В этом письме я указал, что по сравнению с тем периодом, когда в сентябре 1992 года эту страну посетила первая миссия Организации Объединенных Наций, положение в связи с абхазской проблемой драматически усугубилось. Я указал, что после того, как 1 октября абхазская сторона возобновила боевые действия, соглашение от 3 сентября 1992 года было нарушено, а также предложил возможные пути оказания Организацией Объединенных Наций содействия в осуществлении соглашения от 3 сентября, включая размещение наблюдателей в целях контроля за его соблюдением.
3. Я также информировал Совет о том, что в соответствии с ранее выдвинутым мною предложением (S/24633), которое было утверждено Советом Безопасности (S/24637), два сотрудника Организации Объединенных Наций остались в Грузии после завершения миссии в середине октября 1992 года, с тем чтобы обеспечить первоначальное присутствие там Организации Объединенных Наций. Кроме того, в ноябре 1992 года в Тбилиси, Грузия, было открыто объединенное временное представительство Организации Объединенных Наций. В настоящем докладе учитывается информация, полученная от должностных лиц Организации Объединенных Наций, находящихся в Грузии.

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ПОЛОЖЕНИЕ НА МЕСТЕ

4. Интенсивность военных действий между грузинскими и абхазскими силами по-прежнему оставалась на высоком уровне. За исключением короткого девятидневного периода (20-29 ноября 1992 года), в течение которого удалось добиться относительного прекращения огня, с тем чтобы обеспечить вывод некоторых российских военных частей из района Сухуми, боевые действия продолжались с прежней интенсивностью.

5. После того, как в начале октября город Гагра был захвачен абхазскими войсками, основные линии военной конфронтации между грузинскими и абхазскими силами оставались практически без изменений. Грузинские войска оказались не в состоянии вновь взять под свой контроль утраченные территории, а абхазские войска не смогли захватить столицу Абхазии Сухуми, которая регулярно подвергалась обстрелу абхазскими подразделениями. В конце декабря 1992 года правительство Грузии объявило в Сухуми чрезвычайное положение.

6. Начиная с середины октября 1992 года боевые действия между абхазскими и грузинскими силами сосредоточивались в двух основных районах, где обозначились линии военного противостояния. Одна из таких линий фронта протекает в районе реки Гумиста к северу от Сухуми. Ее протяженность составляет порядка 12 км; она протекает от черноморского побережья до деревни Ахашени. Девятидневное соглашение о прекращении огня, о котором говорится в пункте 2, распространялось лишь на шестикилометровый участок к востоку от Черного моря от этой линии конфронтации, протекающей вдоль реки Гумиста. С конца ноября 1992 года в районе реки Гумиста имели место интенсивные обстрелы, в ходе которых использовалась артиллерия, многоствольные ракетные установки, минометы и танки. Кроме того, обе стороны постоянно укрепляли свои позиции вдоль этой линии. Помимо этого, более частыми стали обстрелы вне этого региона, которые были направлены на близлежащие деревни, и в частности на город Сухуми. По сообщениям обеих сторон, имели место многочисленные жертвы и большой материальный ущерб. Практически каждый день подвергаются обстрелу гражданские жилые районы, что приводит к увеличению числа жертв и потоков беженцев.

7. В начале января абхазские войска впервые добились успеха в ходе наступательной операции по границе Грузии в районе реки Гумиста. Как сообщалось, абхазские подразделения захватили часть деревни, однако в течение нескольких часов они были отброшены на другой берег реки грузинской стороной. В середине января абхазские войска предприняли очередное нападение с Черного моря с использованием малых катеров, оснащенных тяжелыми пулеметами и ракетными установками. Эта попытка высадить ограниченные по численности подразделения на территорию, контролируемую Грузией, также не увенчалась успехом.

8. Активные боевые действия также имеют место в регионе, расположенном между городами Очамчира и Ткварчели. В этом горном районе линия фронта четко не обозначена. Рельеф местности благоприятствует военным действиям, подобным партизанским. Грузинская сторона установила контроль над районом к югу и востоку от города Очамчира, который расположен на расстоянии примерно 55 км к юго-востоку от Сухуми на Черном море. Грузины также контролируют побережье между Очамчирой и рекой Кодори, которая расположена примерно в 20 км к

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юго-востоку от Сухуми. Абхазские войска, со своей стороны, контролируют район Очамчиры к востоку от побережья, а именно район от Очамчиры в направлении города Ткварчели.

9. Деревня Тамиз, расположенная примерно в 10 км к северо-западу от Очамчиры, оказалась в центре текущих боевых действий, направленных на установление контроля над прибрежной дорогой, и в особенности над железной дорогой, соединяющей Абхазию с Тбилиси, столицей Грузии. В начале декабря 1992 года в этом районе активизировались боевые действия, и обе стороны утверждали, что они начали наступательную операцию, но ни одна из сторон не смогла добиться существенных территориальных приобретений. Однако время от времени абхазским войскам удавалось отрезать контролируемые Грузией дороги, пролегающие вдоль побережья.

10. В первой половине января 1993 года в этом районе вновь наблюдалась активизация военных действий. Представляется, что грузинские войска успешно расширили свой контроль (на несколько километров) на побережье между Очамчирой и рекой Кодори.

11. Имели место сообщения о более активном использовании в районах боевых действий зенитных ракет. Сообщалось, что обе стороны получили в свое распоряжение ракеты САМ класса "земля-воздух", в результате чего были сбиты два грузинских вертолета. Кроме того, были сбиты один российский военный вертолет, а также российский самолет "СУ-25".

12. Особенно серьезный инцидент имел место 14 декабря 1992 года, когда над абхазской территорией потерпел крушение российский вертолет, в результате чего погибли примерно 60 человек, в основном женщины и дети. Причины, повлекшие за собой этот инцидент, по-прежнему являются невыясненными.

13. Власти Грузии неоднократно высказывали свою обеспокоенность в связи с тем, что некоторые из российских военных подразделений, дислоцированных в Абхазии, поддерживают абхазские силы. В этой связи г-н Шеварднадзе сделал несколько публичных заявлений с требованием о том, чтобы российские войска в Абхазии были поставлены под непосредственное командование Закавказского военного округа российских вооруженных сил, штаб которого находится в Тбилиси.

14. Грузинские и абхазские силы по-прежнему обвиняют друг друга в серьезных нарушениях прав человека в Абхазии. Обе стороны обратились с просьбой о направлении международной комиссии для расследования этих обвинений.

ПОЛОЖЕНИЕ В ГУМАНИТАРНОЙ ОБЛАСТИ

15. Боевые действия в Абхазии, которые продолжают с прежней интенсивностью, привели к тому, что десятки тысяч мирных жителей из этого региона оказались на положении беженцев, и создали серьезную гуманитарную ситуацию в районах конфликта, которая усугубляется зимними условиями. Поступили сообщения о том, что в некоторых частях Абхазии сложилась чрезвычайная гуманитарная ситуация, в особенности в районе находящегося под контролем Абхазии, но блокируемого грузинскими силами города Ткварчели, население которого увеличилось в результате прибытия большого числа беженцев.

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16. Два должностных лица Организации Объединенных Наций в Грузии посетили район Ткварчели в сопровождении представителя Международного комитета Красного Креста (МККК). Им сообщали, что крайне необходимо доставить в этот район основные продукты питания, товары медицинского назначения и зимнюю одежду. Российская Федерация предложила поставить в этот район в чрезвычайном порядке продовольствие, которое будет перевозиться российскими вертолетами с опознавательными знаками Красного Креста из российского города Сочи в Ткварчели. К Организации Объединенных Наций была обращена просьба рассмотреть возможность направления в этот район небольшого числа наблюдателей в целях контроля за погрузкой, транспортировкой и разгрузкой продуктов питания. Временное представительство Организации Объединенных Наций в Тбилиси в срочном порядке обсуждает этот вопрос со всеми заинтересованными сторонами и, как ожидается, представит конкретные предложения в Центральные учреждения ООН.

17. Помимо этого, по просьбе правительства Грузии в конце января 1993 года в Грузию, в том числе в Абхазию, прибудет миссия Организации Объединенных Наций по оценке гуманитарных потребностей. В состав этой миссии, координация деятельности которой будет осуществляться Департаментом по гуманитарным вопросам (ДГВ), войдут представители ЮНИСЕФ, УВКБ и МПП.

ПОСЛЕДНИЕ СОБЫТИЯ

18. После представления моего последнего доклада Совету я получил два письма от Председателя Парламента и главы Государства Грузии г-на Эдуарда Шеварднадзе. В своем письме от 11 ноября 1992 года г-н Шеварднадзе, в частности, указал, что конфронтация в Абхазии приобрела более острый характер и число жертв увеличивается. Г-н Шеварднадзе также указал, что остается мало времени для мирного урегулирования конфликта. Исходя из этого, он настоятельно призвал Совет Безопасности принять меры в поддержку мирного урегулирования абхазского кризиса (см. S/24802).

19. В своем письме от 25 декабря 1992 года г-н Шеварднадзе высказал глубокую обеспокоенность в связи с тем, что эскалация конфликта в Абхазии может повлечь за собой дестабилизацию положения во всем кавказском регионе. В частности, он отметил, что проникновение нерегулярных формирований и военные поставки с севера кавказского региона Российской Федерации, направленное на поддержку абхазских сил, продолжают. Г-н Шеварднадзе вновь просил включить вопрос об абхазском конфликте в повестку дня Совета Безопасности и, учитывая возможность эскалации конфликта, предложил обсудить его на официальном заседании Совета. Он заявил, что Совет Безопасности, возможно, пожелает принять резолюцию, предусматривающую, в частности, направление в Абхазию сил Организации Объединенных Наций по поддержанию мира. Кроме того, он счел необходимым, чтобы Совет обратился ко всем государствам - членам Организации Объединенных Наций с призывом не допускать каких-либо посягательств на территориальную целостность Республики Грузии (см. S/25026).

20. Для решения вопросов, поднятых в его письме от 25 декабря 1992 года, г-н Шеварднадзе направил в Организацию Объединенных Наций специального представителя г-на Сандро Кавсадзе в целях проведения консультаций с Председателем и членами Совета Безопасности, а также с должностными лицами

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Секретариата относительно возможных будущих шагов, которые могут быть предприняты Организацией Объединенных Наций в поддержку возобновления мирного процесса, а также присутствия при обсуждении этого вопроса на заседаниях Совета. Согласно письму г-на Шеварднадзе специальный представитель подчеркнул заинтересованность его правительства в более активном участии Организации Объединенных Наций в оживлении мирного процесса.

21. В ходе своих бесед с должностными лицами Организации Объединенных Наций специальный представитель обратил внимание на следующее: 1) правительство Грузии желает возобновить мирный процесс на основе соглашения от 3 сентября и готово согласиться на безотлагательное прекращение огня при условии восстановления статус-кво до абхазского нападения 1 октября 1992 года; 2) правительство Грузии хотело бы, чтобы Организация Объединенных Наций разместила своих наблюдателей/силы по поддержанию мира в целях наблюдения за грузинско-российской границей в Абхазии и охраны железной дороги и путей сообщения в Абхазии. В данном контексте грузинские должностные лица указали, что открытие вновь этой транспортной магистрали будет также в значительной степени отвечать интересам Армении; 3) правительство Грузии приветствовало бы добрые услуги Генерального секретаря по изучению абхазской проблемы и вынесению рекомендаций в отношении мирного урегулирования. Правительство Грузии выражает готовность последовать этим рекомендациям при том понимании, что они обеспечивают уважение территориальной целостности и суверенитета Грузии, а также прав человека всех граждан Грузии.

ЗАМЕЧАНИЯ

22. В период после представления моего письма Совету 10 ноября 1992 года положение в Абхазии еще более ухудшилось. Продолжающиеся боевые действия создают серьезную угрозу сохранению международного мира и безопасности во всем кавказском регионе и за его пределами. Вспышка межэтнических столкновений в начале ноября 1992 года между североосетинскими и ингушскими силами в северокавказском регионе Российской Федерации, которая послужила причиной введения Президентом Ельциным временного чрезвычайного положения, является еще одним свидетельством наличия потенциально взрывоопасной ситуации на Кавказе. Как я указывал в моем последнем докладе Совету, если эту ситуацию не удастся урегулировать, вероятность возникновения крупного конфликта будет весьма высокой.

23. Соглашение от 3 сентября по-прежнему является наилучшей основой для возобновления мирного процесса. Тем не менее восстановление жизнеспособного мирного процесса в Абхазии на основе положений соглашения от 3 сентября может потребовать более активной поддержки со стороны международного сообщества в целях содействия достижению сторонами соглашения о прекращении огня и выработки путей политического урегулирования.

24. С этой целью я рассматриваю возможность направления в Грузию новой миссии в целях обзора положения в Абхазии, с тем чтобы провести оценку общей политической ситуации. В рамках этой миссии можно было бы также обсудить и предоставить рекомендации в отношении практических вопросов, включая немедленное прекращение огня и контроль за его соблюдением с уделением особого

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внимания границе между Грузией и Российской Федерацией в Абхазии, а также охране железной дороги и путей сообщения в Абхазии. Я, возможно, также направлю в Абхазию миссию по установлению фактов, касающихся прав человека, в целях расследования заявлений о якобы имевших место нарушениях прав человека обеими сторонами. Если Совет Безопасности поддержит этот курс действий, я предприму их, как только это станет практически возможным.



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ЗАПИСКА ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЯ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

После консультаций с членами Совета Безопасности Председатель Совета сделал следующее заявление от имени Совета на его 3169-м заседании, состоявшемся 29 января 1993 года, в связи с рассмотрением Советом пункта, озаглавленного "Положение в Грузии":

"Совет Безопасности с удовлетворением принимает к сведению доклад Генерального секретаря о положении в Абхазии, Республика Грузия (S/25188)

Совет выражает свою глубочайшую обеспокоенность по поводу дальнейшего ухудшения положения в Абхазии и призывает все стороны немедленно прекратить боевые действия и честно соблюдать и выполнять условия Соглашения от 3 сентября 1992 года, в котором подтверждается, что территориальная целостность Грузии должна быть обеспечена, предусматривается прекращение огня и принятие сторонами обязательства не прибегать к применению силы и которое представляет собой основу для общего политического решения.

Совет разделяет мнение Генерального секретаря о том, что восстановление жизнеспособного мирного процесса в Абхазии на основе Соглашения от 3 сентября 1992 года может потребовать более активной поддержки со стороны международного сообщества в целях содействия достижению сторонами соглашения о прекращении огня, возвращении беженцев и выработке политического урегулирования, и в этом контексте Совет вновь заявляет о своей поддержке текущих усилий, предпринимаемых с этой целью Совещанием по безопасности и сотрудничеству в Европе (СБСЕ).

С этой целью Совет поддерживает предложение Генерального секретаря о направлении в Грузию новой миссии для изучения положения в Абхазии и подчеркивает необходимость обеспечения эффективной координации между деятельностью Организации Объединенных Наций и деятельностью СБСЕ, направленной на восстановление мира. Совет полагает, что необходимо дать оценку общей политической ситуации и обсудить практические вопросы, такие,

как немедленное прекращение огня и наблюдение за его соблюдением, контроль за границей между Грузией и Российской Федерацией в Абхазии и охрана железных дорог и путей сообщения в Абхазии, а также представить рекомендации в этой связи.

Совет также поддерживает предложение Генерального секретаря о направлении в Абхазию миссии по установлению фактов в целях рассмотрения заявлений о якобы имеющих место нарушениях международного гуманитарного права обеими сторонами.

Совет просит Генерального секретаря представить доклад о результатах работы миссии и предложить меры по укреплению режима прекращения огня и обеспечению общего политического урегулирования".



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ПИСЬМО ГЕНЕРАЛЬНОГО СЕКРЕТАРЯ ОТ 5 МАЯ 1993 ГОДА
НА ИМЯ ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЯ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

Имею честь сослаться на заявление Председателя Совета Безопасности от 29 января 1993 года в связи с рассмотрением Советом положения в Грузии (S/25198). В этом заявлении Совет Безопасности выразил свою глубочайшую обеспокоенность по поводу дальнейшего ухудшения положения в Абхазии и призвал все стороны немедленно прекратить боевые действия и честно соблюдать и выполнять условия Московского соглашения от 3 сентября 1992 года (S/24523).

В своем заявлении Совет Безопасности разделял также мое мнение, выраженное в моем докладе о положении в Абхазии (S/25188), о том, что восстановление жизнеспособного мирного процесса на основе Соглашения от 3 сентября 1992 года может потребовать более активной поддержки со стороны международного сообщества. С этой целью Совет поддержал мое предложение о направлении в Грузию новой миссии для изучения положения в Абхазии, оценки общей политической ситуации и обсуждения практических вопросов, таких, как немедленное прекращение огня и наблюдение за его соблюдением, контроль за границей между Грузией и Российской Федерацией в Абхазии и охрана железных дорог и путей сообщения в Абхазии, а также для представления рекомендации в этой связи. Совет подчеркнул в этом плане необходимость обеспечения эффективной координации между деятельностью Организации Объединенных Наций и деятельностью Совещания по безопасности и сотрудничеству в Европе (СБСЕ).

С учетом нынешнего положения в Абхазии, которое еще более усугубилось с момента принятия заявления Председателя от 29 января 1993 года, я пришел к тому выводу, что направление еще одной выездной миссии, как я предусматривал первоначально, не является адекватной мерой в попытке оживить мирный процесс. Я полагаю, что необходимы более сконцентрированные усилия для установления прочного прекращения огня и для возобновления процесса политических переговоров.

В соответствии с этим после проведения необходимых консультаций я решил назначить посла Эдуарда Бруннера (Швейцария) моим Специальным представителем по Грузии. Его задачи, с учетом Соглашения от 3 сентября 1992 года, будут включать следующее:

- а) достижение соглашения о прекращении огня;

- b) оказание сторонам содействия в оживлении процесса переговоров с целью найти политическое решение конфликту;
- с) обеспечение поддержки со стороны соседних стран и других заинтересованных сторон в достижении вышеуказанных целей.

Я просил посла Бруннера представить мне доклад о достигнутых результатах по истечении первоначального периода в три месяца, после чего я приму решение о том, следует ли продолжать срок его назначения.

Посол Бруннер, который планирует совершить свою первую поездку в регион во второй половине текущего месяца, будет тесно консультироваться с действующим Председателем СБСЕ.

Буду признателен за доведение настоящего вопроса до сведения членов Совета Безопасности.

Бутрос БУТРОС-ГАЛИ



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ДОКЛАД ГЕНЕРАЛЬНОГО СЕКРЕТАРЯ О ПОЛОЖЕНИИ В АБХАЗИИ, РЕСПУБЛИКА ГРУЗИЯ

ВВЕДЕНИЕ

1. Настоящий доклад подготовлен в соответствии с заявлением Председателя Совета Безопасности о положении в Республике Грузия от 10 сентября 1992 года, в котором меня просили периодически информировать Совет о событиях в Абхазии (см. S/24542). В докладе описываются активные усилия Организации Объединенных Наций по урегулированию этого конфликта после назначения моим Специальным представителем по Грузии посла Эдуарда Бруннера, Швейцария (см. S/25756).

I. МИССИЯ МОЕГО СПЕЦИАЛЬНОГО ПРЕДСТАВИТЕЛЯ

2. Мой Специальный представитель осуществил свою первую миссию в Республику Грузия в период с 20 по 25 мая 1993 года. В Тбилиси посол Бруннер и его группа встретились с Председателем Государственного совета Грузии и Главой государства г-ном Эдуардом Шеварднадзе. Кроме того, миссия вела переговоры с премьер-министром Грузии г-ном Тенгизом Сигуа и личным представителем г-на Шеварднадзе, Председателем Комитета по правам человека и межнациональным отношениям г-ном Сандро Кавсадзе. В столице Абхазии Сухуми миссия встретила с премьер-министром местного правительства и Председателем Военного совета, остающегося верным правительству в Тбилиси, г-ном Тамазом Надареишвили. Миссия встретила также с представителями Комитета по спасению Абхазии и членами Совета национального единства. В Гудауте, где находится резиденция абхазской стороны, миссия встретила с Председателем честного Верховного совета г-ном Владиславом Ардаинбой и его коллегами. До возвращения в Тбилиси миссия провела переговоры с министром обороны Грузии генералом Георгием Каркаршвили. В Тбилиси миссия провела повторные встречи с г-ном Шеварднадзе, г-ном Сигуа и г-ном Кавсадзе. Кроме того, она встретила с другими грузинскими руководителями и представителями дипломатического корпуса в Тбилиси.

3. После завершения своей миссии в Грузию посол Бруннер отправился в Стокгольм для консультации с министром иностранных дел Швеции и действующим Председателем Совета Конференции по безопасности и сотрудничеству в Европе (СБСЕ) г-жой Маргаретой аф Углас, а также с личным представителем действующего Председателя СБСЕ по Грузии венгерским послом Иштваном Дьярмати.

4. После переговоров с представителями СБСЕ мой Специальный представитель отправился в Москву, где встретился с министром иностранных дел Российской Федерации г-ном Андреем Козыревым и заместителем министра иностранных дел и личным представителем Президента Ельцина по Грузии г-ном Борисом Пастуховым.

Позиция правительства Грузии

5. В ходе переговоров с грузинскими властями в Тбилиси и Сухуми собеседники посла Бруннера особо подчеркнули свое желание, чтобы Организация Объединенных Наций играла основную роль в достижении мирного урегулирования конфликта в Абхазии на основе положений Московского соглашения от 3 сентября 1992 года (см. S/24523).

6. Правительство Грузии просило в срочном порядке направить в Абхазию группу военных наблюдателей Организации Объединенных Наций (ВНООН), с тем чтобы они вели наблюдение за прекращением огня, договоренность о котором была достигнута г-ном Шеварднадзе и г-ном Ельциным во время их встречи в Москве 14 мая 1993 года. Грузинские власти выразили также настойчивое желание, чтобы Организация Объединенных Наций принимала участие в наблюдении за выводом вооруженных формирований из Абхазии в соответствии с Соглашением от 3 сентября 1992 года, а также за границей между Грузией и Российской Федерацией.

7. Правительство Грузии горячо приветствовало возможный созыв мирной конференции по конфликту в Абхазии. Такая конференция, проводимая под эгидой Генерального секретаря Организации Объединенных Наций, должна, по их мнению, проводиться в рамках Соглашения от 3 сентября 1992 года.

Позиция абхазской стороны

8. Абхазские власти в Гудауте, во главе которых стоит г-н Владислав Ардзинба, выразили свою заинтересованность в том, чтобы Организация Объединенных Наций играла активную роль в достижении мирного урегулирования конфликта в Абхазии. Относительно возможного размещения ВНООН абхазская сторона выразила мнение, что в нынешних условиях такое размещение было бы преждевременным и что такой шаг должен предприниматься в рамках всеобъемлющего решения, включая вывод из Абхазии грузинских войск и нерегулярных формирований, прибывших из северокавказского региона. В этой связи абхазская сторона потребовала также политического восстановления власти, которую она считает законной властью Абхазии.

9. Абхазские власти решительно поддержали созыв мирной конференции под эгидой Организации Объединенных Наций, которая, по их мнению, должна проводиться на основе Соглашения от 3 сентября 1992 года.

Позиция Российской Федерации

10. На встрече в Москве с министром иностранных дел Козыревым и заместителем министра Пастуховым моему Специальному представителю было заявлено, что правительство России выступает за то, чтобы Организация Объединенных Наций играла активную роль в урегулировании конфликта в Абхазии. Российская сторона полностью одобрила идею безотлагательного размещения в Абхазии ВНООН. Вместе с тем министр Козырев заявил, что его правительство хотело бы продолжить изучение вопроса о возможном созыве мирной конференции Организации Объединенных Наций.

11. Впоследствии на встрече в Вене 15 июня 1993 года, в которой также участвовал посол Брункнер, г-н Козырев заявил мне, что на данном этапе у его правительства имеются серьезные оговорки в отношении мирной конференции Организации Объединенных Наций по конфликту в Абхазии. Он подчеркнул, что его правительство предпочитает продолжать прилагать усилия на региональном уровне в соответствии с Соглашением от 3 сентября 1992 года.

II. ПРОСЬБА ГРУЗИИ О РАЗМЕЩЕНИИ ВОЕННЫХ НАБЛЮДАТЕЛЕЙ

12. После этих событий мой Специальный представитель встретился 22 июня 1993 года в Брюсселе с главой грузинского государства. Г-н Шеварднадзе вновь подчеркнул необходимость принятия Организацией Объединенных Наций срочных мер. Он настоятельно призвал немедленно направить ВНООН с целью размещения их в контролируемом правительством районе Абхазии. Г-н Шеварднадзе подчеркнул, что такой шаг явился бы важной инициативой международного сообщества по предупреждению расширения очага напряженности; если нынешний конфликт не удастся погасить, он может охватить весь кавказский регион.

III. ЗАМЕЧАНИЯ

13. Обстановка в Грузии ухудшается. Продолжающиеся военные действия в Абхазии имеют опустошительные последствия для экономики страны и не позволяют правительству уделять необходимое внимание возможностям, появившимся в результате достижения независимости, и выделять в этой связи необходимые ресурсы. Настоятельно необходимо обуздать этот конфликт и добиться мирного урегулирования путем переговоров.

14. Как сообщалось в моем письме от 5 мая 1993 года на имя Председателя Совета Безопасности (см. S/25756), деятельность по выработке решения конфликта должна, по моему мнению, вестись по трем направлениям: укрепление прекращения огня (и, при необходимости, международное наблюдение за ним); обеспечение начала политического процесса переговоров, желательно под эгидой Организации Объединенных Наций; и оказание поддержки этим двум процессам со стороны соседних стран, среди которых важнейшее место занимает Российская Федерация.

Консультации, проведенные мною и моим Специальным представителем, показали, что грузинское правительство и его сторонники в Сухуми в полной мере разделяют все аспекты моего подхода, что абхазская сторона, возглавляемая г-ном Ардзинбой, выступает за конференцию, однако в настоящее время не поддерживает идею размещения военных наблюдателей, и что российская сторона выступает за размещение ВНООН, однако имеет оговорки относительно конференции, во всяком случае на данный момент.

15. До настоящего времени мой Специальный представитель представлял мой подход в качестве комплексного пакета, в котором размещение ВНООН увязывается с началом жизнеспособного политического процесса, и наоборот. Я разделяю точку зрения, которая нередко высказывается в Совете Безопасности, что Организации Объединенных Наций следует тщательно обдумывать свое решение, прежде чем начинать операцию по поддержанию мира, которая не увязана с политическим процессом, имеющим разумную перспективу успеха. Если это правило не соблюдается, то существует опасность, что Организация возьмет на себя бессрочные обязательства по поддержанию мира, от которых, возможно, будет трудно отказаться, не вызывая новых военных действий. Поэтому я не хотел бы рекомендовать размещение военных наблюдателей до того, как у меня появится возможность информировать Совет о том, что все, кого это касается, согласились участвовать в переговорах под эгидой Организации Объединенных Наций. По этой причине я решил после встречи с г-ном Козыревым 15 июня 1993 года отложить размещение пяти ВНООН, упомянутых в моем письме от 9 июня 1993 года на имя Председателя Совета Безопасности.

16. Однако я пришел к выводу, что такая позиция может привести к дальнейшей эскалации конфликта с потенциально серьезными последствиями для всего кавказского региона. Соглашение о прекращении огня от 14 мая вступило в силу 20 мая. Оно соблюдалось в течение приблизительно первых двух недель. Но в последние недели оно нарушается ежедневно, особенно вследствие артиллерийских обстрелов абхазской стороной Сухуми, столицы Абхазии, которая по-прежнему находится в руках верных правительству сил. Число жертв среди гражданского населения растет. Глава грузинского государства г-н Шеварднадзе озабочен неизбежным штурмом Сухуми через реку Гумиста, которая к северу от самого города является нейтральной территорией между противостоящими силами. Он просил осуществить превентивное размещение ВНООН в Сухуми и Очамчире (еще одном городе, удерживаемом правительственными силами, который имеет исключительно важное значение с точки зрения обороны Сухуми) в качестве первого шага по сдерживанию дальнейшей эскалации этого конфликта и содействию восстановлению прекращения огня. Как упоминалось выше, Российская Федерация поддерживает это предложение. Лидер абхазской стороны в Гудауте до сих пор выражает оговорки в отношении размещения ВНООН на территории, контролируемой его стороной, однако этот вопрос не возникнет, поскольку предлагаемое размещение будет осуществляться полностью на стороне, контролируемой правительством. Я, несомненно, попрошу тех, кто имеет влияние на абхазскую сторону, обеспечить, чтобы в отношении персонала Организации Объединенных Наций не совершалось никаких враждебных действий, и убедить эту сторону как можно скорее согласиться на размещение ВНООН и на своей стороне.

17. В полной мере сознавая опасности, связанные с размещением персонала Организации Объединенных Наций в районе, в котором согласованное прекращение огня не соблюдается, я в то же время считаю, что в данном случае риск является оправданным в силу неотложной необходимости в обуздании конфликта в Абхазии. Соответственно, я рекомендую разместить в Грузии, первоначально в Абхазии в районах Сухуми и Очамчире, группу ВНООН в количестве 50 человек под командованием Главного военного наблюдателя на уровне бригадного генерала. Мандат группы наблюдателей будет заключаться в следующем:

- a) препятствовать, путем превентивного размещения, дальнейшей эскалации конфликта в Абхазии, уделяя особое внимание городу Сухуми;
- b) использовать свои добрые услуги в целях восстановления действия соглашения о прекращении огня, которое вступило в силу 20 мая;
- c) докладывать и, по возможности, расследовать нарушения прекращения огня и принимать меры по восстановлению статус-кво;
- d) принимать меры по установлению контактов между грузинскими и абхазскими силами в целях предупреждения нарушений прекращения огня.

18. Если Совет Безопасности поддержит изложенную выше рекомендацию, я намереваюсь разместить 50 ВНООН как только правительства стран, предоставляющих войска, смогут их выделить ввиду угрожающей обстановки в районе Сухуми. В целях создания условий для этого я буду стремиться заручиться поддержкой правительства Российской Федерации в деле предоставления необходимого материально-технического обеспечения, особенно автотранспортных средств и средств радиосвязи, в качестве временной меры - из ресурсов бывшего штаба закавказского военного округа Советской Армии, который по-прежнему находится в Тбилиси.

19. Размещение группы военных наблюдателей будет осуществлено, разумеется, без ущерба для моих непрекращающихся усилий по началу мирного процесса с участием правительства Грузии, обеих сторон в Абхазии и Российской Федерации. В соответствии с недавно заключенным рамочным соглашением о сотрудничестве между Организацией Объединенных Наций и СБСЕ (A/48/185), я намерен предложить действующему Председателю СБСЕ направить на возможную мирную конференцию своего наблюдателя.

20. Предварительная смета расходов в связи с размещением ВНООН, рекомендованным в пункте 17 выше, вскоре будет распространена в виде добавления к настоящему докладу.



Совет Безопасности

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GENERAL

S/26032
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RUSSIAN
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

ЗАПИСКА ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЯ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

После консультаций с членами Совета Безопасности Председатель Совета Безопасности от имени Совета сделал на его 3249-м заседании 2 июля 1993 года следующее заявление в связи с рассмотрением Советом пункта, озаглавленного "Положение в Грузии":

"Совет Безопасности рассмотрел письмо главы государства Республики Грузия от 2 июля 1993 года относительно положения в Абхазии, Республика Грузия (S/26031). Совет выражает глубокую обеспокоенность в связи с сообщениями об активизации боевых действий в районе Сухуми. Совет призывает все стороны немедленно прекратить военные действия и соблюдать соглашение о прекращении огня от 14 мая 1993 года. Совет незамедлительно рассмотрит доклад Генерального секретаря от 1 июля 1993 года (S/26023) и содержащиеся в нем рекомендации".



Совет Безопасности

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ДОКЛАД ГЕНЕРАЛЬНОГО СЕКРЕТАРЯ О ПОЛОЖЕНИИ В АБХАЗИИ,
РЕСПУБЛИКА ГРУЗИЯ

Добавление

1. В настоящем добавлении говорится о событиях в Абхазии, происшедших в период после представления моего доклада от 1 июля 1993 года (S/26023). В его основу положена информация, получаемая ежедневно от представителя Организации Объединенных Наций в Тбилиси, а также от военнослужащего из состава его персонала, посетившего некоторые из районов боевых действий.
2. Абхазские силы возобновили артобстрел Сухуми ночью 1 июля и усилили его в 06 ч. 00 м. 2 июля, когда было выпущено более 100 снарядов. В 08 ч. 00 м. абхазские силы провели артиллерийский обстрел населенного пункта Гульрипши, расположенного между Сухуми и сухумским аэропортом. Начиная с того времени артиллерийский обстрел Сухуми продолжается, не ослабшая.
3. Позднее 2 июля примерно 300 абхазских комбатантов высадились с моря близ деревни Тамиш, расположенной в Очамчирском районе. Сообщается, что с того времени они продвигаются на север и создают угрозу Сухуми.
4. Абхазские силы также проявляли активность на фронте у реки Гумиста к северу от Сухуми. Утром 5 июля при поддержке артиллерии и авиации они предприняли подрыв пять атак на позиции грузинских сил близ деревень Шрома и Ахалшени. Был сбит один грузинский самолет Су-25, по сообщениям - ракетой с тепловой головкой самонаведения; грузинская сторона утверждает, что ею были уничтожены два абхазских вертолета. Сообщается, что в результате артиллерийского обстрела была уничтожена деревня Шрома, в районе которой продолжают тяжелые бои.
5. 6 июля Глава государства Грузии г-н Эдуард Шеварднадзе объявил в Абхазии перемирие, первоначально - на двухмесячный период.
6. Также 6 июля я получил письмо руководителя абхазских властей в Гудауте г-на Владислава Ардзинбы, в котором утверждалось, что артиллерийский обстрел 2 июля начали грузинские силы.

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7. В Москве проходят обсуждения с участием высокопоставленных представителей России, Грузии и Абхазии, направленные на возобновление оказавшегося недолгим прекращения огня, о котором была достигнута договоренность 14 мая и которое вступило в силу 20 мая. Сообщается, что обсуждения продвигаются медленно. Абхазская сторона настаивает не просто на прекращении огня, а на всеобъемлющем урегулировании конфликта и призывает к выводу всех грузинских войск из Абхазии. Предложения Грузии в отношении полной демилитаризации Абхазии наталкиваются на возражение абхазской стороны, которая желает сохранить существование своих сил.

8. В письме от 5 июля на имя заместителя Генерального секретаря по политическим вопросам г-н Ардзинба выразил свою признательность в связи с предлагаемым размещением в Абхазии военных наблюдателей Организации Объединенных Наций (ВНООН). Вместе с тем в его письме указывалось, что сначала обе стороны должны взять на себя обязательство относительно прекращения огня, вывода всех грузинских войск с "оккупированной Грузией территории" и всех "групп добровольцев" - из Абхазии и создания обеими сторонами необходимых условий для размещения и функционирования ВНООН.

9. Представляется, что потери велики. Согласно информации, поступившей 7 июля из госпиталей, расположенных в районе боевых действий, начиная со 2 июля 77 грузинских солдат было убито и 481 - ранено; за тот же период было убито 6 мирных жителей и ранено 43. Согласно подсчетам независимого наблюдателя, в одном из госпиталей в Гудауте находилось 250 раненых абхазцев.

ЗАМЕЧАНИЯ

10. С учетом этого очень серьезного ухудшения военной обстановки я считаю, что было бы неразумно приступать к фактическому размещению 50 военных наблюдателей, как предлагалось в моем докладе (S/26023), до тех пор, пока прекращение огня не будет восстановлено и не будет соблюдаться. В сложившихся обстоятельствах Совет Безопасности, возможно, пожелает уполномочить меня предпринимать все необходимые шаги с целью обеспечить возможность оперативного размещения наблюдателей, как только это условие будет выполнено.

11. Я по-прежнему убежден, что эти события еще более подчеркивают важное значение налаживания жизнеспособного мирного процесса, как только это будет практически осуществлено.

Резолюция 849 (1993)
от 9 июля 1993 года

Совет Безопасности,

рассмотрев доклад Генерального секретаря от 1 и 7 июля 1993 года¹,

ссылаясь на заявления, сделанные Председателем Совета Безопасности 10 сентября² и 8 октября³ 1992 года и 29 января 1993 года⁴ в отношении положения в Абхазии, Республика Грузия,

ссылаясь на Московское соглашение от 3 сентября 1992 года⁵,

одобряя подход, изложенный в письме Генерального секретаря от 5 мая 1993 года на имя Председателя Совета Безопасности⁶,

отмечая с обеспокоенностью недавнюю активизацию боевых действий вокруг Сухуми,

подтверждая заявление Председателя Совета Безопасности от 2 июля 1993 года⁷, в котором, в частности, Совет обратился ко всем сторонам с призывом соблюдать соглашение о прекращении огня от 14 мая 1993 года,

подчеркивая то значение, которое он придает в контексте размещения военных наблюдателей наличию и осуществлению прекращения огня и мирного процесса при эффективном участии Организации Объединенных Наций,

1. *с удовлетворением принимает к сведению* замечания, содержащиеся в докладе Генерального секретаря;
2. *просит* Генерального секретаря направить в регион своего специального посланника для оказания содействия в достижении соглашения об осуществлении прекращения огня и немедленно приступить к осуществлению необходимых подготовительных мероприятий, включая установление контактов с теми государствами-членами, которые могут предоставить наблюдателей, и отправку в район группы планирования, связанных с направлением в Грузию пятидесяти военных наблюдателей как только будет осуществлено прекращение огня;
3. *просит также* Генерального секретаря уведомить Совет — на предмет принятия им решения — о том, когда осуществлено прекращение огня и когда, на его взгляд, условия позволят разместить наблюдателей, и на этом этапе вынести рекомендации в отношении их мандата и заявляет о своей готовности оперативно принять меры по получении такого уведомления;
4. *приветствует* в этом контексте продолжающиеся усилия Генерального секретаря, направленные на то, чтобы начать мирный процесс с участием сторон в конфликте и с

участием правительства Российской Федерации как оказывающего содействие;

5. *поддерживает* продолжающееся сотрудничество Генерального секретаря с действующим Председателем Совещания по безопасности и сотрудничеству в Европе в их усилиях по установлению мира в регионе;

6. *призывает* правительство Республики Грузии без промедления приступить к обсуждению с Организацией Объединенных Наций соглашения о статусе сил, с тем чтобы способствовать скорейшему размещению наблюдателей после того, как Совет примет об этом решение;

7. *постановляет* продолжать активно заниматься этим вопросом.

Принята единогласно на 3252-м заседании.

Источник: *Официальные отчеты Совета Безопасности, Резолюции и решения за 1993 год.*

1. *Официальные отчеты Совета Безопасности, сорок восьмой год, Дополнение за июль, август и сентябрь 1993 года, документы S/26023 и Add.1 и 2.*

2. Там же, *сорок седьмой год, Дополнение за июль, август и сентябрь 1992 года, документ S/24542.*

3. Там же, *Дополнение за октябрь, ноябрь и декабрь 1992 года, документ S/24637.*

4. S/25198.

5. *Официальные отчеты Совета Безопасности, сорок седьмой год, Дополнение за июль, август и сентябрь 1992 года, документ S/24523.*

6. S/25756.

7. S/26032.

[Перечень резолюций Совета Безопасности, принятых в 1993 году](#)



Совет Безопасности

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ДОКЛАД ГЕНЕРАЛЬНОГО СЕКРЕТАРЯ ВО ИСПОЛНЕНИЕ
РЕЗОЛЮЦИИ 849 (1993) СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

ВВЕДЕНИЕ

1. В пункте 2 своей резолюции 849 (1993) от 9 июля 1993 года Совет Безопасности просил меня, в частности, "немедленно приступить к осуществлению необходимых подготовительных мероприятий, включая установление контактов с теми государствами-членами, которые могут предоставить наблюдателей, и отправку в район группы планирования, связанных с направлением в Грузию 50 военных наблюдателей как только будет осуществлено прекращение огня". В пункте 3 Совет просил меня также уведомить его членов - на предмет принятия ими решения, когда будет осуществлено прекращение огня и условия позволят разместить наблюдателей, и на этом этапе вынести рекомендации в отношении их мандата.

2. Во исполнение просьбы Совета я направил группу планирования для подготовки к развертыванию, в конечном счете, миссии военных наблюдателей. Группа во главе с бывшим помощником Генерального секретаря г-ном Джорджем Л. Шерри находилась в этом районе с 19 по 26 июля 1993 года. Независимо от группы планирования в этом районе с 28 по 31 июля, сразу же после вступления в силу прекращения огня, в рамках выполнения задач, определенных в пункте 2 резолюции 849 (1993), побывал также мой Специальный представитель посол Эдуард Бруннер. Настоящий доклад основан на рекомендациях, полученных мною как от посла Бруннера, так и от группы планирования.

3. 27 июля 1993 года, на следующий день после отъезда группы планирования из района и незадолго до прибытия туда посла Бруннера, было заключено новое соглашение о прекращении огня между правительством Грузии и абхазскими властями в Гудауте при посредничестве заместителя министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации г-на Бориса Пастухова, выполнявшего роль оказывающего содействие. Текст соглашения воспроизводится в приложении I к настоящему докладу. В нем вновь устанавливается прекращение огня с 28 июля 1993 года и предусмотрено прибытие международных наблюдателей в течение 10-15 дней после этой даты.

4. В этом соглашении, в частности, предусмотрена трехсторонняя "Объединенная комиссия", включающая представителей сторон, а также Российской Федерации. "Объединенной комиссии", которая должна быть создана к 5 августа 1993 года, поручается осуществлять надзор за установлением и соблюдением прекращения огня. В этих целях "Объединенная комиссия" создаст несколько трехсторонних грузинско-абхазско-российских "временных контрольных групп", которые будут осуществлять патрулирование на местах и надлежащим образом реагировать на нарушения прекращения огня. В соглашении предусматривается, что военные наблюдатели Организации Объединенных Наций, а также Сопредседатели по безопасности и сотрудничеству в Европе (СБСЕ) будут оказывать содействие в проверке соблюдения прекращения огня на местах и будут также участвовать в работе трехсторонней "Объединенной комиссии".
5. В соглашении предусматривается размещение "временных контрольных групп", которые должны установить тесный контакт с международными наблюдателями по прибытии в Сухуми, Гульрипш, Гудауту, Новый Афон, Ткварчели, Гагру и Гали и, возможно, в другие места. Международные наблюдатели будут также размещены вдоль рек Гумиста, Псоу и Ингури.
6. Стороны считают также необходимым пригласить в зону конфликта международные миротворческие силы для участия в поддержании режима прекращения огня и правопорядка. Эта задача будет также выполняться, возможно, после консультации с Организацией Объединенных Наций российским воинским контингентом, временно расположенным в этой зоне.

1. ДОКЛАД ГРУППЫ ПЛАНИРОВАНИЯ

7. В соответствии со своим мандатом группа планирования должна была осуществить подготовительные мероприятия, связанные с развертыванием в зоне конфликта между Республикой Грузия и Абхазией 50 военных наблюдателей для осуществления надзора за выполнением соглашения о прекращении огня, достигнутого между сторонами 14 мая 1993 года. Как было отмечено в моем докладе от 1 июля 1993 года (S/26023), наблюдатели должны быть направлены сразу же после вступления в силу прекращения огня. В силу условий, о которых говорится в моем докладе от 7 июля 1993 года (S/26023/Add.2), их развертывание осуществлено не было. Группа планирования должна была между тем подготовить подробный план, который позволил бы мне представить Совету Безопасности рекомендации в отношении мандата миссии по наблюдению в соответствии с пунктом 3 резолюции 849 (1993) Совета.
8. Группа побывала в Тбилиси, Сухуми, Гудауте и Очамчире; она имела встречи с грузинскими правительственными должностными лицами в Тбилиси и Сухуми, с абхазскими должностными лицами в Гудауте и с представителями Российской Федерации. Из-за обстрелов группа не смогла посетить ряд прифронтовых и других деревень.
9. В процессе своих контактов с представителями сторон в конфликте и представителем Российской Федерации, находящимся в Грузии, группа четко дала понять, что любые меры, имеющие последствия, выходящие за рамки мандата, изложенного в резолюции 849 (1993), потребуют санкции со стороны Совета Безопасности. Группа детально разъяснила концепцию миссии военных наблюдателей Организации Объединенных Наций в Грузии, обсудив также такие практические вопросы, как выбор мест для штаб-квартир и мероприятия по размещению наблюдателей и материально-техническому обеспечению операции.

1. ...

10. Председатель грузинского парламента, глава государства г-н Эдуард Шеварднадзе и другие правительственные должностные лица в Тбилиси подчеркивали важность скорейшего развертывания военных наблюдателей Организации Объединенных Наций. Они объяснили, что включение в соглашение о прекращении огня положения о "временных контрольных группах" продиктовано стремлением избежать вакуума, который в противном случае возник бы в период между вступлением в силу прекращения огня и развертыванием международных военных наблюдателей, - вакуума, который мог бы ввести одну из сторон в искушение начать военные действия, чтобы изменить территориальный статус-кво. По их мнению, "временные контрольные группы" должны оставаться в этом районе даже после размещения международных наблюдателей. Грузинские должностные лица высказали также мысль о том, что соглашение о прекращении огня от 27 июля 1993 года имеет хорошие шансы на успех, при том условии что правительство Российской Федерации обеспечит эффективное перекрытие границы в целях недопущения поступления оружия из Сочи, поставит заслон проникновению вооруженных групп с Северного Кавказа и будет способствовать справедливому урегулированию лежащих в основе всего политических вопросов. По заявлению российского посредника г-на Пастухова, все поставки оружия через границу организуются элементами, не контролируемые его правительством, которое, таким образом, будет приветствовать присутствие Организации Объединенных Наций в целях обеспечения прекращения такой деятельности.

11. Первоначально абхазские власти в Гудауте скептически отозвались о необходимости вовлечения Организации Объединенных Наций в конфликт: в конечном итоге они заявили о том, что не будут препятствовать развертыванию наблюдателей Организации Объединенных Наций в районах, контролируемых абхазскими силами.

II. КОНЦЕПЦИЯ ОПЕРАЦИИ

12. Если Совет Безопасности примет такое решение, то задачи, предусмотренные для военных наблюдателей в соглашении о прекращении огня, подписанном 27 июля 1993 года, могла бы осуществлять миссия военных наблюдателей Организации Объединенных Наций, которая получила бы название "Миссия Организации Объединенных Наций по наблюдению в Грузии" (МООННГ). Миссия действовала бы под командованием Организации Объединенных Наций, которое было бы возложено на Генерального секретаря с санкции Совета Безопасности. Командование и контроль на месте осуществлял бы главный военный наблюдатель (ГВН) в звании бригадного генерала, который назначался бы Генеральным секретарем с учетом мнения Совета Безопасности. Главный военный наблюдатель был бы подотчетен Генеральному секретарю.

13. МООННГ разместила бы свою штаб-квартиру в Сухуми. Были бы также созданы три секторальные штаб-квартиры (в Сухуми, Очамчире и на реке Псоу) и отделение связи в Тбилиси (см. карту в приложении II к настоящему докладу). Для эффективного выполнения своих функций по наблюдению МООННГ потребовалось бы сочетать использование стационарных наблюдательных пунктов и подвижных патрульных групп. Предполагается, что потребуются создание трех наблюдательных пунктов в Сухумском секторе и четырех патрульных групп в Очамчирском секторе. В дополнение к патрулированию на автомобилях будет использоваться вертолетное патрулирование. Кроме того, предполагается, что для осуществления контроля на переправах потребуется создать два контрольно-пропускных пункта на реке Псоу и один контрольно-пропускной пункт на реке Ингури. Для обеспечения контроля на переправах второстепенного значения будет осуществляться вертолетное патрулирование и

/...

выборочное патрулирование силами подвижных групп. Общая численность миссии составила бы 88 военнослужащих вместе с международным и местным вспомогательным персоналом.

14. Для выполнения своих функций военные наблюдатели должны обладать свободой передвижения и доступа, связи и проверки, а также обладать другими правами, необходимыми для решения возложенных на них задач. МООННГ и ее персоналу необходимо было бы также предоставить все соответствующие привилегии и иммунитеты, предусмотренные в Конвенции о привилегиях и иммунитетах Организации Объединенных Наций. Таким образом, чтобы обеспечить МООННГ возможности для эффективной работы необходимо будет заключить соглашение о статусе миссии с правительством Грузии, а также необходимые договоренности с абхазскими властями в Гудауте.

15. Я уже обратился к ряду правительств с просьбой предоставить военных наблюдателей для предполагаемой миссии. Как только я получу ответы от всех из них, я приму, по согласованию с Советом Безопасности, решение о составе миссии с учетом общепринятого принципа справедливого географического представительства. Я регулярно информировал бы Совет Безопасности о деятельности МООННГ. Все вопросы, которые могли бы отразиться на характере или процессе эффективного функционирования миссии по наблюдению, доводились бы до сведения Совета Безопасности на предмет принятия им соответствующих решений.

16. В кратчайшие возможные сроки я представлю добавление к настоящему докладу с изложением финансовых и административных последствий операции, описанной выше.

III. ЗАМЕЧАНИЯ

17. После того как 27 июля 1993 года было подписано соглашение (см. пункт 3 выше), 28 июля вступило в силу прекращение огня, которое, если не считать отдельных инцидентов, в целом соблюдается. Очевидно, что присутствие международных наблюдателей, предусматриваемое в соглашении, стало бы важным стабилизирующим фактором. Грузинское и российское правительства считают их присутствие крайне желательным, и абхазские власти в Гудауте дали на него согласие. В контексте пункта 3 резолюции 849 (1993) от 9 июля 1993 года и исходя из докладов, полученных от моего Специального представителя, я считаю, что в настоящее время сложились условия, позволяющие развернуть предлагаемую миссию военных наблюдателей, как это излагается в пунктах 12 и 13 выше. Перед ней будут стоять следующие задачи:

a) контроль за соблюдением соглашения о прекращении огня от 27 июля 1993 года;

b) оказание содействия в предотвращении любой эскалации боевых действий и уделение при этом особого внимания городу Сухуми;

c) поддержание канала связи с военными командующими сторонами в целях предупреждения нарушений прекращения огня;

d) расследование сообщений о нарушениях прекращения огня и осуществление усилий по урегулированию таких инцидентов на местах с участием соответствующих сторон;

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е) представление в Центральные учреждения докладов о ходе выполнения своих задач.

18. После тщательного рассмотрения результатов работы группы планирования я пришел к выводу, что отправки 50 военных наблюдателей, санкционированной резолюцией 349 (1993), которая была принята до заключения соглашения от 27 июля, будет недостаточно для контроля сложившейся с тех пор ситуации. Я согласен со сделанным группой планирования выводом о том, что размещение в дополнительных местах (вдоль рек Гумиста, Псоу и Ингури), которое предлагается в данном соглашении, позволит значительно повысить эффективность военной миссии Организации Объединенных Наций по наблюдению. В этой связи я рекомендую Совету Безопасности расширить мандат миссии, включив в него эти задачи в качестве одного из компонентов операции, и безотлагательно приступить к размещению 88 военных наблюдателей и вспомогательного персонала. Я рекомендую далее Совету Безопасности санкционировать создание МООННГ с таким расширенным мандатом. В этой связи я предлагаю назначить главным военным наблюдателем бригадного генерала Йохана Видегора (Дания).

19. Вместе с тем я хотел бы обратить внимание Совета на некоторые новые элементы в вышеупомянутом соглашении (пункты 3 и 4 выше), которые могут затронуть функционирование МООННГ. В пункте 2 соглашения предусматривается, что трехсторонние "временные контрольные группы", которые будут осуществлять наблюдение за режимом прекращения огня, войдут в тесный контакт с "международными наблюдателями". В пункте 3 предусматривается, что стороны обязуются пресекать нарушения, зафиксированные "временными контрольными группами", и что о нарушениях будет сообщаться Организации Объединенных Наций и СБСЕ. Хотя наблюдатели Организации Объединенных Наций и СБСЕ могут участвовать в "Объединенной комиссии", учреждаемой в соответствии с пунктом 4, подробные условия такого участия еще предстоит уточнить. В пункте 5 упоминаются "международные наблюдатели и миротворческие силы". В пункте 6 предусматривается временное размещение российского воинского контингента после консультации с Организацией Объединенных Наций.

20. Таким образом, в этом соглашении предполагается, по-видимому, своего рода совместное развертывание с участием других контингентов и групп, на которые также возлагается ответственность за поддержание режима прекращения огня и правопорядка. С согласия Совета в этот район направляется передовая группа миссии. Одна из ее задач будет заключаться в выяснении у сторон взаимосвязи МООННГ с этими подразделениями и сферы их соответствующих обязанностей и полномочий до полного развертывания миссии.

21. Я выражаю надежду, что помощь Организации Объединенных Наций в форме создания МООННГ позволит урегулировать нынешнюю ситуацию и будет способствовать скорейшему восстановлению мира, безопасности и стабильности в регионе путем переговоров, при проведении которых стороны могут пользоваться услугами моего Специального представителя, с тем чтобы можно было оперативно выполнить задачу МООННГ и распустить эту миссию.

1

Приложение I

СОГЛАШЕНИЕ О ПРЕКРАЩЕНИИ ОГНЯ В АБХАЗИИ И
МЕХАНИЗМЕ КОНТРОЛЯ ЗА ЕГО СОБЛЮДЕНИЕМ

Представители сторон в конфликте при посредничестве России согласились о следующем:

1. Участвующие в конфликте стороны с 12.00 часов 28 июля 1993 года возвращаются к строгому соблюдению режима прекращения огня и неприменения силы друг против друга в зоне конфликта, который был установлен на 20 мая сего года.

Запрещается какое-либо боевое применение авиации, артиллерии, плавучих средств, любой военной техники и оружия.

В зону конфликта (на территорию Абхазии) не будут вводиться дополнительные войска и другие вооруженные формирования, не будут проводиться мобилизация, несогласованные перемещения войск и иных формирований, завозиться оружие и боеприпасы, строиться объекты военной инфраструктуры.

2. С 29 июля 1993 года начинают функционировать грузино-абхазско-российские временные контрольные Группы (по 3-9 человек), персональный состав которых будет согласован сторонами.

Временные контрольные группы осуществляют наблюдение за соблюдением режима прекращения огня. Они размещаются в Сухуми, Гульрипше, Очамчире, Гудауте, Новом Афоне, Ткварчели, Гагре, Гали. В случае необходимости такие группы размещаются по согласию сторон и в других пунктах. Контрольные группы имеют право на доступ в любую интересующую их точку зоны конфликта после соответствующего уведомления сторон. Стороны в конфликте обеспечивают безопасность контрольных групп, создают условия для их проживания, предоставляют им средства передвижения.

Контрольные группы могут рассматривать обращения населения по различным вопросам.

По прибытии международных наблюдателей временные контрольные группы входят с ними в тесный контакт.

3. Каждая сторона в конфликте обязуется принимать незамедлительные, эффективные меры по пресечению любого допущенного ее формированиями нарушения режима прекращения огня, зафиксированного контрольными группами, оперативно реагировать на рекомендации и предложения контрольных групп.

О нарушениях обязательств, принятых по данному соглашению сторонами в конфликте, ставятся в известность ООН и СБСЕ.

4. До 5 августа 1993 года формируется Объединенная комиссия по урегулированию в Абхазии (ОК). Положение о ней утверждается сторонами. В работе Комиссии участвуют представители и наблюдатели от ООН, СБСЕ при их согласии.

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5. Стороны считают необходимым приглашение и использование в зоне конфликта международных наблюдателей и миротворческих сил. При этом имеется в виду, что численность и состав международных миротворческих сил будут определены по консультации с Генеральным секретарем и Советом Безопасности ООН при наличии согласия сторон.

6. Начинается поэтапная демилитаризация зоны конфликта.

В зону конфликта незамедлительно вводятся международные наблюдатели, и в течение 10-15 дней со дня прекращения огня с территории Абхазии будут выведены вооруженные формирования Республики Грузия.

В эти же сроки расформируются и выводятся из Абхазии вооруженные формирования, группы и лица, находящиеся в зоне конфликта.

Для охраны магистральных путей, важных объектов в соответствии с Итоговым документом Московской встречи 3 сентября 1992 года в зоне конфликта из местного населения формируется подразделение внутренних войск грузинской стороны, которое будет находиться на казарменном положении. Впоследствии это подразделение вместе с нижеупомянутым полком внутренних войск войдет в состав полинациональных внутренних войск Абхазии.

Вооруженные формирования абхазской стороны сводятся в полк внутренних войск, который переходит на казарменное положение и выполняет до полномасштабного урегулирования свойственные внутренним войскам функции (охрана магистральных путей, важных объектов).

Все вышеуказанные действия осуществляются под наблюдением Объединенной комиссии.

По рекам Гумиста, Псоу и Ингури выставляются международные наблюдатели.

Сразу после прекращения огня для поддержания общественного порядка в зоне конфликта создается полинациональная милиция, состав и численность которой определяются сторонами.

К поддержанию режима прекращения огня и правопорядка привлекаются международные миротворческие силы, а также, по консультации с ООН, российский воинский контингент, временно расположенный в зоне конфликта.

Стороны в конфликте гарантируют соблюдение прав многонационального населения.

Будут приняты меры для возвращения беженцев в места их постоянного проживания, оказания им помощи. Для оперативного решения задач, связанных с проблемой беженцев, Объединенная комиссия создает специальную группу.

7. Российские войска, временно находящиеся на территории Абхазии, соблюдают строгий нейтралитет.

Статус временного пребывания, условия функционирования, сроки и порядок вывода воинских формирований и пограничных войск Российской Федерации будут определены отдельными договорными документами.

Стороны обеспечивают безопасность российских военнослужащих и членов их семей.

8. В соответствии с Итоговым документом Московской встречи 3 сентября 1993 года стороны создадут условия для возобновления нормальной деятельности законных органов власти в Абхазии.

9. Стороны в конфликте под эгидой ООН и при содействии России безотлагательно продолжат переговоры по подготовке Соглашения о полномасштабном урегулировании конфликта в Абхазии.

В Соглашении будут отражены принципиальные вопросы поддержания мира, демилитаризации зоны конфликта, использования международных миротворческих сил, налаживания экономической жизни, поддержания правопорядка, привлечения к уголовной ответственности лиц, совершивших преступления против мирного населения, возвращения беженцев в места их постоянного проживания, соблюдения прав человека и национальных меньшинств, гарантий обеспечения политического статуса и государственного устройства Абхазии.

10. Участники настоящего Соглашения обязуются не использовать его положения, режим прекращения огня для действий, которые могли бы нанести ущерб интересам любого из них.

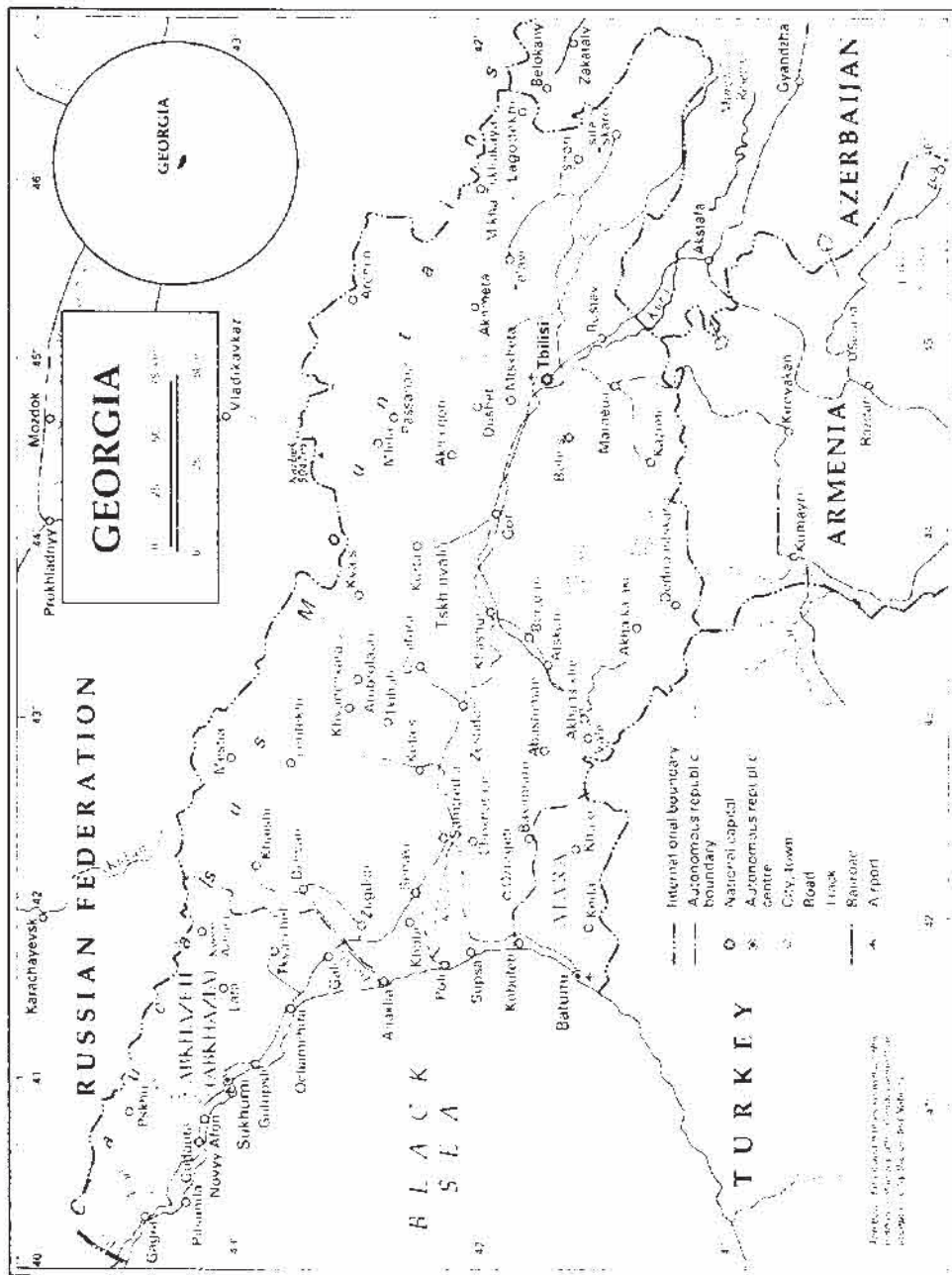
Сочи, 27 июля 1993 года

ЗА ГРУЗИНСКУЮ СТОРОНУ

ЗА АБХАЗСКУЮ СТОРОНУ

ЗА РОССИЙСКУЮ ФЕДЕРАЦИЮ

Приложение II
КАРТА ГРУЗИИ



Составлено по материалам
С.С.С.Р. 1991

Резолюция 854 (1993)
от 6 августа 1993 года

Совет Безопасности,

ссылаясь на свою резолюцию 849 (1993) от 9 июля 1993 года, в которой за Советом резервировалось решение о размещении военных наблюдателей после осуществления прекращения огня,

приветствуя состоявшееся 27 июля 1993 года подписание соглашения, устанавливающего прекращение огня в Абхазии, Республика Грузия,

1. *утверждает* предложение Генерального секретаря, содержащееся в его письме от 4 августа 1993 года на имя Председателя Совета Безопасности⁴, относительно скорейшего направления в регион передовой группы до десяти военных наблюдателей Организации Объединенных Наций, с тем чтобы она приступила к оказанию содействия в проверке соблюдения прекращения огня, как это установлено соглашением о прекращении огня, с истечением мандата группы в пределах трех месяцев, и предусматривает, что эта передовая группа будет включена в состав миссии Организации Объединенных Наций по наблюдению, если такая миссия будет официально создана Советом;

2. *ожидает* представления Генеральным секретарем доклада о предлагаемом учреждении миссии Организации Объединенных Наций по наблюдению, включая, в частности, подробную оценку стоимости и масштабов этой операции, сроки ее осуществления и предполагаемую дату завершения операции;

3. *постановляет* продолжать заниматься этим вопросом.

Принята единогласно на 3261-м заседании.

Источник: *Официальные отчеты Совета Безопасности, Резолюции и решения за 1993 год.*

1. *Официальные отчеты Совета Безопасности, сорок восьмой год, Дополнение за июль, август и сентябрь 1993 года*, документ S/26254.

[Перечень резолюций Совета Безопасности, принятых в 1993 году](#)

Резолюция 858 (1993)
от 24 августа 1993 года

Совет Безопасности,

ссылаясь на свою резолюцию 849 (1993) от 9 июля 1993 года, которая оставляла за ним решение о размещении наблюдателей после осуществления прекращения огня,

приветствуя подписание соглашения о прекращении огня между Республикой Грузией и силами в Абхазии от 27 июля 1993 года,

ссылаясь на свою резолюцию 854 (1993) от 6 августа 1993 года, в которой он утвердил направление передовой группы наблюдателей на период в три месяца,

рассмотрев доклад Генерального секретаря от 6 и 7 августа 1993 года¹,

вновь подтверждая прежние заявления, в которых подчеркивалось жизненно важное значение поддержания соглашений о прекращении огня, в частности заявление Председателя Совета Безопасности от 2 июля 1993 года²,

определяя, что продолжение конфликта в Грузии создает угрозу миру и стабильности в регионе,

отмечая, что стороны в конфликте взяли на себя обязательства о выводе сил из Абхазии и что этот вывод в настоящее время осуществляется,

1. *приветствует* доклад Генерального секретаря от 6 и 7 августа 1993 года;

2. *постановляет* учредить Миссию Организации Объединенных Наций по наблюдению в Грузии в соответствии с вышеупомянутым докладом в составе до восьмидесяти восьми военных наблюдателей и персонала минимальной численности для поддержки Миссии со следующим мандатом:

a) проверка выполнения соглашения о прекращении огня от 27 июля 1993 года с уделением особого внимания положению в городе Сухуми;

b) расследование сообщений о нарушениях прекращения огня и осуществление усилий по урегулированию подобных инцидентов с вовлеченными сторонами;

c) представление Генеральному секретарю докладов об осуществлении своего мандата, включая, в частности, нарушения соглашения о прекращении огня;

3. *постановляет*, что Миссия учреждается на период в шесть месяцев, с тем условием, что она будет продлена на период свыше первых девяноста дней только после проведения Советом обзора на основе доклада Генерального секретаря о том, был ли достигнут

существенный прогресс на пути к осуществлению мер, направленных на установление прочного мира;

4. *предлагает* Генеральному секретарю представить в надлежащее время — но в любом случае в течение трех месяцев — доклад о деятельности Миссии;

5. *постановляет* проводить постоянный обзор оперативных мер по осуществлению мандата, содержащегося в настоящей резолюции, в свете любых дальнейших рекомендаций, которые Генеральный секретарь может вынести в этой связи;

6. *приветствует* предлагаемое размещение временных контрольных групп из грузинско-абхазско-российских подразделений, призванных способствовать укреплению прекращения огня, и предлагает Генеральному секретарю содействовать сотрудничеству между наблюдателями Организации Объединенных Наций и этими подразделениями в рамках их соответствующих мандатов;

7. *призывает* все стороны соблюдать и осуществлять соглашение о прекращении огня от 27 июля 1993 года и полностью сотрудничать с Миссией и обеспечивать безопасность всего персонала Организации Объединенных Наций и всего другого персонала по поддержанию мира и гуманитарного персонала в пределах Грузии;

8. *призывает* правительство Республики Грузии без промедления заключить с Организацией Объединенных Наций соглашение о статусе сил, с тем чтобы способствовать размещению Миссии;

9. *предлагает* Генеральному секретарю — через его специального посланника — осуществлять энергичные усилия по содействию мирному процессу и переговорам, которые должны начаться как можно скорее и вести к достижению всеобъемлющего политического урегулирования;

10. *выражает свою постоянную поддержку* продолжающемуся сотрудничеству Генерального секретаря с действующим Председателем Совещания по безопасности и сотрудничеству в Европе в усилиях по установлению мира в Грузии и других местах этого региона;

11. *постановляет* продолжать заниматься этим вопросом.

Принята единогласно на 3268-м заседании.

Источник: *Официальные отчеты Совета Безопасности, Резолюции и решения за 1993 год.*

1. *Официальные отчеты Совета Безопасности, сорок восьмой год, Дополнение за июль, август и сентябрь 1993 года, документы S/26250 и Add.1.*

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ЗАПИСКА ПРЕДСЕДАТЕЛЯ СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

На 3279-м заседании Совета Безопасности, состоявшемся 17 сентября 1993 года, в связи с рассмотрением Советом пункта, озаглавленного "Положение в Грузии", Председатель Совета Безопасности сделал от имени членов Совета следующее заявление:

"Совет Безопасности выражает свою крайнюю обеспокоенность в связи со всплеском боевых действий в Абхазии, Республика Грузия, являющейся результатом наступлений абхазских сил на города Сухуми и Очамчирю.

Совет решительно осуждает это грубое нарушение абхазской стороной Сочинского соглашения о прекращении огня от 27 июля 1993 года, которое было достигнуто при посредничестве Российской Федерации и приветствовалось Советом Безопасности в резолюциях 854 (1993) от 6 августа 1993 года и 858 (1993) от 24 августа 1993 года.

Совет требует, чтобы абхазское руководство незамедлительно прекратило военные действия и безотлагательно отвело все свои силы к линии прекращения огня, согласованной в Сочи 27 июля 1993 года. Отказ выполнить эти меры может повлечь за собой серьезные последствия.

Совет настоятельно призывает все страны содействовать восстановлению прекращения огня и возобновлению мирного процесса.

Совет выражает свое настоятельное желание обеспечить всестороннее участие абхазской стороны в мирном процессе без дальнейшего промедления.

Переидаается по техническим причинам.

Совет принимает к сведению устный доклад Генерального секретаря от 17 сентября 1993 года о положении в Абхазии, Республика Грузия, и приветствует его намерение направить своего Специального представителя по Грузии в Москву и в этот район для оценки ситуации и нахождения пути к мирному урегулированию спора.

Совет ожидает скорейшего получения доклада Генерального секретаря"

Ethnic Processes in Shida Kartli (The Ossetians in Georgia)

Roland Topchishvili

Short survey about the ethnic situation in Georgia

Georgia has never been a mono-ethnic state. Drastic changes in the ethnic situation occurred due to the annexation of Georgia by Russia (1801). It was the purposeful politics of Tsarism to colonize a state with different ethnic groups, usually notwithstanding the will of the peoples, who had to transmigrate from their native lands. Besides, Tsarist Russia did not allow local population to exile to another place and did everything to force them leave their native lands (Abkhazian and Georgian Muslims exiling to Turkey for instance). The percentage of Georgians diminished constantly when it became a constituent of the Russian Empire. At the beginning of the 19. century, 90 % of the whole population were Georgians; By 1939, it diminished to 61 %. In the 19. century, ethnic Armenians, Greeks were resettled from the Osman Empire to Georgia and Russians and Germans. Earlier, Armenians settled in Georgia, basically in towns. Two strata of Armenians were distinguished: a) migrants and b) Georgian monophysists, nominated as Armenians. Georgian language was the mother tongue of both strata. They created books and documents in Georgian. The Jews living in Georgia called themselves "Georgian Jews", and differed from Georgians by religion. The Tatars (ancestors of modern Azeri) from Borchalo were respectful citizens of Georgia. They were devoted to the Georgian Kings and especially showed themselves under the reign of King Erekle II. A worthy man was warrior Khudia Borchaloeli, who actually became a national hero of Georgia.

The Abkhazian and Ossetian peoples

Before dealing with the principle issue – the migration of the Ossetians to Georgia and Georgian-Ossetians interrelations - it should be mentioned that Georgian-Abkhazian and Georgian-Ossetians relations (notwithstanding the facts of former forays from the North Caucasus) were friendly and neighborly, before their purposeful transmigration from the North Caucasus by the Russian empire. On the whole, historically in Georgia there had never been any facts of ethnic conflicts or confrontations between Georgians and other ethnic groups. According to one of the folk poems, there was no difference between Georgians and Armenians; Tatars and Georgians were brothers. The Russian Empire created confrontation among different ethnic groups in Georgia, due to the politics it accomplished in the country. Conflicts firstly were revealed in the 20. century. It must be highlighted that Georgian-Abkhazian and Georgian-Ossetian nuptial relations, characteristic of these peoples, were well manifested especially in the contact area of these ethnoses.

Precise information on the Ossetian migration to Georgia

For the last two or three decades, the history of Ossetian resettlement to Georgia has been constantly and purposefully disfigured and that was surely provoked by

the particular imperialistic forces. Unfortunately, Ossetian “warriors” inspired with hatred from childhood towards Georgians, who quasi had colonized their ancestral homeland, South Ossetia, used to blame Georgian feudal for invading Ossetia. Later Georgian social- democrats (Mensheviks) were blamed again for putting down the Ossetian rebellion provoked by the Russian Bolsheviks.

Before naming the real date of Ossetian migration to Georgia, the following should be noted:

1. For the last period, Ossetian historians give different dates about Ossetian resettlement in Georgia. Some assert that it happened five thousand years ago (Nafi Jusoit) but more moderate social scholars think that it happened between the 13. and 14. centuries. The others suggest different chronological periods between these two very distant dates. Recently one of the Soviet historians, Mark Bliev, distinguished himself by ignoring the historical sources and creating mythologemes via interpreting his imaginary ideas on the topic. According to Mark Bliev, Medieval Karthli (Iberian Kingdom) was nothing but a Georgian-Ossetian confederation. Some of the odious scholars go further and denominate the territory of the so-called “South Ossetian”, as Sarmatia. Such an odious statement is appalling to any historian.

2. Surely, history should have no importance in ethnic conflict resolution - people living on the territory of definite ethnos should be plenipotentiary members of the state (as Ossetian used to be in Georgia historically). It’s a fact that the Georgian-Ossetian conflict was evoked in the post Soviet period. It was not a classical ethnic conflict but provoked and controlled by the imperialistic forces. This was evidenced by introduction of extra historical themes that were crowned by the statements made by the Russian Duma in 2004 and later by the authorities. The essence of those statements is: Russia annexed North and South Ossetia simultaneously in 1774. I.e. “South Ossetia” had never been a part of Georgia. The purpose is clear: the imperialistic forces try to legitimize the annexation of Georgian territories. In this case, Ossetians were exploited as instruments. Actually, Russia violated interests of ethnic Ossetians and ethnic Georgians. This problem will be touched again but now, the real history is offered to the reader.

Historians have no doubt that the Ossetians are descendants of the Iranian Alans, though the final formation of the nation occurred after mixing with the local Caucasians in the Caucasian Mountains. Earlier the Alans had had similar contacts with other ethnos for example with people of Turkish and Mongolian origin. The ethno-genesis of Iranian language speaking Alans proceeded in Middle Asia. From this point of view, the Alans are mentioned firstly in Chinese sources of 2. century B.C. (Aleman, 2003), the horizon of which reached the Eastern part of the Caspian Sea. According to other classical authors, the Alans appeared in the 1. century A.D., since they had started nomadic life in the European part of Eurasia and had isolated from the Asian Alans. All the data existing in the world historical sources about the Alans, the ancestors of the Ossetians, are gathered in the work of the Catalonian author August Aleman, where the interested reader can find that the Alans (Ossetians) did not inhabit nearby territories of Georgia within the early Medieval Ages. Different sources distinguish the Asian and the European Alans. Those who led a nomadic life in the area of the river

Volga and the Azov Sea in the 4. century A.D. were annihilated by the Huns. Those who survived followed the Huns towards West. The others moved to the Caucasian valleys, where they settled down and formed a state. Since then onwards, Georgia had intensive relations with the Alans (Ossetians). The relations were neighborly and even dynasty marriages were made between them. More important was that the Georgian kings often hired Alan-Ossetians to repulse attacks from different enemies.

The second stage of Alan –Ossetians miserable history started in the 13. century. After Mongolian invasion, in spite of long resistance, the defeated Alan-Ossetians lost not only their statehood, but their area of inhabitation. Between the 13. - 14. centuries from steppes they moved to mountains. It should be mentioned that some Alans moved to the mountains after early medieval period. After the Huns invasions, they inhabited not only the North Caucasian Valleys, but also the West part of the Caucasus, in modern Karachay and the Balkan territories. The Digorian Ossetians of the late Middle Age are the descendents of those old resettled Ossetians. (The Ossetians who inhabited the North Caucasian Mountains lived in four communities: Digori, Alagiri, Kurtauli and Tagauri). Since the 13. - 14. centuries, the Alan-Ossetians settled down exactly in those three gorges: Alagiri, Kurtauli and Tagauri. The geographers called these territories the Central Caucasus. Modern Ossetian language has two dialects: Digorian, which is archaic, and Ironian.

Up to the 20. century, the Ossetians had no common endo-ethnonime. Those who lived in the three East Ossetian gorges, called themselves "Irons", and others living in the West, in Digori gorge, called themselves "Digorons". Digorons are firstly mentioned in "Armenian Geography" of the 7. century, but nothing is said about the Irons till the 17. century. N. Volkova, an ethnologist, mentions that the term "Iron" denoting the Eastern group of Ossetians is rarely met in historical sources but gives no explanation to it. It's easy to explain, if we precisely study the area of Alan-Ossetian tribes' inhabitation and the migratory directions from the early Middle Age to late Middle Age. Till the 12. - 14. centuries i.e. before Mongolian invasions, the Ossetians, more rightly their ancestor Alans, never inhabited the three above-mentioned gorges (Alagiri, Kurtauli, Tagauri). They formed their state in the valleys of the North Caucasus. As for the mountains of the North Caucasus, they lived in Digoria and in the Western territories of modern Balkaria and Karachay, since the early Middle Ages - 6.-7. centuries That is the basic reason why the Digorians are mentioned in early sources and not the Irons. According to one Balkarian legend, the ancestors of Digorian and Balkarian feudal, Badeliats and Basiats, were resettled from the North - Majari - the middle part of River Kumi.

But this does not mean that neighboring peoples perceived these two Ossetian ethnic groups as different peoples. Despite not having a common name, these Iranian language speaking people, living in the central part of the North Caucasus, had a common self-identity. As for the ethnonime- "Ossetians", it was spread by Georgians and besides Georgians nobody named them this way.

Nowadays, the Ossetian scientists mark out "Tuals", i.e. those living in Tualta. Tualta is the historical-ethnographical part of Georgia - Dvaleti - where the Georgian

mountaineers (Dvalians) used to live. They were settled in six communities situated in the gorges of Zhgeli, Zramagi, Nara, Zrogo, Zakha and Kasri. In the second half of the 20. century, Ossetian scientists described Dvaleti as "Central Ossetia".

In the 13. - 14. centuries the Allan-Ossetians changed their place of settlement and intermingled with local Caucasian tribes. In Georgian sources those were Caucasians and ancestors of Ingush tribes. Ossetians former habitats in the North Caucasian valleys were occupied by Kabardians. They had built solid fortresses in passages, from mountain to lowland, to block the Ossetians from resettling in the North Caucasian valleys. Migration of Ossetians was attended by shifting of some toponymies. Since the 13. - 14. centuries onwards, up to the establishment of Soviet authority, the Ossetians did not have any statehood or a common governor. As the majority of the Caucasian ethnic groups, the Ossetians used to live separately in territorial communities.

We shall deal with the Ossetians migration to the South later. But now will be discussed Ossetians relation with Russia and their migration to the North Caucasian foothills and valleys. As indicated in Russian scholarly literature, the Russian-Ossetian relations were strengthened in the 18. century. The major part of the Ossetians was Russian-oriented and had appealed several times to the Russian government to take Ossetians, as subject nation, under subordination. At the beginning of 1770, the Elders of East Ossetia applied to Kizlar commandant with this request. Russia was interested in taking over Ossetia, for its perfect strategic location, connecting the gorges of Ossetia with the South Caucasus. The process of joining Ossetia with Russia started with the Kuchuk-Kainarji treaty and ended with entering Kabardo, as a subject under protection, in the Russian Empire. In this treaty document nothing was said about Ossetia, because by that time such state or unit did not exist at all. But Russian authorities declare the opposite. There is not one document referring to Ossetia as a state formation. Moreover, there is not even a single document proving the unification of both Ossetias or the conception of "North Ossetia" and "South Ossetia". The existence of two Ossetias as separate state units or of whole Ossetia as a state by the end of 18. century is a complete nonsense. If the state of Ossetia really existed why did the Ossetian "Chenils" (elected representatives of people), not the state leader or the ambassador of the country, visit the Astrakhan governor with the request to join Russia in 1774? The Kuchuk-Kainarji truce refers to Kabardo and nothing is said about Ossetia. At that time, the Ossetians were under the formal dependence of Kabardo. In historical researches of the Soviet period it was mentioned that out of the four Ossetian gorges (communities) only three of them went under the dependence of Russia (North Caucasus1988, p.422-449; Bliev 1990, p.44-45). But Russian historiography considers 1774 as the year when Ossetia went under the rule of Russia. In October of 1774, in Mozdok fortress, due to the will of the Ossetians, negotiations were carried out between the governor of Astrakhan and an Ossetian delegation of twenty people to discuss the following issues: settlement of Ossetians into the Central Caucasian foothill valleys; joining of the territories populated by the Ossetians to the Russian Empire; building of fortresses to protect them from the attacks of the neighboring feudal. Both sides reached the agreement on all of the issues. It should be highlighted that the Moslem

Western Ossetians (Digorian Ossetians) did not participate in those negotiations and in 1774 they maintained independence from Russia. As for the Ossetians of Georgia, living in Dvaleti and Shida Karthli, after annexation of Karthl-Kakheti, they resisted the Russian government for a long time. For example, in 1830 they rose in rebellion against Russia. Especially the Thomaevs, who lived in the village of Roki, affirmed themselves against Russian colonizers (Kaloiev 1999, p.268). The Ossetians aimed to their own lands in the foothill valleys of the North Caucasus. Since then, began an intensive migration of Ossetians to the North, particularly during the 20s of the 19. century. This actually stopped Ossetian migration to the South i.e. to Georgia, notwithstanding Ossetians of Dvaleti residing geographically closer to Georgia than to the North Caucasus.

By the end of the 17. century, before moving to North, the verges of passages of Digori, Kurta and Taguri ravines of Ossetians settlements were bordering Kabardo. In the late 70-80s of the 18. century a few settlements appeared in the foothill valleys: Karajaev, Kobani, Vastili, Vaseligo, Tuma on the River Urukhi and Kubati in the ravine of the River Dur-Dur. The new settlers were the Karajaevs, Kupataevs and Tuganovs, who had moved with their subordinates. A bit earlier, at the beginning of the 18. century the Ossetians extended borders to the East and in the 20s of the 18. century settled down on the left bank of the River Tergi in Larsi, Chmish and Balta (all are in Dariali Ravine). According to Russian sources, the left bank of River Tergi, in the 16. - 17. centuries, was inhabited by Ingush people. The Ossetians had moved from Alagiri Ravine to the above mentioned villages (Volkova 1974, p.125-126). According to Klaprot, Ossetians living in Lars, Chmish and Balta had to pay tribute for land to the Ingush. According to the same author, the Ossetian Slonats (patronymic name) were joined by different patronymic groups from Taguri Ravine. The reinforced Ossetians stopped paying a tribute to the Ingush, notwithstanding nobility of minor Kabardo, the Mudarovs, to whom they had been paying tribute for 30 years. Due to several documents, it was confirmed that by 1774 the modern capital of Ossetia, Vladikavkaz, when the Russians built a fortress there, was an Ingush village. It was called Zauregui and was settled by Ingush with patronymic name Zaurov. The 19. century was a period of intensive Ossetian transmigration from mountains to valleys. In the 20s of the 19. century, new Ossetian settlements appeared in the valleys of Vladikavkaz, which was inhabited by Iron Ossetians (Berozov, 1980).

About Ossetians migration to Georgia

There are no weighty arguments or facts corroborating Ossetians inhabitation on Georgian territory from old times. None of the historical sources or documents corroborates Ossetian migration to Georgia during different periods B.C. and Alan-Ossetian resettlement in the 4. century A.D. when the Huns invaded Georgia. As it was mentioned above, then Ossetians then moved forward from the Don and the Azov valleys to the Southern part of the North Caucasian foothill valleys.

The Ossetians inhabited Georgia neither in the 7. nor in the 13. centuries, as some of the authors desire to imagine. In the 13. century, Ossetians started migrating exceptionally through the mountainous ravines of the North Caucasus. The migration process was prolonged and ended only at the beginning of the 15. century. In the

second half of the 12. century, only one Ossetian group, entering via Darubandi, tried to settle in Shida Karthli. Their military force acted under the command of the Ilkhan Mongolian Empire. "In 1292 the Ossetians conquered Shida Karthli and overtook Gory" (as described by Chroniclers). Ossetians exploited the weakening of the Georgian State and with support of the Mongolians tried to get settled in Shida Karthli. Ossetians serving actually as Mongolian "police forces", lately were destroyed and fought off the country by George V (the Brilliant). The mountaineers of Aragvi Ravine and the Army of Ksani "Saeristavo" (Principality), led by Virshel Eristavi, fought for the central government in that war. After exile of Ossetian forces from the country, Georgia firmly blocked both gateways of Georgia to Ossetia (Dariali and Kasris-Kari) and stopped for long the Ossetian migration to Georgia. It should be mentioned that Ossetians had attempted to settle, via the help of foreign forces, in Georgia before. For example in the middle of the 9. century, the Arab military leader Bugha Turkish led 100 Ossetian families through Dariali gateway and helped them settling in the city of Dmanisi, Kvemo Karthli, the Northern part of Georgia which is quite far from Shida Karthli. Nothing is known about what happened with those 100 Ossetian families. Supposedly they were either assimilated with Georgians or left Georgia soon. In the middle of the 13. century, due to the Order of Mongol Khan, King David VII let Ossetian military forces into Georgia and let them settle in Dmanisi and Zhinvani. Nothing is known about the fate of those military forces. In any case, no Georgian source reveals any Ossetian ethnic enclave in those cities.

Settlement of Ossetians in the historical Georgian province of Dvaleti, located in the North part of the Caucasus, started at the end of the 15. century and proceeded mainly during the 16. century. In the 17. century, the process of assimilation of local Georgian ethnographic group (territorial unit), the Dvales with Ossetians was finished in Dvaleti. However, as known from B. Kaloev's ethnographic records, bilingualism was characteristic of some Dvaleti ravines for a long time, for example in Zakha (Kaloev 1999). Most of the inhabitants of Zakha knew Georgian language well. According to Kaloev, this fact must be explained by long ethno-cultural links with Georgia. Besides, ecclesiastics used Georgian language while serving in churches in Zakha. This record directly indicates not the ethno-cultural links between the two different ethnoses, but the fact that the Dvals were Georgian mountaineers assimilated by exogenous Iran language speaking group. The existence of Georgian churches and servings of Georgian priests in Georgian language corroborate that Dvaleti was Georgian land with its powerful Christian Religion. B. Kaloev in his records also brings some other proof that even at the end of the 18. century, in case of need, the inhabitants of Dvaleti fought for the Georgian army, similar to other representatives of other parts of the country. Before Ossetian settlement in Dvaleti, owing to Ossetian raids and forays in the region, most of the Dvals moved to different parts of Georgia (Shida Karthli, Kvemo Karthli, Imereti, Racha). Those who remained in their habitat, within the Ossetian ethnic-linguistic environment, were quickly assimilated by the intensively growing Ossetian ethnic groups. The Georgian patronymic names of Dvaleti were: the Khadurs, the Chipchiurs, the Bigulis, the Tvauris, the Chochouris (the same as Chochishvilis), the Begeluris, the Gudiauris, the Bagauris, the Gergaulis, the Tabauris, the Kherkheulidzes, the Qesauris, the Parukhailis and also the Biganis (the Biganishvilis), the Khabarelis, the Kheterelis, the Khachidzes (who were known as

the Khachiuris before). As for the most popular Ossetian patronymic name Khetaguri (Khetagurebi), living in Nar-Mamisoni cave i.e. Dvaleti, their ancestor came from Kabardo. Thus, it's natural that, in Georgian ethnic-linguistic surrounding, their surnames were registered with the suffix "-ur" and afterwards, in the Ossetian ethnic surrounding, the surname took Ossetian ending.

The fact that Ossetians forcibly found their way through many attacks and assaults to settle down in Dvaleti, historic territory of Georgia, was expressed in folk too. We implicate the folk poem "Unknown Bird Flew over the Mountain", which was composed in Racha, one of the historical-ethnographical provinces of Georgia bordering Dvaleti. Therefore, the importance of the poem as a historical source, is great. It must be indicated, that this folk poem well elucidates, that one of the historical provinces of Georgia, Dvaleti, had never been a constituent part of Ossetia and that Ossetians managed forcibly to settle down in Dvaleti:

"An unknown bird with white wings flew high over the mountains. The army of Ossetians and Dvals moved to Zhgali. The war began in the morning. They were drawing the swords and beating the spear. The swords were all in blood. Japhar ran away like a partridge, the Ossetian chased him like an eagle. Japhar, you can't run away to your wife, you will not tell her about this war, you will not give her the red dress. Japhar, the golden pole, fell down and so the war was over.." (Ancient, 1911-1913, p.115).

There are more than 15 versions of this folk poem, even more perfected. It is possible to restore the first version. Scientists consider this poem to be quite old due to its structure (Qurdiani, 1997, p.176-178). We can conclude that *this poem depicts Ossetian people's fight with the local Dvaleti population. Ossetian people invaded the territories in Dvaleti by force. They won victory in this struggle. Lots of Dvaleti population died. Those who had survived left their ancestors' dwellings (and they settled in Shida Karthli, Kvemo Karthli, Racha, Zemo Imereti). One of the leaders of Dvaleti people, Japari, was defeated in that unequal fight and he run away "as a partridge". Japari, who personifies Dvaleti people, was cut up by the Ossetian people.* The truthfulness of that fight is very well depicted in this folk poem. Both toponymes (geographical names) mentioned in the poem ("Upper Mountain" and "Zhgele") were fight places and are in Dvaleti. "The Upper Mountain" is the same as "Upper Dvaleti". The same geographical unit was mentioned by Ioane Bagrationi (Bagrationi, 1986, p.79). "Zhgele" is one of the six ravines of Dvaleti, which geographically is near to the mountainous Racha (there is an exit from mountainous Racha to Zhgele ravine in Dvaleti). There is one toponyme "KalaKa" mentioned in some versions of the poem. "Kalaka" was also one of the inhabited areas in Dvaleti. The phrase "white-plumed strange bird" in the poem stands for Ossetian people who came with a huge army to fight with local Dvaletian people. The poem makes obvious that the two different nations stood against each other: Ossetians, who came by force, and the local Georgian (Dvals). This poem annihilates the Ossetian authors' "assertion" that, Dvals were Ossetians. The drastic ethnic changes in one of the oldest mountainous provinces - Dvaleti, took place exactly after the fight that is illustrated in the poem.

Ossetian legends confirm too, that Ossetian ethnos settled in Dvaleti by force.

They fought with the local population, defeated them and occupied their dwellings. According to such legends, we can fix the local and foreign surnames. After settling in Dvaleti, Ossetians moved to the mountainous parts of Shida Karthli.

Ossetians families settled in Nar-Mamisoni cave (i.e. historical Dvaleti) by the 18. century, transmigrated mainly from Alagiri Ravine. The ethnographic corroborative data on this fact is given by the Russian ethnologist Natalia Volkova: "The more massive and ancient movement of the people from Alagiri Ravine should be considered their settling in Central (as Ossetians called Dvaleti; the term was first used by B. Kaloev) and South Ossetia. The national tradition brings the population of Didi Liakhvi and Ardoni out of the Alagiri settlement, Tsamat, Dagom, Luar, Ursdon, Tsei and so on." (Volkova, 1974, p.122). "The formation of Tualta (as the Ossetians called Dvaleti) occurred with the help of exiled Alagirians. The ancestors of Kozaevs, Khozaevs, Biragovs, were settled in the Zrogo Ravine, the ancestors of Kaloevs in the Zakha Ravine and the ancestors of Kuchievs from Mizuri in the Gib Ravine. Tuals transmigrated from Tualta to the region of Georgian Military Road (Kobi, Ukhate) and Urs-Tualta, from where some families (for example Abaevs) moved to Kobi, to the Truso Ravine, (out of the six ravines of Dvaleti, one of them is the Nara Ravine), also to the Java and Kudari ravines" (Volkova, 1974, p.124). The same author points out the massive migration of Tagaurian Ossetians to the gate of the Tergi Ravine (Truso) and to the region of the Georgian Military Road. The scientists mark out that the Alagirians' massive migration was conditioned by a lack of fertile lands in Alagiri Ravine, in comparison with other Ossetian ravines. B. Kaloev couldn't avoid the trustworthy materials which prove that Ossetians of Dvaleti were formed by assimilation of Dvals, the local Caucasian tribes with the Alans. But it is difficult for him to admit that Dvals are ethnic Georgians (Kaloev, 1999, p.5). Generally, Ossetian peoples' migration to Shida Karthli occurred mainly through Dvaleti. This province was not removed from Georgia, even after ethnic changes in Dvaleti. During the statehood of Georgia, even after it's annexation by Russia, Dvaleti was always an indivisible part of Georgia. Due to the order of April 3, 1858 of A. Bariatskiy-the Viceroy of the Caucasus, Dvaleti, (Nara District), modern Piagdoni and Ardoni sources, (consisted in the province of Gori) (total square 3. 581km), was joined to the "Ossetian Military District" of Tergi District of the North Caucasus (Ivanenko 1873, p.450-451). As mentioned in one of the documents dated by 1858, the Abaevs living in Zakha ravine of Dvaleti indicated that, their ancestors devotedly served Georgian Kings and defended them from violent Lezghins and Persians. This statement given by B. Kaloev directly indicates that Dvaleti, despite ethnic changes, was always the indivisible part of Georgia. Georgian sources also corroborate the same. According to Vakhushti Bagrationi, Dvaleti was comprised in the territorial unity of Georgia (Kartlis Ckhovreba 1973, p.633) since the reign of king Parnavazi (4. - 3. centuries B.C). Similar to other mountainous parts of Georgia, Dvaleti was directly subordinated to royal court and a feudal unit – "Satavado" never existed there (the same situation was in neighboring mountainous parts: Pshavi, Khevsureti, Tusheti...). Generally, the mountaineers had comparative freedom. Their responsibility was mainly to defend the borders. Since the break down of the United Kingdom of Georgia in the second half of the 15. century, Dvaleti was an indivisible part of the kingdom of Karthli. It was governed by "Mouravs", who were assigned by the King. Representative of

such authorities was Giorgi Saakadze, the head of Dvaleti at the beginning of the 17. century. Similar to other mountainous people of Georgia, Ossetians of Dvaleti sometimes were disobedient. Such attempts were registered at the beginning of the 18. century. King Vakhtang VI had to organize a special expedition and the Ossetians of Dvaleti had to acknowledge again the supremacy of the King of Karthli.

Dvaleti was related to Georgia not only politically but economically too. B Kaloev writes about Zakha Ravine (community) that the harvested crop was three-four months supply and until joining the Tergi district and opening the Ossetian Military Way (60s of the 19. century), they used to buy food in Georgian cities: Tskhinvali, Oni, Gori, Kutaisi, etc. They changed here mainly cattle-rearing products into husbandry and industrial products. According to ethnographic data, wine was also mentioned among those products taken from Shida Karthli (Kaloev, 1999, p.270-271, p.276). Ossetian people of Dvaleti generally never got related with North Caucasian Ossetian, due to geographically inaccessible pathways connecting Dvaleti to the North Caucasus, while they through eleven passages were easily connected to Didi Liakhvi and Rioni Ravine even in winter.

The first dwellings of Ossetian people nowadays can be seen on the Georgian territory in Truso (upper reaches of the River Tergi) and in Magran-Dvaleti (upper reaches of the River Didi Liakhvi). Ossetian people moved from the mountains of the North Caucasus in the first half of the 17. century, but yet hadn't occupied the most of the mountainous part of Shida Karthli. They had migrated only into the upper reaches of Didi Liakhvi (Magran-Dvaleti), which was the unity of nine "mountainous villages". According to historical data, in the first half of the 17. century, many remains of dwellings could be seen in the mountainous parts of Shida Karthli (ravines of Didi and Patara Liakhvi). The local Georgian population had migrated to the lowlands. Vakhushti Bagrationi used to underline that Ossetian people dwelt in the mountains of Dvaleti and Shida Karthli on the remains of the Georgians' habitat: "First Georgian peasants had dwelt on those territories. Then the Ossetian overtook and Georgians moved to the valleys, due to the decrease of population in the valleys" (Vakhushti Bagrationi).

Ossetian migration to the mountains of Shida Karthli, namely to the upper part of the rivers Didi and Patara Liakhvi, proceeded in the second half of the 17. century. According to records of the Russian ambassador M.I. Tatischev (1604-1615), there was only one settlement of 200 Ossetians between Circass and Georgia. One of the documents proves that in the middle of the 17. century, Ossetians had not been settled in the village Zemo Java of Didi Liakhvi Ravine yet. It is written in the document that "no man survived in Zemo Java, no dwelling remained in the area" (documents, 1940, p.364). The local population died out as a result of Ossetians raids and piracy. Depopulated Zemo Java was bought and sold now and again by feudal. This document names the extinct Georgian surnames, but Ossetian historians translated it in a mangled way, as if Ossetians died out in Zemo Java, which is not true.

According to this document, the inhabitants of Zemo Java were the Dziganidzes, the Epeniashvilis and the Gurjishvilis. *According to the document dated 1634-1658, King Rostom ordered his subordinates not to do any harm to those Ossetians who moved*

from their own country to Zemo Java and not to hinder any who would try to move in future (Georgian Central Historical Archive. Fund 1448, document N 10326). According to the earlier document, dated the second half of the 16. century, Java was inhabited with the patronymic of the Garakanidzes. It must be noted here also that Georgian kings and princes used to invite Ossetians to settle in the remains of Georgian dwellings and villages. There are many documents confirming this. The Ossetians' migration to Georgia, in the middle of the 17. century, was well elucidated in their records. Each patronymic had its own legend about the history of its ancestors' (embracing 10-12 generation) migration from the North Caucasus to Georgia (Vaneev 1936). If we consider the age of marriageable Ossetian, only four generations lived in a century. Factually, these legends are consistent with the sources and documents: Ossetians migration took place in the middle of the 17. century. Though, the Ossetian scientists still found a way out: they nominated those migrants as last second wave migrants and introduced the notion of "former Ossetian", who quasi had migrated to Georgia earlier and Georgians assimilated them. Therefore, about hundred Ossetians with Georgian family names were purposefully considered as native Ossetian - the "former Ossetian", as they refer to.

Ossetians gradually moved to the South and by the 30s of the 18. century, they had occupied totally the whole mountainous line of Didi Liakhvi and Parata Liakhvi Ravines. In the mentioned period, Ossetians lived in some mountainous villages together with the remaining local Georgians (Giuldenshtedt, 1961, p.277-279).

In fact, Ossetians didn't settle in the foothills of Shida Karthli in the 18. century. Their migration into the foothill villages of Shida Karthli (mostly on the remains) started in the late 18. and early 19. centuries.

At the beginning of the 18. century Ossetians adopted the upper reaches of Jejori - (Kudaro) and Ksani ravines (Zhamuri). The Ossetian migration into Zhamuri proceeded from mountainous ravines of the North Caucasus and the mountainous line of Didi Liakhvi ravine. However, famous Ossetian scientist Vasil Abaev stated also that the Ossetians had inhabited Ksani Ravine for two hundred years (Abaev, 1949, p.50). They migrated into Kudaro mainly from Dvaleti. In the mountains of Shida Karthli, the Ossetians first occupied Didi Liakhvi then Patara Liakhvi Ravines and the upper reaches of the River Ksani (Zhamuri). At the beginning of the 18. century, a little group of Ossetians appeared in the upper reaches of Mejuda Ravine and Isrolikhevi. They came to the upper reaches of Mejuda Ravine via the upper reaches of Patara Liakhvi ravine. We must use the citations from the monograph of the Russian ethnologist N. Volkova: "Many historical sources prove the fact of Ossetian migration to the South. The facts, given by these sources show that this kind of migration, which was even the second wave of migration for some regions, touches 3-5 generations. According to some materials, most of the Ossetian families living in the Kudaro Gorge are the descendants of the people living in the Alagiri Gorge (the settlement of Tsei, Bud and so on) and Tualta (the settlement of Tib, Nar, also the Dzakhian and the Mamisonian Gorges), which formed the following settlements: Let (formed by the Kaloevs), Gulianta (formed by the Gularovs), Stirmasig (formed by the Gagievs), Kobet (formed by the Jajievs), Sagilzas (formed by the Nanievs and Nartikoevs). The 4th generation of Khugaevs, settled in the upper part of Jojori near Chasavali (near the modern Kvaisi),

formed the settlement of Kiozita. Ancestors of this family, according to the legend, had left Mamisoni because of the lack of arable lands" (Volkova, 1974, p.134). The fact that in the middle of the 18. century the Ossetians only dwelt in the mountainous extinct areas of Shida Karthli is very well depicted on the Georgian atlas composed by Vakhushti Bagrationi. The Ossetian' dwellings are marked by number 8 on the atlas.

By the end of the 18. century, Ossetians main populated area embraced the extreme South edges (from West to East): Kudaro (the source of the river Jejori in Racha), Gupta (the River Didi Liakhvi Gorge), upwards the Atseriskhevi Gorge (in Patara Liakhvi gorge), two villages on the upper reaches of Mejuda Gorge, Zhamuri (the source of Qsani Gorge), Guda (the upper reaches of the river Tetri Aragvi Gorge, in Mtiuleti), Truso (the source of the River Tergi). There were no Ossetian dwellings in Lekhura and Mejuda Gorges (except the upper reaches), the most mountainous parts of Ksani and Proneebi Gorges by the end of the 18. century, i.e. as in times of Vakhushti Bagrationi. So at the end of the 18. century, the Ossetians lived only in the "barren (fruitless) areas" of different gorges of Georgia, i.e. in "the mountainous parts" of Georgia.

At the end of the 18. century and at the beginning of the 19. century, the Ossetians occupied an important mountainous part of Patara Liakhvi Gorge. From this period, and especially in the first decade of the 19. century, Ossetians started to move individually from the mountains of Shida Karthli to the villages on the foothills and valleys of Shida Karthli. By that time, such migration was accomplished from the mountainous part of Patara Liakhvi Gorge (the details of Ossetian movement from mountains to foothills and valleys are well depicted in the population register books dated 1818, 1830, 1840, 1860, 1873, 1886 and family lists, which are protected in the fund 254 of the Central State Historical Archive of Georgia).

The Ossetian migration from the North Caucasian Mountain to Georgia had stopped actually at the end of the 18. century, because the official government of Russia allowed Ossetian to settle down in the North Caucasian valleys. The special exception was only the Ossetian population of Dvaleti, who did not stop migration to present Georgian territories almost for the entire 19. century. Generally, the Ossetians migrated to Georgia through Dvaleti. After settling down in Dvaleti for a while, the Ossetian people used to move to the mountainous parts of Shida Karthli. However, there are many facts confirming Ossetian migration directly from the mountainous parts of the North Caucasus, especially at the early stage of migration.

The statement of some authors, concerning Ossetians settlement on the foothills and valleys of Shida Karthli in the 17. - 18. centuries, is not trustworthy. At the beginning of the 19. century, Ossetians started to migrate to Proneebi, Mejuda, Lekhura Ravines and the other inhabited parts of Ksani Ravine. Ossetians settling on the remains of Georgians in Proneebi Ravine occurred mainly from Didi Liakhvi Valley. Though it is noticeable that the first Ossetian migrants in the Proneebi Ravine were from Dvaleti. The population of Patara and Didi Liakhvi moved to Mejuda Gorge. The Ossetians from Ksani Gorge (Zhamuri, Churta) migrated basically to Lekhura Gorge. Despite of this fact, Ossetian settlement in Lekhura, Mejuda and Proneebi Gorges was not intensive in the first three decades of the 19. century. The intensive settling of Ossetians in those ravines proceeded basically from the middle till the 80s of the 19. century.

One or two Ossetian families appeared on the other side of Shida Kartli in the 80s of the 19. century. Since then and by the end of the 19. century Ossetians inhabited intensively the mentioned territory and also modern Borjomi (Gujareti Gorge).

Ossetians migrated from the mountainous parts of Shida Kartli to Kakheti and Kvemi Kartli regions at the beginning of the 20. century. According to Soviet records of the 20. century, 164 000 Ossetians lived in Georgia. Only sixty five thousand ethnic Ossetians out of this number lived on the territory of the "Autonomous Region of South Ossetia". Almost 100 000 people inhabited other parts of Georgia. They lived compactly in some parts, or mixed with Georgian population in other parts. The number of ethnic Ossetians in 1886 was 72 000. At the end of the 18. century, 2 130 Ossetian farmstead (15 000 people) lived on the present territory of Georgia. According to some Ossetian authors, the number of Ossetians in Georgia in the second half of the 18. century varied from 6 000 to 7 000 farmsteads. This figure is quite unreal and obviously, the authors ignore the historical data. Actually, as mentioned above, only 2 130 farmsteads were registered. On the whole, during the 19. and 20. centuries the percentage of Ossetians in Georgia varied between 3 - 4%.

The process of migration and settlement of Ossetians in Georgia was not a quite peaceful process. Sometimes they made their way by force, especially during the first period of their migration to Dvaleti, as well as to the mountains of Shida Kartli. According to historical data, legends and folklore, it is obvious that bored by the attacks of Ossetians, the local Georgian mountaineers had to leave their habitat and migrate to the valleys. The conditions in the valleys were more peaceful for them. Frequent attacks dramatically changed the demographic situation in foothill and lowland regions of Shida Kartli.

Ossetians found the critical social-political situation in Georgia propitious for them and started assimilation of the mountainous part of Dvaleti and Shida Kartli. Due to the frequent attacks, disintegrated and broken into pieces, Georgia could not control the blocking of passages to the North Caucasus: Kasris Kari and Dariali. By the way, Kasris Kari was situated North of Dvaleti and served as a passage to Ossetia. Vakhushti Bagrationi wrote about this: "there is a gate of rock and stones, big-vaulted, on the river, made by the kings purposefully, not to allow Ossetians cross it by their own wish" (Vakhushti, 1973, p.644-645).

By the 18. century, the economic and demographic situations in the country were so catastrophic in Shida Kartli, that the Georgian King, and nobility, Tavadebi, frequently invited them to settle in Georgia. For example, according to Ioane Bagrationi, Ossetians lived in Digomi village or nearby. Ossetians' provisional settlement near Digomi is confirmed by the registration document of Digomi village population, at the beginning of the 19. century, where none of the Ossetians farmsteads and the surnames of Ossetian origin are registered. One document dated from 1799 is worth mentioning, it was given by King Giorgi XII to the Tagaureli Ossetians. According to the document, Tagaureli Ossetians had appealed to the King with request to allow them to resettle in Georgia. The king sent a nobleman, Ninia Gabashvili, to Ossetia to let people know his conditions on the request. He suggested to the Ossetians to become his paramour peasants and promised to take them under his protection. At first, they would have

to stay in Digomi and then would be chosen a suitable place for living. Before starting arable works, they would be helped in supplying themselves with food (document of the institute of manuscript N 1617). The temporal settlement of Ossetians near Digomi is also attested by ethnographic data. As it appeared, at the edge of the 18. - 19. centuries, 32-33 Ossetians farmsteads lived there. Owing to the ignominious behavior of thievery, which was Ossetians characteristic feature (they did not even leave tugs and thongs to Digomi peasants), the Digomi peasants banished them with switches and cudgels and followed them to Bebristsikhe.

No more than one Ossetian generation managed to live in the mountains of Shida Karthli in the second half of the 18. century and in different villages of the foothills in the first half of the 19. century. After short stays in different villages of mountains and foothills, the Ossetians moved mainly down to the South. This is evidenced by the population registration data of the 19. century. Settled in the foothill villages at the beginning of the 19. century, Ossetians intensively moved to the valley villages in the middle of the same century. Thus, the Ossetians' gradual, intensive movement from highlands to lowlands at the end of the 18. century and for the whole 19. century is obvious and was quite suitably termed the "dense settlement" in Georgian historiography. Ossetians were characterized by intensive movement, so since settled in valley villages in the second half of the 19. century, they used to change their habitat and moved to other villages of the same valley. According to the family lists dated from 1886, in the 60-70s of the 19. century, more than 1 340 Ossetian farmstead moved from more than 76 mountainous villages of the Didi and Patara Liakhvi Gorges and settled in different villages of the valleys.

Ossetian migration to the mountains of Shida Karthli occurred not long ago, which is confirmed by their social status. The majority of Ossetians living in Didi Liakhvi Ravine were recorded in the population registration data of the 19. century as „Khizans" (migrants). The term „Khizans" (migrants) is known in Georgian historical sources and appropriate research works and which stands for the peasants banished from their own habitat and settled down somewhere else. „Khizan" was a category of peasants in feudal Georgia, but unlike them, they were personally free and their dependence on the feudal- landowner was defined by using their native land. „Khizan" was apart from the local population because he was a migrated peasant.

The fact that Dvaleti and the North part of Shida Karthli was not the land of the Ossetians' dwelling but of the Georgians was very obviously confirmed by such data as Oikonims (village names). None of the toponymes dated here are Ossetian. The villages had Georgian transparent names, the roots of toponymes and their formative suffixes were typical of Georgian language. It is enough to enumerate some names of the mountain villages: Satskhenisi, Edemkalaki, Beloti, Atseriskhevi, Inauri, Chabarukheti, Tsipori, Shambiani, Isroliskhevi, Koloti, Kvitkiri, Mokhisi, Bieti, Andoreti, Gupta, Patara Java, Zemo Java, etc. It is obvious from the postscript on the Gudi (Gundi) gospel, dated at the beginning of the 15. century, that Dvaleti was ethnically Georgian. The gospel appears to have been lost during the period of "Tatars". It was found by Ivane with the patronymic name Khorauli. After that, a man of Parukhauli name sent it to his relative in Dvaleti for sale. It is confirmed by the postscript that Dvaleti was Georgian land. Theological language in Dvaleti was Georgian and there was a demand on Georgian

gospel which was bought by the Georgians. The postscript is important, because the anthroponyme Parukhauri mentioned there is a Georgian family name, formed by the suffix -ur (-ul) characteristic of East Georgian mountain family names.

The facts that the territory of "South Ossetia" during the Soviet period was originally indivisible part of Georgia and that Georgians were the native population from ancient times are confirmed by several Georgian Christian architectural monuments, dated from the 5. - 18. centuries (Mepisashvili, Tsintsadze, 1975) and many epigraphs written only in Georgian language, depicting different periods of the Georgian history (Otkhmezuri, 1994). The territory of Shida Kartli, inhabited by Ossetians, is full of fortresses and towers. Can anyone substantiate that the fortress "Bertsikhe," which is situated in Zhamuri, in the upper reaches of Ksani Gorge was not built by Georgians? There are also towers with a horse-shoe shape, the so-called "towers with backs" characteristic only of the mountains of Shida Kartli. The back of those towers were facing the mountains and had a round shape. There is no evidence of similar towers on the Ossetian motherland, the North Caucasus. They are characteristic only of the Georgian architecture. It is stated by the specialists that some ancestral towers of square forms were Ossetian works of art in the upper reaches of Didi Liakhvi Gorge dated from the 18. century (Gvasalia, 1997, p.68). The family names of Ktitors – the Tbelebis, the Kanchavelis, the Pavelis, the Korintelis, the Machabelis, the Amirejibis, the Palavandishvilis, the Eristavis – mentioned in the inscriptions of cultural monuments, on the South Ossetian territory of the Soviet period, are Georgians. There are also representatives of the Georgian royal families mentioned in the inscriptions, including Tamari, the daughter of David the IV Agmashenebeli (1089-1125), Ketevan Tsereteli, the daughter-in-law of Giorgi XII (1798-1880), also the representatives of administration at court, bishops (Niqozeli, Mroveli...) and other servants of the church. Along with Ktitors are mentioned also architects (Taplaidze, Bavreli, Giorgidze, Kurdgelashvili...). All the inscriptions are made in Georgian and the mentioned anthroponymes reveal their ethnic Georgian origin (Lortqipanidze, Otkhmezuri, 2007, p.127-137). There are hundreds of historical documents of the middle ages related to the North part of Shida Kartli, the "South Ossetian" territory of the Soviet period. In those documents, only ethnic Georgians of high, as well as low social class are mentioned. One of the important Georgian historic masterpieces of the 14. - 15. centuries, the ancestral chronicle of Ksani feudal (called as Eristavi) – "The Monument of Eristavs" (authors are Avgaroz and Grigol Bandaisdzes, father and the son), was written on that territory, in Largvisi monastery.

Ecclesiastically Dvaleti and Shida Kartli were both comprised in Niqozi Episcopacy. Vakhushti Bagrationi wrote: "The Ossetians of Dvaleti, Christians by name,... were baptized in Kartli and Racha". Vakhushti Bagrationi also pointed that Dvals used Ossetian language i.e. transformation of their language was finished. Though historical witnesses remarked that some Dvals, who used to go to Racha and Kartli, spoke Georgian. There were many Christian cultural monuments in Dvaleti along with the pagan worship places, characteristic of mountains, which were called in Ossetian language "dzuar" (jvari). (The term "jvari" was used for pagan worship places, in different historic-ethnographic mountain regions of East Georgia too). The Ossetians living in Dvaleti maintained those "jvars" from the native mountaineer Dvals. "Atinagis Jvari" can serve as a good example. "Atengenoba" was a widespread holiday in historic-

ethnographic provinces of East Georgia, especially in Khevsureti and Tusheti.

Ossetians had no written language. Nowadays, their written language appeared on the basis of the Russian diagram. However, the first Ossetian alphabet appeared on the basis of the Georgian diagram. The author of it was Ioane Iagluzidze (Gabarati) (1775-1830), a man brought up on the basis of Georgian culture. From 1820, he taught Georgian and Ossetian languages to Ossetian pupils studying at the Tbilisi Ecclesiastic Seminary. It was the period when he created the Ossetian written language. The Ossetian alphabet, based on the Russian alphabet, was first created by the Russian scientist, Andria Shegren, who was aware of Ossetian language.

In 1922, the Bolshevik authority established the South Ossetian Autonomous Region. For the first time, notwithstanding the Georgians will, an administrative unit was created for the Ossetians on the territory of Georgia. The Autonomous Region of the South Ossetia embraced the historical feudal provinces of Shida Kartli. The center of the autonomous region was Tskhinvali, a small city located in the foothill line of Shida Kartli. There are registration materials of the population carried out by the Russian authority in the 19. century. According to all the records of the 19. century none of the ethnic Ossetian lived in Tskhinvali. Now we think that indicating of only archive materials of 1818, 1830, 1860, 1873 and 1886 will be sufficient. There is a single example mentioned in the records of 1830, in Tskhinvali, that only one ethnic Ossetian family (consisting of 5 members) appears to have moved there from the mountains in 1828, but they seem to have left the place very soon (see: Georgian State Historical Archive. Fund 254; extract 1, affair N 1244, p.170-191). Different records are also kept in the same fund, for example: 254-1-1243, 254-1-541, 254-1-252). In the scientific literature are often referred the family lists of 1886 about the ethnic composition of Tskhinvali, the statistic data of which were printed by the Russian authorities (collection...1893). The interested reader can also see the case N 1717 of the 3rd extract of the fund 254 in the Georgian Central Archive about the fact that none of the Ossetians lived at that time in Tskhinvali. The city, as in the Middle Ages, was settled by Georgians, Georgian Armenians and Georgian Jews (according to the author Aikhvaldi living in the first three decades of the 19. century, "the Ossetians lived on the other side of Tskhinvali, in the mountains. Previously, they continuously robbed and killed people in Tskhinvali. Now, they make Georgians, living in Tskhinvali to baptize them"). The Ossetians, 613 men in total, living in Tskhinvali were first mentioned in the data of 1922. In 1926, the number of Ossetians residing there topped 1152 (the city population in 1926 on the whole was 5 352). Such increase surely occurred due to mechanical raise. The Ossetian population exceeded the Georgian population in Tskhinvali only when the local Georgian Jews, at the end of the Soviet period, left for Israel and their houses were occupied by Ossetians who migrated from Java region.

A few words must be said about the term "South Ossetia". None of the Georgian historic sources or documents acknowledge this term. In the 18. century, when Georgian statesmen used to enumerate the territorial units (historic-ethnographic provinces, feudal units), they never used to mention "Ossetia" (especially the term "South Ossetia"), because such a unit did not exist in nature. They only used to mention the term "our Ossetians". At that time, ethnic Ossetians inhabited the Northern mountainous part of the historic-ethnographic, historic-geographic region of Shida Kartli. There

were different Georgian feudal units (Samachablo, Qsani Saeristavo, Saamilakhvro, relatively small feudal units of prince Davitishvili-Bagratiotis, Taqtaqishvilis and Kherkheulidzes) on the territory of the Soviet "South Ossetia". The term "South Ossetia" was introduced only by the officials of the Russian empire in the 19. century (this term was mentioned only three times in the press of that century). In the 19. century, the Russian Empire created several maps of the Caucasus, but one cannot find indication of "South Ossetia" in them. Ossetia, without attribution "North," is mapped in the North Caucasus. For example, in Natalia Volkova's book we can see the map of the parts of Kabardo, Ossetia, Ingushetia and Chechnya of the second part of 18. century, created by the Russian officials, where the conformable territory of the North Caucasus is called Ossetia. The main watershed mountain range of the Caucasus is called "Gruzinskaya Granitsa" meaning "Georgian border" (Volkova, 1974). By the way, on the same map, the capital of the modern North Ossetia, Vladikavkaz, which was called "Zaur", is on the territory of Ingushetia. Thus, it is a good illustration of falseness and even cynics, when one of the leaders of Russia declares that "the decision of handing South Ossetia over to Tbilisi province was made only in the middle of the 19. century". They say the Russian Soviet "emperor", ethnic Georgian Stalin, decided finally to hand South Ossetia over to Georgia. Nobody can show any archive document depicting that Soviet South Ossetia was not part of Tbilisi province from 1801 till 1917 and onwards in 1918-1921, when the Republic of Georgia existed and in the Soviet period too. In fact, it is only in 1843 that Tsarist Russia established on Georgian territory the Region of Ossetia, which was divided into three districts (Java, Patara Liakhvi and Nara). The police districts of Java and Patara Liakhvi of "Ossetia Region", opened in 1922, composed only one third of the territory of the autonomous district of South Ossetia (Gvasalia, 1997, p.58). The Bolshevik authorities also comprised the part of the Georgian historic-ethnographic regions of Racha (Kudaro) and Zemo Imereti in the territory of the South Ossetian Autonomous District.

It is known that a treaty was signed between East Georgia (Qartl-Kakheti) and Russia in 1783, known as Georgievski Treaty. At the time of signing the treaty and in 1801 when Russia broke the agreement and annexed Georgia, Dvaleti and the whole Northern part of Shida Kartli (the Soviet "South Ossetia") was an indivisible part of Georgia. The mentioned territory was never referred to as Ossetia. Every Russian source confirms the same. For example, very soon after signing the treaty in 1784, S. Burnashov, who was sent from Russia on a mission to Georgia, mapped out the Georgian kingdoms and principalities with their adjacent boundary regions. The term Ossetia was indicated on the map on its real place: in the North Caucasus. The term "Karthli" was addressed to the territory, which in the soviet period was called "South Ossetia".

In 1918-1921, Georgia shortly relieved from Russian colonial oppression and restored its state system. In that period, started the Ossetian separatist movement, which was inspired by Bolshevik Russia. In 1921, the Communist regime was established forcibly in Georgia and it became part of the Russian Empire again. The communist power created the administrative unit of Autonomous District for Ossetians in the main province of Georgia in the Northern part of Shida Kartli. In order to differentiate it from the territorial unit of Ossetia in the North Caucasus, it was called "the Autonomous District of South Ossetia". Tskhinvali was announced the center of the autonomy. By that time,

as mentioned above, ethnic Ossetians didn't live in Tskhinvali. Besides, some densely populated Georgian villages were also comprised within the limits of the Autonomous District of South Ossetia. That fact generated protest in the Georgian villages. The main reason for that protest was the language factor. For example, the inhabitants of Nedlati village complained: "our village Nedlati was connected to Ikona. Nowadays, Ikona became part of the Autonomy of South Ossetia and we got in a bad situation because everything, the social activities, are conducted in Russian and Ossetian languages, which are not understandable for us". The inhabitants of Dzartsemi wrote: "Why do we have to be within South Ossetia? Moreover, their language is foreign and obscure to us. The majority of the population in the whole Northern part of Tskhinvali region, with a small exception, is Georgians" (Bochoridze, 1996).

The Ossetians, who immigrated in the 17. - 18. centuries, became plenipotentiary citizens of the Georgian state. A majority of them was bilingual and spoke the official Georgian language. Reality made them know Georgian. Ossetians, settled in the mountains, needed to have links with the Georgian lowlands. Here are implied historically recognized husbandry - economic relationships. Therefore, Ossetians aspired to learn Georgian language. There were also some Georgians, living on the contact line with Ossetians, who knew Ossetian as well. According to some ethnographic data, on the contact line of Georgian Ossetian settlement, there were many cases of sending Ossetian children to Georgian villages (families) for studying the Georgian language. This was accomplished via Christianizing and making relations with them (however, it's the oldest Caucasian tradition). Due to the demand of Georgian Kings, the Ossetians living on Georgian territory had to receive Christianity. Ossetians themselves were interested in the Christian religion. Conversion to Christianity also pushed them to learn Georgian language, as the language of divinity was Georgian. The Christened Ossetians living in the mountains used to frequently send their children to their Georgian Godmothers and Godfathers living in the valleys. According to historical-ethnological data, there were many cases of marriages between Ossetians and Georgians. This also was one of the supporting factors for making the two nations related.

Settlement of Ossetians in the mountains of Georgia caused the ethnical-linguistic assimilation of a little group of Georgians. Even nowadays, the Iluridzes (about 40 families) living in Doretkari and the tributary of Churti and Ksani ravines, are bilingual. Bilingualism was mainly caused by mixed marriages. At the end of the 18. century, Ossetians settled on the remains of Georgians who migrated from Churti Ravine to the valleys. The Iluridzes actually turned out to be in the Ossetian ethno-linguistic surrounding. It is true that the nearby territories of valleys were inhabited by Georgians, but no women from the valley wanted to get married in the mountainous Doretkari. However, men living in Doretkari had to marry the neighboring Ossetian women. Ossetians women made their sons marry Ossetian. Such marriages from the middle of the 19. century, as well as the Ossetian ethnic surroundings made the Iluridzes bilingual. However, it must be underlined that Georgians living in Doretkari didn't change their ethnic identification. The similar situation is evident in other parts of Ksani Gorge too. According to one teller, for example, the Psuturis in Nakhidi village identified themselves as Ossetians, because their language of communication was mainly Ossetian.

The author of these lines traveled all over the Ossetian villages of Mejuda Ravine in 1987. With exception of two small Ossetian villages, in the extreme upper part of the ravine, Ossetians migrated there in the 30-80s of the 19. century. The last big Georgian village of Mejuda Ravine is Mejriskhevi. Mejriskhevi is bordered by Gromi village, inhabited by Ossetians. Gromi was comprised in the autonomous district. By 1886, Gromi was still inhabited by Georgians and only after their translocation to Mejriskhevi, Ossetians settled there. There are many mixed Georgian-Ossetian families in Mejriskhevi. The upper gorge is mostly settled with Ossetians, except Isroliskhevi village, which is still inhabited by Georgian families. We communicated with many ethnic Ossetians during a month expedition in Georgia: the only exception was an old woman, who didn't know Georgian language. All the rest spoke Georgian quite well. It is essential to notice that Georgian language, acknowledged by the constitution as an official language, was not included in school programs of the Autonomous District of South Ossetia. There were Ossetian-Russian schools, organized in the following way: primary education (1-4 classes) was taught in Ossetian language, secondary education in Russian language, to which only the Ossetian language and literature was added. In spite of this, Ossetians could speak and write in Georgian. They studied Georgian alphabet independently, because, as they had explained, they had economic relations not only with the population of the Autonomous District, but also with Georgians living in the valley of the ravine. The same situation was with Ossetians living in Lekhura Ravine. Generally, this condition was characteristic of the whole Ossetian population of the Autonomous District, except Java Region. Java Region comprised the mountainous part of Didi Liakhvi Gorge. This region was densely populated by ethnic Ossetians, who had relatively less contact with Georgian population. The opening of Ossetian-Russian schools in the Soviet period and ignoring the Georgian language caused Ossetians alienation from the Georgian ethnic-linguistic surrounding, which became one of the reasons for the Ossetian separatist movement on the territory of the autonomous region, after the collapse of the Soviet Empire.

As mentioned above, old Georgian inhabitants still live in the extreme upper mountainous part of Mejuda Gorge. However, their number decreased substantially in the Soviet period. Those who had remained in the ethnic Ossetian surrounding, speak Ossetian language well. They are in marriage relations with the Ossetian population. We had a chance to visit one of the families: the Gengiuris (Georgian patronymic name). The head of the family, sixty years old man, identified himself as being an ethnic Georgian. He spoke perfectly Georgian. His mother and wife were Ossetians. Though, his five children had dual consciousness. It was noticeable, that the five of them spoke Georgian with an Ossetian accent. Besides, they argued about their ethnicity and couldn't say whether they were Georgians or Ossetians. The daughters tended to identify themselves with ethnic Ossetians. Neither the sons had any aspiration for being Georgians. One of the sons had decided to go to Russia for studying. When we got interested why he wanted to go so far, to Russia, he said he didn't like Tbilisi. Such disposition towards Tbilisi was caused by the lack of knowledge in Georgian language. Moreover, he did not know written and spoken language at all. As it was found out, the Gengiurs used to send their children to the Ossetian-Russian school in Tskhinvali. Thus, knowledge of language was a decisive factor in identifying to a certain ethnicity.

The example of the Gengiurs was not the only exception in the mountainous part of the Autonomous District.

As for other Ossetians, living in other parts of the Georgian territory, i.e. out of the autonomy, they speak Georgian fluently, along with their national Ossetian language. There are cases when the representatives of the Ossetian ethnos consider themselves as Georgians.

Before summarizing the present linguistic situation of the Ossetians living in Georgia, we must return to the 19. century. At that time, Georgian press paid much attention to Ossetian language. The articles of S. Mgaloblishvili (a writer) are especially important from this point of view. The Ossetians did not have any aspiration for receiving education, while the Georgian society tried to open schools in Ossetian villages. They tried to persuade the parents to give education to their children. Russian authorities sent Russian teachers to Ossetian villages. Ossetian children did not know Russian language. They knew only Ossetian and Georgian languages. S. Mgaloblishvili stated: "the teachers must be either Ossetian or Georgian. The Russian teachers should be sent to the over-mountain Ossetia, the North Caucasus, where Ossetian and Russian languages are spoken". The Georgian publicists wrote that, the Ossetians in the North Caucasus were gradually losing their ethnicity, due to the process of Russification. While Georgians worried about Ossetians and tried to support them in protecting their native language and nationality. N. Tadeozishvili touched this problem in one of the edition of the newspaper "Droeba" in 1884: "the Georgians have a huge influence on those Ossetians, who live in Georgia. All men speak Georgian language and inhabitants of nearby territories of Georgian villages, even women and children, speak Georgian. Besides speaking, they can read and write in Georgian. The more the over-mountain Ossetians tend to lose ethnic identity, the more in Georgia Ossetians are proud to read and write in Georgian. There are cases of inter-marriage between neighboring villages. Thus, mixed families are characteristic of their life". S. Mgaloblishvili wrote that, Georgians must have taken appropriate measures not to let Ossetians lose their language and nationality. He insisted on opening schools for Ossetians for this reason. Another author (Grigol Liakhveli, the same as Sadzaglishvili) appealed to everybody in the same newspaper, in order to help protect the Ossetians and their language. He considered it was necessary for Ossetians to create their own alphabet.

The newspaper "Tsnobis Purtseli" expressed also great interest towards Ossetian language. It was stated in one of the edition of 1903 that all Ossetians living in Kudaro knew Georgian language, owing to close neighboring relationships with Rachvelians and Imeretians (Georgian ethnographic (territorial) groups). The same newspaper wrote in 1901: "Georgian society intends to provide Ossetians, living in Georgia, with Ossetian books. Therefore we are appealing knowledgeable people to submit books in order to provide teaching of Ossetian language in every Ossetian school in the nearest future".

The same disposition of Georgian educated people and Georgian authorities towards Ossetian language continued in the 20. century too. Ossetians had all the conditions to develop their language and culture, in and out of the territory of the Autonomous District. The press and scientific literature, for the last ten years, often compared

ethno-linguistic situations in South Ossetia comprised in Georgia, with North Ossetia, comprised in the Russian Federation. Everything in North Ossetia, be it social work, study at the educational institutions was conducted in Russian language. The author of this article participated in the Union student-ethnographers' conference held in Leningrad in 1972. There were also students from North Ossetia, who could not help expressing their own amazement that we Georgians, students of Tbilisi State University, were able to communicate in Georgian with each other and write in Georgian.

In Tskhinvali Pedagogical Institute and Tskhinvali Scientific-Research Institute of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, special attention was paid to the teaching of Ossetian language and literature. The "Explanatory Dictionary of Ossetian Language" was prepared there, along with other important research-works. There was the state Ossetian theatre in Tskhinvali. The magazines and newspapers were issued in Ossetian language. The radio broadcasted in Ossetian as well. There were 97 Ossetian schools in 1990-1991 in Georgia. 90 schools in the South Ossetian Autonomous Region and seven in other regions of Georgia: Lagodekhi, Kareli and Borjomi. In 1980, the Georgian government started opening Ossetian schools in other regions that were compactly populated by Ossetians.

It's worth of mentioning that according to the description of the population in 1989, from sixty five thousand inhabitants of the Autonomous Region of Ossetia, 64.257 considered Ossetian language as their mother tongue and only 820 ethnic Ossetians had a different idea (that is 1,3%). Georgians who lived in this region were not able to use Georgian in public and social life. During Soviet period, Ossetians tried to change primary Georgian toponymes with those translated into Ossetian, or loan translation. A lot of ancient Georgian toponymes have been violently disfigured.

As we have already mentioned, in Georgia studying Ossetian language was carried out in 97 schools, while in North Ossetia, which is a constituent part of the Russian Federation, there are no Ossetian schools. The Ossetians study only at Russian schools. The ex-president of North Ossetia, A. Galazov, commented about it, in the newspaper "Pravda" (1983, 11/XI): "I sincerely feel pity for Ossetian young generation.... when they are embarrassed through unawareness of their own Ossetian ethnic culture in their homeland. For example, national youth is deprived from its own mother tongue. Till last year, there was not any school where Ossetian language was taught".

As for the Autonomous Region of South Ossetia in Georgia, the local authorities did everything to raise the rate of Russian language, via ignoring Georgian. The linguistic situation in the Autonomous Region of South Ossetia in the 1920s was described by historian, G. Bochoridze. He wrote: "Georgian language is banished from Georgian villages; correspondence was done in Russian, now Ossetian is used; Georgian is banished". "Since 1929, Ossetian language has been introduced at court but earlier, in 1928 in Akh'algori, even statements were to be written in Ossetian or at least in Russian. Only few exceptions were made to accept statements in Georgian". "Schools are opened for Ossetians, but for Georgians, very rarely. In 1921-1924, Georgian teachers were not paid for six-seven months' salaries and were made to quit the job and the schools were closed down. People needed schools, but they were told: if you wish, your children can study at Ossetian schools, otherwise no school will be opened

for you. Ossetian language is obligatory at Georgian schools, but Georgian language is not. "Some Ossetians wanted their children to learn Georgian language as an applicable subject but they received flat refusal".

Finally, we should mention that in the 20. century, Georgian scientists did their bit in investigation of Ossetian language. For example, academician G. Akhvediani edited „The Academic Grammar of Ossetian Language“, in two volumes.

So, after Ossetian migration and settlement in Georgia, three periods can be distinguished in the linguistic situation. The first period is Ossetians being within the Georgian state system. When Ossetians identified themselves as the citizens of Georgia, similar to other ethnic groups, they also respected Georgian as the official language of Georgia. Their majority spoke Georgian language perfectly. In the contact line area, many Georgians spoke Ossetian language fluently. It was conditioned due to social-economic and kin relationships.

After the 19. century, when Georgia became a Russian colony, the linguistic situation in Georgia started to change, that was stipulated though active interfering of Russian authorities. Russia forcibly distributed Russian language in its colonies and made different ethnic groups be in opposition with each other. Russia tried to replace Georgian with Russian for Ossetians. The 19. century, and particularly the second half of it, for many Ossetians was the period of initial transition to Russian language. Georgian society did everything to preserve Ossetian language and its ethnic origin. Still, in the 19. century, many Ossetians spoke Georgian because of practical need. The third is the Soviet period, when the Bolshevik authorities managed Ossetians alienation from Georgians. Due to intensive introduction of Russian language, the majority of Ossetians forgot Georgian language. Thus, there was another tendency: the educated part of Ossetians could speak and write Georgian but deliberately did not.

In the mountains, Ossetians used to settle down according to their patronymic names. One patronymic inhabited one village, or several villages. The villages did not have any streets, only narrow paths wide enough for walkers and riders. The center of social life was the village square, which was called "Nikhas" in Ossetian language. All the important issues of the community were discussed on Nikhas. Ossetians traditional activity in the plain was agriculture (wheat, corn, barley, millet...), in the mountains agriculture and live stock farming (sheep, goats, cattle,). The lands for mowing and plough, that they owned, were hereditary. Only the forest and pasture was common to the entire village. The ploughshare in the mountain and in the plain was different. The one that was used in the plain was called "guton" (the term is assimilated from the Georgian -"gutani"). The name of a harvester tool "lamgal" originates from the Georgian "namgali", which is bigger in radius and has sharp cogged side. Georgian harvester (namgali) was popular not only in North Ossetia but among other Caucasian peoples.

Before their transmigration to the plain lands, live stock farming was not prevalent for Ossetians, owing to the lack of winter pastures. For the migrated Ossetians sheep-breeding was very important and in the valleys, they had more possibility for its development. They kept goats together with sheep, but in some villages of Alagir and Digori, the goat-breeding was more promoted than sheep-breeding. Cattle-breeding

also played an important role in their economics. Cattle produced milk and meat. It was exploited as draught animal. The traditional farming for Ossetians was horse-breeding, which had key importance for them as descendants of nomadic people. According to Ossetian folklore, the Alans were perfect horsemen who owned huge herds of horses. Till the second half of the 19. century, horse was the only means of transportation in the mountains.

Similar to other North Caucasian people, Ossetians had a great variety of weapons: sword, bow, arrow, shield, chain gown and helmet. According to Klaprot, Ossetians of Trusso Ravine still used oval iron edged shields made of firm skin and wood.

Cheese-making, out of the milk of cow and sheep, is their ancient activity. But even if some Ossetian scientists insist that West Georgian people learned making cheese "Sulguni" from Ossetians, it is wrong. On the contrary, Ossetians had never known the method of "sulguni".

An important issue:

In the first half of the 19. century, there were villages settled, basically due to the same patronymic name. Often in different neighboring villages, people of one and the same patronymic name were settled. Ossetians, migrating from the mountains to the valleys, could not manage to settle down, due to their patronymic kinship. The legends say that many fights broke out among Ossetians living in Shida Kartli. The fights especially proceeded among the villages, which often ended up with total annihilation of the families or their escape from their habitat. M. Kosven supposed that those fights led to the break down of the villages, which were initially settled by Georgians.

In mountainous Ossetia, before the beginning of the 19. century, the deceased were buried in tombs, mostly in over ground tombs. This tradition was also spread in Ingushia, Chechnia, Karachai and Balkar. Over ground tombs were typical only for the mountain. In the plain region and foothills such tombs were not characteristic. The deceased, kept in the tomb, owing to natural-geographical conditions, were mummified. All of the tombs had two or three holes, through which the deceased were shifted inside. There were wooden or stone couches, where the deceased were placed. The tombs of Ossetians were patrimonial. The burial ceremony contradicted the Christian standards and the Christian church fought against it. The tombs were of Caucasian origin. According to some Ossetian legends, the over ground tombs were built by other people inhabiting the territory before Ossetian transmigration. The majority of builders were Ingush. They were hired also to build towers. It is significant that some over ground tombs belonged to the Nogaels, who lived together with Ossetians. The Nogael origin of the deceased was proved according to the anthropological type, dressing and different vessels found in the tombs. Due to the materials obtained in the 1920s, in the ravines of Kurtati, Taguri and Digori, the Nogaels lived together with Ossetians. Nogaels and Ossetians had migrated from valleys in the 14. - 15. centuries. After settling in the mountains the Ossetians (and Nogaels) mastered in local tomb culture. Ossetian over ground burial constructions reminded Ingush towers with pyramidal-stepped cover. Tombs were unfamiliar to the Dvaleti Region (Kaloiev, 1999), which points directly to the fact that Dvaleti was not Ossetian territory in ethnic-cultural terms.

There were perfect architectural models of towers in mountainous Ossetia. Ossetians possessed different towers: watch, battle and living ones. Battle towers generally were not very high and their quadrangular walls had flat covering. Ossetians considered that the towers were not built by Ossetians. According to legend, the builders were the former inhabitants of the settlement. B. Kaloev considers that those were Alans and that supposition is beneath criticism. The builders were local Caucasians and Alan-Ossetians transmigrated and settled down in their remains. The majority of Ossetians lived in stone houses. There were pagan sacred places almost in every village, which they called "Dzuar". This word originates from the Georgian word "Jvari" (cross), from times when Georgians spread Christianity.

During weddings and funerals, the people of the whole gorge gathered to support and encourage each other. The villages, that were situated close to each other, represented territorial-neighboring unions and were linked to each other with an oath. It was done at a sacred place by the elders. To consolidate their vow, they made some cutting on the stick which was kept in the common sacred place.

The community members had private and collective lands: the arable and mowing lands were private and pastures and woods common.

Ossetian food was similar to that of other North Caucasian mountaineers. They prepared pies stuffed with meat or cheese, which they called „Khabizjins“. Also beer, „Bagan“, was very popular among Ossetians, which was made of barley in the mountain region and wheat and corn in the valley region. According to the Narts Epos, beer was made by one of the characters of the epos, Satana. Habitually, it was prepared in a big copper pot during great festivals of a family or community. Earlier the Ossetians used to make a heady drink from honey called "Rong".

Ossetian society was divided into several social groups. Ossetians were organized due to their patronymic kinship. Their family names were patronymic. Each patronymic („Miggar“) represented the union of some patronymics („Fidifirt“). Ossetian scientists suppose that the 16. century is the time of Ossetian patronymics formation. In Georgia, Ossetian patronymic names descended from the first migrants. Several names originated from neighboring people (the Ingush, the Balkans, the Georgians). It has been confirmed that the names of the second line, uniting four-five or more patronymics, descended from common ancestors. Up to now, exogamy is strictly controlled within the blood related groups. Those who abrogated exogamy were punished and were exiled from society. This custom was so severe that people of different kinship, who had heard about their common descent, did not make marriages. In Georgia such names were: Kokoev and Gaciev, Sanakoev and Gagloev. Marriage was forbidden among related or fraternized groups. Marriage was forbidden not only within the bounds of one section, but within the whole village. It was initially conditioned by the fact that villages, for a long time, were populated with one patronymic group, which then became a tradition. There are cases in Ossetian legends about strict punishment of incest. Each Ossetian patronymic group had its own cemetery and sacred place for praying ("Dzuar"). In Ossetia, monogamy was the dominant practice. Polygamy was very rare and was allowed in case of barrenness of the first wife. In that case, the permission of the first wife and her relatives was needed. It is mentioned in the scientific literature that it

was necessary to receive the consent of a bride, of her mother, brothers and uncle (mother's brothers).

There were many old institutions that were maintained in Ossetia among which could be named revenge (vendetta), which involved not only close but far relatives also. Vendetta was the respond to humiliation of dignity, abduction, quarrels about lands and so on. As reconciliation, the offender part had to give a lot of cattle, valuables (weapons, pots for beer preparation) and arrange a feast. According to M. Kosven, in old times wives could share bed publicly in November and December. Generally husband and wife used to meet each other secretly. Fathers never used to carry their child in his arms and never addressed their children with their names.

The customs and traditions of assistance, hospitality and brotherhood of Ossetians were similar to other peoples of the Caucasus. Large families still existed at the beginning of the Soviet period. Nuptial age for males was seventeen to eighteen and for females fourteen to sixteen. Those who got married had to pay bride-money, which sometimes was the main reason of abduction. Weddings generally were held in autumn after harvesting. Those Ossetians who lived in Georgia often married Georgians, but they had to take Christianity. The village ruling was done by a council ("Nikhasi"), which was also the name of the place where councils were held. The members were all adult males of the community, but the elders played a major role.

All relatives were informed about death. Funeral and a funeral repast were held the other day. A horse was sacrificed to the deceased and horse-race and target shoot was held in his respect. The plate of a widow was cut and hung over the grave.

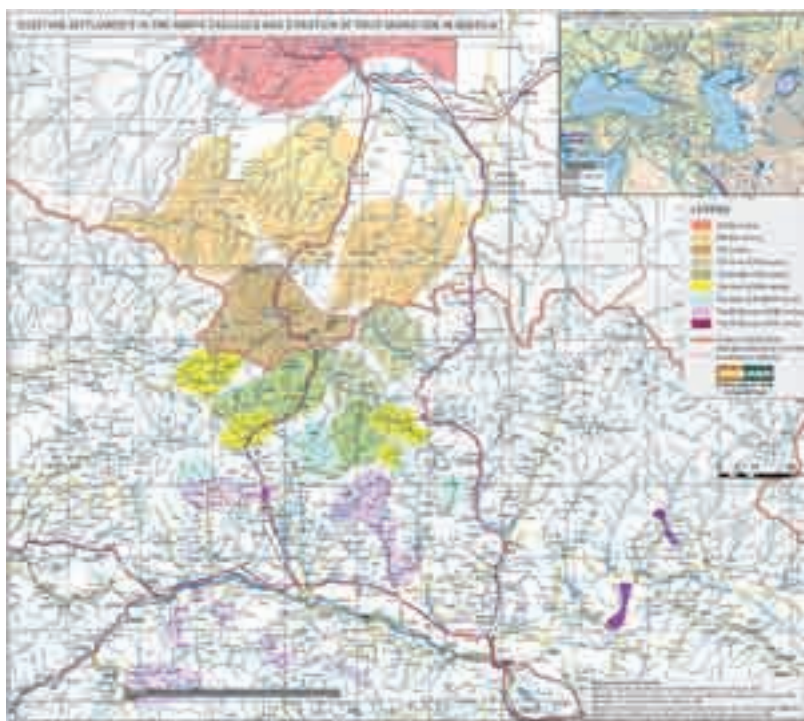
Nowadays, Ossetians are mainly Christians and a small amount are Muslims. Islam was basically spread within Ossetians of Digori. Christianity was introduced here in the 6. - 7. centuries by Byzantium and later by Georgia but wasn't engrained among population. In the late Middle Ages, Ossetians residing in the mountain gorges were the followers of pre-Christian faith and ideas. The Georgian government tried to introduce Christianity through the migrating Ossetians. Islam was spread in West Ossetia from Kabardo in the 17. - 18. centuries. Ossetians had Christianized deities: Uats-Giorgi, Uastirji (St. George), Uatsila (St. Ilia), Uatsnikola (St. Nickolas), Uatstotur (St. Theodor) and others. There were common sacred places ("Zuars") and worships of family and the village in Ossetia. The Allaguirs' sacred place was "Rekom". In that warship place was a bell with ancient Georgian inscriptions on it. In prayers, Ossetians often used to mention "Miqalgabrit" and "Taranjeloz", which corresponded to Georgian Mickael-Gabryel and Archangel. As for the Kurtati and Taguri Gorges, there were no common gorge worships, but village sacred places like 'Dzigvisi Dzuar" of the Saint George. Ossetians, similar to Georgians used to sacrifice land to the sacred places (when childless parents finally bore a baby, or when one did not have the heir or they had to abandon their homeland).

Ossetian folklore is very rich. It's worth of mentioning that V. Miler considered that the Narths' epos was created in the steppes of the North Caucasus, as the names of large rivers, seas and steppes are often mentioned there. The Narths used to fish in the large rivers and seas. This material directly points out the fact that Ossetians initially inhabited the steppes not the mountains. In the Narths' epos, nothing is mentioned

about Alans settlements in the mountains. The Narths used to hunt deer, but the wild beasts of Ossetia are not mentioned in the epos at all. Horse was Narths' favorite domestic animal, as an indivisible part of nomadic people. The fact that Ossetian ancestors were inhabitants of the steppes is evidenced by their agricultural calendar. Scientists concluded that the calendar had been created in valleys not in mountains. Also the historical songs prove it. One of the songs depicts the Tamer-Lam marches in Digori Gorge. The birth of the national literature in the 19. century was a very important event in the Ossetian people's cultural life. The initiator was Kosta Khetagurov (1850-1906).

At the end, it should be mentioned that Georgian historical sources appear to be of key importance when studying the history of Ossetia and other important issues. In his work Vakhushti Bagrationi wrote the following about Ossetians: "Men are handsome and women slim, well built up, beautiful, with dark complexion and good appearance. At home eating little, satisfied with bread, water and whey and greedy outside; coward at fight, but brave when acting stealthily at night; free and proud at home and in other countries modest, good talkers, revengeful..."

We must finish this article with Vasil Abaev's words, which were published in the "Nezavisimaia Gazeta" (independent newspaper) in 1992 (January 22): "The main mountain range of the Caucasus is the natural border between Georgia and Ossetia. Every trial to remove these borders will cause permanent conflict situation.... First of all, the discussion about breaking off Ossetia from Georgia must be stopped, because no Georgian government will ever agree with it, as it means the destruction of the territorial integrity. Those who want peace between Georgians and Ossetians should throw away the idea of South Ossetia's and North Ossetia's integration. Also those who wish peace between Georgia and Russia must withdraw this idea. That is the reality." Unfortunately, nobody listened to this Ossetian scientist. The falsified history and perfidious plans, created by the Russian Government, misled Ossetian people. Historians cannot foresee the future. One thing is clear, the prognosis in this situation does not seem to be hopeful.



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Regarding the Political-Legal Status Of a Certain Part (Tskhinvali region) of Shida Kartli

Bimurza Dadeshkeliani-Aprasidze

Since the 19. century, the Russian government provided the "absorption" of the entire Caucasus and first of all of the Black Sea front by means of genocide, ethnic cleansing, deportation and demographic expansion of the Caucasian peoples. According to the "project" of the Tsarist Russian government and the Decembrists (Pestel, 1991), the issue of resettlement of the Caucasian "mutinous" nations (Georgians, Chechens, Daghestans, Adygheans, Circassians, Kabardinians, Apsua/ Abkhazians...) was principally posed. Only those obeying to Russia, "placid" nations together with the settled Russians, were to be left in the Caucasus. This process lasted while the existence of the entire Soviet Empire and still continues up to present in form of the Georgian, Chechen, Ingushian peoples genocide and ethnic cleansing.

During the history of Georgian statehood, its legitimate authorities (Pharnavazian Dynasty, Bagrationi Dynasty, the Georgian Democratic Republic and the Georgian Republic Authority) have never recognized the existence of any form of autonomous entity in the midst of the country, meaning in Shida Kartli.

In February-March of 1921 and in 1991-1993, following the occupation of independent Georgia, the armed forces of the Russian empire (the 8th, 9th, 11th Armies, the Trans-Caucasian Military Regional Forces, the Special military services, the Black Sea Navy, Rostov special troops, Dzerzhinsk Division and the 345th Air -Landing Regiment) and the local renegades established unconstitutionally, the so- called South Ossetian Autonomous District (which was later renamed South Ossetian Republic).

From 1921 to 1990 and since 1992 up to the present days, the author of the autonomous formations in both cases was the illegal regime ruled by Russia, – as was the occupation administration of the Republic of Georgia.

In 1918-1921 and in 1990-1991, the legitimate government of Georgia based on the Georgian constitution and international law suppressed the attempts to separate the territory of Shida Kartli from Georgia.

In 1989-1991, as a result of the Russian (Kremlin) propaganda there was disseminated false information as if the ethnic minorities were oppressed by Georgians. As an example of such disinformation serves the photo-video material on burning alive a Georgian patriot, Mindiashvili, by Ossetians, which was presented abroad as the confirming material of Ossetians' burning alive. Besides, at the international conference of dissidents in Prague, members of the so-called National Congress accused the Georgian nation the Ossetian people's genocide and in discrimination of ethnic minorities.

Moreover, on the account of protecting of ethnic minorities living in Georgia, the Russian authority established military-political organizations in 1989-1991 as were

"Aidgilara", "Adamon-Nikhas", "Krunk", "Soyuz", "Kazaks' Union", "Slavic House", "Mountaineer Peoples' Union", "Mashtoz" and others.

In 1921-1922 and in 1991-1993 as result of the aggression committed against the sovereign Georgian Republic, via violating the UN Charter, the UN Declarations of 1965 and 1974 and the OSCE Conferences and elementary norms of international law, there was perpetrated the occupation of Abkhazia and Shida Kartli.

On April 20, 1922, the Russian occupation regime created the South Ossetian Autonomous District. This fact was harshly opposed by 20,000 Georgians and 1,100 ethnic Ossetians (i.e. majority of the Ossetians) living on this territory.

In 1988-1990, the communist regime of Georgia that was forcedly included within the frames of the Soviet Union, factually lost its control over the so- called Autonomous District of South Ossetia – jurisdiction of Soviet Georgia was almost not extended over this region.

In August of 1990, the Georgian Communist Government (Occupation Administration of Russia) declared the self-liquidation by means of admitting the Georgian occupation by Soviet Russia in 1921. As a consequence, all the adopted legal acts during 70 years (amongst them were the resolutions about the establishment of autonomies), were invalidated (regulation, 20.08.1990).

From October 28, 1990, since the very first days of coming into power of the democratically elected legitimate national government of Georgia, the authorities of the Russian empire have been attempting to stop the building process of Georgian statehood with the help of the Ossetian separatists and its military-occupation forces. On December 9, 1990, according to the instruction of the Russian government and with their immediate guidance the Ossetian separatists held elections of the Supreme Council of the so- called "Soviet Republic of South Ossetia" and thus, caused a serious threat to the territorial integrity of the Georgian Republic.

On December 11, 1990, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia adopted the 363th law "Regarding Abolishing the Autonomous District of the South Ossetia" (law, 12.12.1990). It was mentioned in the law that, "the separatist forces in the Autonomous District of South Ossetia try to commit usurpation of the state authority by means of creating the so called "Soviet Republic of South Ossetia", as well as to infringe upon a historical, indivisible part of Georgia, that vividly opposes not only the Georgian Constitution, but also the USSR constitution and the elementary norms of the international...". According to article 104, paragraphs 3 and 11 of the constitution of the Georgian Republic, the Supreme Council of the Georgian Republic stated:

1. to abolish the South Ossetian Autonomous District;
2. ...
3. to declare invalid 2 decrees of the Georgian Central Executive Committee and the Georgian Public Commissariat Council issued on April 20, 1922 regarding the structure of the "South Ossetian Autonomy" and the Georgian SSR law of November 12, 1980 about the "South Ossetian Autonomous District";

4. "...to render null the results of elections on the so-called South Ossetian Soviet Republic held by the Supreme Council on December 9, 1990...".

On March 23, 1991, in Kazbegi there was signed a document by the leader of the Georgian Republic Zviad Gamsakhurdia and the head of RSFSR (Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic) Boris Eltsin, in which a term "a former South Ossetia Autonomous District" was stated. Besides, Russia recognized that the issue about the status of the former South Ossetian Autonomous District as indivisible part of Georgia was the internal affair of Georgia. Russia also agreed to withdraw the USSR military forces from this zone ("Sakartvelos Respublika", Republic of Georgia, 24.03.1991).

In May 1991, the Higher Council of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic together with the representatives of the Higher Council of the Russian Federation and the Supreme Council of the Georgian Republic, in attendance of the Ossetian side as supervisor, initialed a treaty on the basis of which the resolution of the problem of Tskhinvali Region was stated as a prerogative of the Georgian Republic. On this ground, the Presidium of the Higher Council of the USSR adopted a statement of similar essence.

In public referendum held on May 31, 1991, about 99.68% of electorate in Tskhinvali region and 99.44% in Akhlagori region voted for restoration of the Georgian state independence. Great majority of ethnic Ossetians, living on the entire territory of the Georgian Republic, voted in three elections held on October 29, 1990, March 31, 1991 and May 26, 1991 for independence of Georgia, territorial integrity, the program of the "Round Table – Independent Georgia" and the state policy of Zviad Gamsakhurdia ("Khma Erisa" (Nation's Voice, 1995, p.94-98, p.470-475).

Based on the results of the Referendum of March 31, 1991, on the ground of restoration of the Georgian state independence on April 9, 1991, proceeding from the Constitution of the Georgian Republic and the international legal norms, the Supreme Council of the Georgian Republic adopted the 657th Regulation (on September 15, 1991) regarding the armed forces of the Soviet Union located in Georgia in which there was stated:

"1.To declare the USSR armed forced located on the Georgian territory as the occupation military forces;

2. The government of the Georgian Republic shall start negotiations regarding withdrawal of the USSR armed forces from the Georgian territory; 3. Before final withdrawal of the USSR armed forces from the Georgian territory, to bring up the issue before the USSR of immediate withdrawal of the Soviet troops from the Abkhazian ASR and the former South Ossetian Autonomous District, as their presence and activity on these territories hinder the stabilization of the situation in the region" (Resolution, 16. 09.1991).

The occupation regime of Shevardnadze ignored the constitution of the Georgian Republic, the results of the Referendum of March 31, 1991, the act of April 9, 1991 on restoration of the state independence, the UN Charter, the OSCE Vienna 1986 summarizing document and the Regulations of the Supreme Council of the Georgian Republic of September 15 and March 13, 1992. It signed a treaty with Russia in Dagomis, in force of which the Russian military forces were given the right to deploy

in Tskhinvali region the “peacekeepers” status. As far as the Russian empire military forces located on the Georgian territory were declared as the occupation troops by the Georgian legitimate authority since 1991, the “obligation” undertaken, following, to the Dagomis Treaty, was now admitted as a state crime before Georgia. Adding to that, it should be considered void as the document was signed by the illegal regime. It’s worth noting that, at that period, the still existing and functioning legitimate government of Georgia had been expelled from the country by Russia (the President of Georgia, legislative body – Supreme Council of the Georgian Republic, the Georgian government and the local self-governance bodies).¹

In parallel, the occupation regime of Shevardnadze supported the parliamentary elections of so-called South Ossetia and announced the South Ossetia state formation in Shida Kartli at the meetings that were held in Borjomi, Tskhinvali, Moscow and Vladikavkaz. Meantime, together with the Russian government and the Ossetian separatists, this regime attempted to accuse the Georgian legitimate authority in Tskhinvali region conflict which was in fact provoked by Russia.

Besides, Shevardnadze’s illegitimate regime illegally rendered the occupation troops the role of “peacekeepers” in the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic.²

Nowadays, Putin-Medvedev’s regime, after committing genocide of Georgians in Tskhinvali region, attempts to legalize this factual situation and by means of declaring “two Ossetian” Republics create the legal-political grounds for formation of one Ossetia in composition of the Russian Empire.

Russia, since August 7, 2008, besides of its own and also Georgian constitution (Constitution of Georgia, 1995) has violated the major principles of international law³, namely:

1. principle of territorial integrity;
2. principle of state sovereignty and equality;
3. principle of non-use of force in international relations;
4. principle of inviolability of frontiers;
5. principle of non-intervention in domestic affairs of other states;
6. principle to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms;
7. principle of equity and right on national self-determination;
8. principle of peaceful settlement of disputes;
9. implementation of obligations and agreements determined by international law and others.

1 It’s paradox but yet a fact: the “Treaty” of Dagomis among Russia and Georgia from the Georgian side was signed by the Russian citizen Eduard Shevardnadze, who was a representative of the Russian Occupation Administration in Georgia.

2 Compare: earlier before, by the time of turning Georgia into the Soviet country, the Russian Bolshevik Empire with the support of Sergo Ordjonikidze’s occupation administration created the so called South Ossetia Autonomous District by means of neglecting the Georgian legitimate authority.

3 The UN Charter; the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, 1990

At this time, Russia occupies Ksani Gorge – Akhargori region. This act represents a fact of violence and cynicism, as the South Ossetia autonomous entity had not existed since December 11, 1990. It should be mentioned that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Akhargori Region was always controlled legally by Tbilisi and the jurisdiction of the Georgian government on the mentioned territory is spread up today.

Annexation of Shida Kartli to Russia has neither legal nor political or geographical grounds.

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Church – Consolidating the Georgian Regions

Metropolitan Ananya Japaridze

Saint Ilia the Righteous said from the very establishment of the holy Church of Georgia, that it presented a strong power consolidating the whole population of the state. It was not locked within the narrow ethnic borders but was the belonging of different ethnos residing in the state. According to Holy Writ, it never differentiated Hellenist from Jew, Georgian from non-Georgian, as its flocks were children of Georgia with mutual responsibility to the country and citizenship. Even Saint Nino, founder of the Georgian Church, came from Kapadokia. Saint of Georgian Church, martyr Razhden, and Saint Evstati Mtskheteli were Persian. Famous 12 fathers struggling against fire-worship and Monophysitism were Assyrian (Syrian). Neopyth Urbani Episcopo was Arabian. The famous Saint Abo Tbileli came from Arabia too. The Saint Queen Shushanik was Armenian etc.

The above list shows that Georgian church unified all citizens of the country in spite of their ethnic origin. At the same time, the Georgian church always used to create a united cultural space. The Georgian Church was consolidating regions and different ethnic groups of Georgia.

The Georgian language was the key factor of Georgian Christian culture. Initially, Georgian language and based on it Georgian Christian culture embraced whole Georgia, all its regions. Divine services, all church acts, in mountains and lowlands from the Black Sea to Armenia and Albania were implemented only in Georgian language. Georgian language and Georgian culture dominated all over the Georgian territory. And just this differentiates old Georgia from the present one.

It's evident that the main flocks of Georgian Church were Georgians of West, South and East Georgia. Also, as seen from the above indicated list, the flocks of Georgian Church were Persians, Arabians, Assyrians, Armenians etc. residing in Georgia. Georgian Church unified flocks of diverse ethnos via the Georgian language and culture.

Georgian literary language – as the basis of integration of Georgian population - due to Old Fathers' knowledge, was protected by God itself. For example, in the "Life of Syrian Fathers" is described such a story: the fathers were told from heaven, that they were to go to preach in Georgia. They were astonished as they didn't know Georgian language, some of them hadn't even heard about this country before. But the Holy Spirit acquired them with knowledge in Georgian language, similar to Apostles who acquired knowledge in different languages. And really, from the very arrival, Syrian fathers were preaching in Georgian language throughout all Georgia and christianized many people.

Georgian language and culture were treated with special care by Saint Fathers originated from different regions. For example Saint Ilarion the Georgian originated from Kakheti region. He served the Divine in Greece and praised God in Georgian

language. Preceptor of one monastery forbade him serving in Georgian, but the Blessed Virgin was shown to the Greek father saying that Georgian language was the "Language of Salvation". Besides, the Blessed Virgin was shown to Ekvtime Mtatsmindeli from Tao, dying in one of the Greek monasteries and taught him Georgian language as he spoke only Greek.

In Abkhazia, Samegrelo Svaneti, Kakheti, Meskheti, Argveti, Takveri, Guria, Adjara, Tianeti and other provinces, only native Georgian was applied in divine service. There were no separate provincial cultures in Georgia but one Georgian culture and a unique Georgian language.

Georgian literary language was not a product of Christianity. Ivane Javakhishvili stated that even in the period of paganism, in all provinces including Samegrelo and Svaneti, Georgian was the language applied in pagan services. It means that Georgian language was not disseminated from one of the provinces of Karthli to different provinces of Georgia, due to the so-called Karthization. Georgian language existed even before Christianity in period of paganism. So far before Christianity, Georgian communities were united by a common Georgian culture and language.

From the epoch of Saint Nino till the appearance of Russians in the Caucasus i.e. from the ancient period to the 19. century, Georgian language and culture unified people of different ethnic origin, settling in Georgia. Generally, all Georgian residents spoke Georgian language. Moreover, Georgian language was used for relation between nations of Caucasian origin. It's not casual that there are many Georgian lapidary inscriptions even in Caucasus – Dagestan, Chechnya-Ingushetia and North Ossetia. Abkhazia and Shida Kartli always were Georgian cultural centers, not only in good times but in bad times too, when Georgian State power was destructed. During Arabian domination (lasting 400 years) in Tbilisi, in the 8. - 11. centuries, Abkhazia and Tao-Klarjeti represented the centers of consolidation of Georgian nation, Georgian culture and state power. Also afterwards, in the 17. century, when East Georgia was conquered by Persians, Samegrelo defended Georgian state system and culture under the ruling of Levan II Dadiani. The same was in other regions of Georgia. None of the Georgian provinces created local culture. Culture of each region of Georgia was a part of the common Georgian culture.

Hence, the state of Georgia i.e. Karthli, since the period of Apostles, King Mirian and Scent Nino, involved the entire territory of the present day Georgia on which, since paganism was spread the common Georgian culture. Due to the notes of Episcopo Leonti Mroveli, there was no other language applied in Georgia 300 years before Christ but Georgian. According to "Karthlis Tskhovreba" (Iife of Karthli) and "Moqtsevai Karthlisai" (Christianization of Georgia), Mirian was King of United Georgia (from Egristskali to Albania) and Saint Nino due, to the note of Ruis-Urbnisi church meeting, "Enlightener of whole Georgia." I.e. the Georgian Church from the very establishment at the time of St. Nino involved West and East Georgia. Proceeding from the above mentioned can be noted the following:

Georgian language and culture was spread throughout whole Georgia from ancient times. Since then and till the 19. century, Georgian language and culture served as the basic consolidating source for integration of different ethnoses, coming to Georgia

at different times, into the whole Georgian state.

This historically confirmed viewpoint was unquestionable until the 20. century. Inadequate attitude towards the History of Georgia was developed after domination of the Russian Empire in Georgia. Due to the so-called "Kartization" theory, West Georgia was quasi under jurisdiction of Constantinople for 600 years. Then, in 9. - 10. centuries, Georgian church broke into foreign jurisdiction and abolished Greek Episcopacy in West Georgia and established Georgian Episcopacy instead, which created space for spreading Georgian language and culture in West Georgia. I.e. had occurred "Kartization" of west Georgian population. Also Meskhs, mountaineers of East Georgia and even Her-Albanian tribes quasi underwent "Kartization". The "Kartization" theory, which was the ideology of the Russian imperial politics of the 19. century, is still actual among the circles aiming to separate Georgian regions from the integral Georgian state.

Soviet historiography was used by the Russian Empire as ideological weapon. In particular, if old Georgian historiography stated that integral Georgia was founded centuries far before Christ in the period of King Parnavaz, the Soviet historiography stated the opposite: that integral Georgian State was established only in the 11. century during Bagrat III. If old historiography stated that Saint Nino and Andrew were enlighteners of the Georgian population, new Georgian historiography stated that Saint Nino was enlightener of East Georgia only, whilst Andrew of West Georgia.

According to old Georgian historiography, Georgian culture and language involved whole Georgia from the very period of King Parnavaz. Due to the Soviet historiography, Georgian language was spread in West Georgia only in the 9. - 10. centuries. According to old historiography, Vakhtang Gorgasali and all his predecessors were also kings of West Georgia but according to new studies, they were kings only of East Georgia. In the period of Bagrat III, not the latter, Parnavaz was mentioned to be the first king of Georgia. The Soviet Kartvelology destroyed the viewpoint of Georgians integrity, it stated that Parnavaz was a king only of "Karthli" i.e. East Georgia.

If old Georgian historiography recognized jurisdiction of Georgian church in West Georgia from the period of Saint Nino, the new one considered that West Georgia was under jurisdiction of Constantinople.

The Soviet regime tried to separate Samegrelo, Svaneti and Abkhazia from Georgia. Therefore, it was necessary to create a strong historiographical basis to confirm that in West Georgia there existed Kolkhic (Colchis) and then Lazic states with their own language and culture, whilst the sources indicate that Colchic culture was not a narrow local event but the language of common Georgian phenomenon. G. Melikishvili and other famous historians and linguists have stated that the Kolchic language is undivided the so-called Zanur-Georgian language (in other viewpoint the basic Georgian language) and that Kolchic culture involved not only South-West Georgia but the whole present day Georgia. Common Georgian Kolchic state gave birth to ancient state of Karthli established by King Parnavaz.

The contemporary situation in Georgia completely differs from the old one. Now, after 200 years of Russian domination, Georgian is no more a language of relation

between different nations but Russian. The same can be said regarding the culture if in old times Georgian culture served for unification of different regions, today Russian culture is uniting different ethnic groups of Georgia (it means that Azeri, Armenians, Ossetians or Abkhazians, even Georgians communicate in Russian language. Russian culture is common and familiar to them). So, Russian language and culture not only limited Georgian language and culture in Georgia but replaced it completely.

The process of falsification of the history continues:

Unfortunately, in the issue of "Orthodox Encyclopedia" of 2007, volume 13, the second viewpoint is recognized, that West Georgia was under jurisdiction of Greek church in the 9. - 10. centuries. Accordingly, old Georgian church standpoint is rejected. In volume 13 of the same encyclopedia, Saint Nino is mentioned to be enlightener only of Kartli, East Georgia and the reader is assured that it is the only viewpoint, while according to Ivane Javakhishvili: "Georgians immediately considered Saint Nino to be the enlightener of integral Georgia and not of its separate part". The authors of "Orthodox Encyclopedia" point to the shortage of sources on West Georgian church jurisdiction, ignoring the fact that the issue was discussed at Ruis-Urbnisi church meeting which accepted appropriate definition. Apparently, authors of "Orthodox Encyclopedia" did not consider the conclusions of Ruis-Urbnisi church meeting to be a source for investigating the case of West Georgian jurisdiction.

In order to meet the globalization process in a worthy manner, Georgian nation should strengthen the Georgian state and promote formation of faithful citizens of different ethnic origins and confessions. Expanding of Georgian culture is the key factor in achieving this goal. Due to such situation, priority should be given to Georgian culture. The government should lead appropriate politics in the country in order to make Georgian language, culture and music accessible for everybody. The minority rights should also be protected.

For implementation of the above mentioned goals, special attention should be paid to all sources of information (media, TV, radio, internet) to apply Georgian language. As practiced in every country, national channels should broadcast in the state language. It's humiliating for Georgian culture that in most of the Georgian regions, such as Kvemo Karthli, Samtskhe-Javakheti, north highlands and other provinces, TV and radio space are covered by Azeri, Armenian, Russian and other foreign channels, broadcasting in different languages (not Georgian). Even 30 to 40% of Tbilisi's radio and TV channels are in Russian.

Georgia, as a small country, should be ready to meet globalization process with a strengthened centralized state. Accordingly, due to territorial-administrative arrangement, Georgia should not be divided into separate regions. This can threaten territorial integrity of the country in future. Such division can promote separatist tendencies of the regional authorities (as in the case of South Ossetia).

Federal arrangement can be fatal for Georgia. More dangerous is the establishment of army (even reserve type), of region prosecutor offices and other power facilities and educational systems. Ivane Javakhishvili stated that communities and provincialism always carried threat for the territorial integrity of Georgia. It became the reason for

division of Georgia in the 15. - 16. centuries: communities won and the King of all Georgia was defeated. In Middle Ages, Georgian territorial integrity was weakened by community. Other countries, expecting globalization, already passed stages of feudal division (Turkey, Azerbaijan, Rumania etc) and were established as centralized states. Now, according to medieval legal model, division of Georgia into regions is a reanimation of ethnic state division. This will prevent consolidation of Georgian nation and integration of local ethnic groups as Georgian citizens. The neighboring empire tries to make Georgian leaders establish Georgia as federal state.

Finally, it should be concluded that before Georgia was annexed by Russia i.e. till the 19. century, Georgian language and culture were important means of consolidation of Georgian population and state integration. Particularly in the 20. century, Russian language replaced Georgian. Nowadays, we hope that Georgian society will manage to solve this problem and develop the Georgian linguistic-cultural space, protect the cultural rights of other ethnic groups and establish Georgian as the state language.

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Russian Church Globalization Project and Georgian Orthodox Church

Ketevan Pavliashvili

World history proved that the creation of globalization projects is a characteristic feature for great empires of theocratic type trying to dominate over the world and using the church for this goal. First universal empire of such type is Byzantium. Russian scientist A. Dvornik notes: "In Byzantium, the empire has the concept of a state body with two heads, the world patriarch and the world emperor. This body involved the whole orthodox world, rather the world which will become orthodox". Byzantium sharing the theocratic ideology became a pioneer of orthodox globalization and its capital, Constantinople, was called "Eternal City", "Eastern Rome", "Center of Theocratic Empire".

Theocratic ideas became interesting for young states and, when in the middle of the 15. century, the "Second Rome" disappeared from the political map but still remained the idea of imperial globalization, there appeared Moscow to be the "Third Rome" with the vanity of orthodox empire. Russia immediately adopted all signs of theocracy: 1) Khiliazm – in the form of Russia's historic mission; 2) Escatologism – with creation of "Third Rome" ideology i.e. exclusion of existence of the "Fourth Rome"; 3) Messianism – by the theory of Peculiar Russian People. Thereafter messianic ideas became an integral part of Russian nationalistic ideology. N. Berdyaev noted: "From ancient times there exists the opinion on Russia being a country of great activities and that it differs from other ones. Russian nationalism is fed with the idea of their peculiarity and proceeds from the idea of the "Third Rome". The latter required changes in public-political life of Russia and Moscow aimed to assume Byzantium mission of world saving. It came closer to the Greek Church and turned into a World Orthodox Empire with its church having world status.

Charmed by Byzantium globalization, Russia counterfeited it in projects creation and made the first project just immediately after the collapse of Byzantium (1453) and "Golden Horde" (1480). From this time, Moscow principality began training for formation as Super-Power of Eastern Christianity and usefully used the church in this case.

Russia began simultaneous work on several church globalization projects: for the Near East – holy land, Aton Hill; for Eastern Europe – unification of Rech-Postolita state; for the Caucasus - assimilation of orthodox Georgia with Russia. Survey subject of the present work is the project of the Caucasus Church globalization with leading load of Georgian Church.

Russia was distinguished with perfected church globalization projects; the most complex among them was the Caucasus project. The latter passed the painful way of evolution with changes relative to epoch. The Caucasus project can be divided into several stages: the 16. - 17. centuries, the 18. century and the 19. - 20. centuries. The latter in its part is divided into internal stages: the 19. century, the 1910s, "new"

the so-called "Democratic Russia", the 1920s of Lenin-Trotsky, the 1930 and 1940s of Stalin, the so-called "reformation" epoch and modern post-Soviet globalization projects. Each stage of the project was connected to the foreign political course of Russia and the Caucasus project as well was a part of a great project envisaging Russia's domination in the world. It should be noted that government imposed the Russian Church to have decisive function and the latter headed for the Georgian Orthodox Church. The goal of this work is to analyze the results and to make general conclusion about these processes.

The 16. - 17. centuries is the period of struggle between great powers for world redistribution. Contradiction between East and West powers was passing through Georgia and made the so called «Issue of Gurjistan» very urgent. During this time interests of Iran, Europe and Russia intersected and any diplomatic agreement between them became impossible. In such case, the political choice of Georgia was of critical importance. Due to its orthodox belief Russia had an advantage, which determined the methodology of its global project: subordination of Georgia with the help of its church. In such a way, orthodoxy became a basis for Russia's aggressive politics and the project acquired a church globalization character.

Georgian church, stuck between the European Catholicism and Eastern Christianity, took an option on Russia. The latter diligently studied the pathways to become closer to Georgia and using the difficult situation of Georgia, declared itself to be the defender of the religion. In this way Russia conflicted with Vatican's interests and condemning popularization of Catholicism precipitated implementation of a globalization project. In diplomatic negotiations of Russia and Georgia was urgent the issue of Catholicism in Georgia. Russian diplomats complained about Georgians loyal politics towards Vatican, blaming them in "Violation of Rules". True evidence of the above is a deed sent by Russian patriarch to Alaverdi Metropolitan in 1589, describing a mission of Russia on defending Georgia from aggression of Catholicism. Arsen Sukhanov, being a diplomat in the years 1630 - 1640, informed the king of Russia about the situation in Georgia and considered necessary a "Revision of Iberians Religion". The above facts were followed by requirement of Russia on arranging Georgian church into Russian manner, what was met by Georgian King and clergy with great protest. To punish Georgia, Russia didn't prevent the invasion of Georgia by Iran. So the first attempt of Russia to implement the Church globalization project in Georgia failed.

In the 18. century, Russia intended to finally conquer the Caucasus. Russia was perfectly familiarized with the problems of the region and decided to use assistance in struggle against Muslim aggressors as enticement. Russia prepared solid theoretical basis for the new project called the "Caucasians Saving Theory". This theory had several tasks: political, economical and religious. Due to the fact that traditionally Georgia was the key for Russia in conquering the Caucasus, it applied the Georgian Church and exploited it as a foothold in project implementation. Georgian church was imposed to carry out the missionary activities among the Caucasian mountaineers. Missionary work of Georgian clergy strengthened national self-consciousness among the Caucasians and saved their culture and traditions from degradation via introducing elements of the Georgian culture in them. Work of Georgian clergy among the Caucasian mountaineers was positively assessed even by Russia. General Tormasov

noted: "Georgian clergy has done great services to the Caucasus via spreading Christianity. Caucasians owe to Georgian Church".

At the beginning of the 18. century, the international condition was not suitable for Russia to reveal its real interests in the Caucasus but the situation changed in the second half, when Russia showed down its cards being irritated by Georgia's achievements in the Caucasus. Russia began to reject Georgian clergy from the Caucasus. Afterwards, for a long period, Georgian Church left traditional mission by force.

The 19. century is the period of ascent of the Russian Empire, which increased its ambitions regarding domination over the world. Proceeding from this, globalization project acquired a large-scale form. Religious factor in the project acquired more significant load, because confessional variety of the Caucasus prevented the implementation of Russian goals. Russia's state ideology was Russian Orthodoxy and it was natural that, it would not adapt to the existence of nations with different religions. Defining nationalism and due to the demands of the Empire, assimilation of those ethnos into Russia was envisaged. In such case Russia brought to the forefront Orthodoxy and put it as basis for globalization project.

In a new project, special attention was paid again to the Georgian church but in that case it was aggressive. The first stage of a new project, envisaged via abolition of the Georgian Church, to provide establishment of a Russian Church cell in the Caucasus. The second part of the project envisaged Russification of the Caucasians via the above mentioned cell. Therefore, during the 19. century, Russia was implementing the process of liquidation of Georgian Church. In its activities Russia met serious difficulties. It came across the ancient traditions of the Georgian Orthodox Church, which turned out to be a staunch defender of national interests. Georgian clergy assumed the initiative of the state unification. It was involved in public-political movement and led the cultural life of the country.

In church globalization program, several directions were distinguished: political, economical, cultural-ideological and religious. Each of them involved a sphere of activity. They were to establish the Russian regime, at the expense of degradation of Georgian Church and its clergy to be exploited in popularization of Russian monarchism.

Georgian clergy together with Georgian society declared war to the Russian project and joined common civil commotion. This struggle did not envisage rejection of political orientation towards Russia because the clergy perfectly realized the political-religion essence of Georgian-Russian relations. They just aimed to restore the rights of Georgia and the national church that was in opposition with the church globalization project of Russia. During the 19. century, the above opposition passed a difficult way and in spite of several failures, Georgian vital forces were gaining energy under the leadership of Church and continued stubborn struggle.

The first decade of the 20. century is an agony period for Russian aggressive imperialism and in spite of an internal and external political-spiritual crisis, Russia continued to struggle for the rights of "Third Rome" and developed a new church globalization

project. Unlike the previous one, the new project was directed towards preservation of political-religion rights achieved in the Caucasus. The target in that case was still the Georgian Church. The project embraced different options for reformation of exarchate: infringe on administrative rights of the Church; violation of metropolitan borders; subordination of Georgian Eparchies to Saint Synod etc. Georgian clergy, both orally and written, expressed strong resistance to the realization of the project and acted due to the processes proceeding in the Empire. Georgian clergy assumed leadership in this struggle. Thus, via inflaming belief and nationalism in Georgians, the clergy prepared the nation for an organized approach towards the state and religious independency, which finally resulted in the victory of national forces.

Events, which took place in 1918-1921 in Georgia, show that forces (provisional government, Bolshevik and counter-revolutionary) acting in Russia after the revolution (1917) still considered the global Caucasus within the borders of "New Russia". They used different methods for achieving the above goal: Bolsheviks with provocation i.e. setting Russian population of the Caucasus against Georgians; provisional government – with reformation of institutes of Tsarism period; White Guard – with military actions. A new preparation of the project began in Russia, which aimed to satisfy requirements of "New Russia". Actually, it did not differ from Tsarism requirements, differences laid only in methods. The new project envisaged the creation of new church cell: the Caucasian Exarchate, which would prepare assimilation through the religion of Caucasians for integration into the Empire under the pretext of Russian Orthodoxy. Thus, for the imperialistic goals of "New Russia", alliance was made between State and Church. One aimed State domination in the Caucasus and the other preservation of church power. The first would be the guarantor of Russian Church domination and the other defender of imperialistic ideas in the Caucasus.

Georgian society immediately guessed a challenge by the so-called democratic Russia and declared restoration of church sovereignty (1917). This was a new struggle of Georgian clergy against the Church project and it finished with complete victory of Georgian church. The Caucasus exarchate was abolished (1920). So, implementation of the new project failed again and simultaneously Russian bourgeois government ceased its existence.

The new government of Russia started construction of socialism from the issue of religion. Approach towards the church policy was the same, yet the methods different.

In global politics of Soviet Russia two directions were distinguished immediately and accordingly two projects developed: Church projects of Lenin-Trotsky and Stalin. Due to the project of Lenin-Trotsky, European atheistic ideology was brought under the State ideology and religion was declared as the survival of Tsarism. According to the project, religion in general was inadmissible for Soviet system and especially Orthodoxy due to its great popularity among the masses. The authors of the project intended to occupy the place of the Church for consolidation of the population and finally to celebrate the victory of socialism. Just in the beginning of the 1920s the project declared to be a strategic plan of the state and its implementation began by discrediting the church. Soon, the contradiction of the project ideology with the Soviet

goals was manifested: demolition of churches, repression of clergy, encroaches on properties etc. acquired large-scale character and public sentiments towards power were distrustful.

Due to the above mentioned, in the late 1920s, corrections were made in church politics which were linked with the beginning of Stalin's church policy. This stage is distinguished by great carefulness and compromises. Stalin's new project was completely opposite to the previous one. The new project did not aim rejection of the atheistic ideology. On the contrary it aimed its strengthening by means of a new church course. For the government it was meaningful to be aware of the political course of the Church. Therefore, it decided to involve the Church in the Soviet state building. Stalin realized the historical function of the Church and exploited it in the establishment of the Soviet System.

Stalin's project envisaged annihilation of the traditional church and instead, formation of a new one, providing introduction of the Soviet ideology among the masses. The project was to assure people that the historical Church could no longer meet modern requirements and needed immediate reformation. The government established a group of clergy supporting the reforms and made them oppose the clergy of the traditional Church. Thus, the so-called "Renewal Movement" began, which prepared the basis for a great schism in the Church. The government recognized the «Renewal Movement», and thus established the new Church in the Soviet Empire, known as «Living Church» in church history. The latter took a function of social ideology in the Soviet State. At the end of the 1930s, the government finished church modernization. "Renewal Movement" completed its mission and the liquidation of the counter-revolutionary wing of church took place. So there was established the so-called "Red Church" acceptable for the Empire.

Soviet globalization politics developed in two directions and accordingly two projects were elaborated: foreign and internal-imperialistic projects. Foreign projects were applied to America, Eastern Europe and the Near East, while internal-imperialistic projects embraced the Soviet Orthodox nations. Both projects reached the full apogee during II World War. Via the foreign policy "Great Merging" of Orthodox churches was implemented. Within the sphere of influence of Russian Church were included the Churches of Bulgaria, Rumania, Czechoslovakia and Poland, i.e. the political "Socialist Block" was strengthened by the creation of a "Church Block". As for the internal projects of the Empire, the Georgian Church was of vital importance here again. The only Orthodox Church of the Caucasus was obliged to unify all Caucasian Orthodoxies under the badge of Russian Orthodoxy. But the event required modernization of Georgian Church itself.

Modernization of Georgian Church was a difficult process. Supporters of church renovation were known as "Kutaturs", due to the Church meeting held in Kutaisi. In Russia they were known under the name of "New Georgian Church". "Renewal Movement" in Georgia was presented by two clergy groups: Russian renewals under jurisdiction of Russian Synod and Georgian renewals, which saw survival of national church in envisaging the state interests. These two groups were following different interests: the first aimed to subordinate the Georgian Church to the "Living

Church”, while the second aimed the restoration of the historic form of the national Georgian Church. Proceeding from the above mentioned, exploitation of Georgian “progressives” for the interests of Russia was actually excluded. That's why the idea of renewal became popular only among non-Georgian flocks.

So, if Soviet government gained domination over the Russian church, it failed with national ones, since the attempts of modernization of the Georgian church collapsed.

Georgian Church and its clergy timely guessed the course of the Soviet Church and completely rejected Church renovation ideology. Georgian clergy understood that “New Church” was to provide formation of a new society. Due to unsuccessful experiment, the government nominated the Georgian church as outdated, retarded, “Dead Church”. Following events confirmed that Georgian church, according to World Church Rules, was able to resist to Soviet provocation.

The heavy crisis which took place during the 1980s and 1990s, raised an issue of changing the governing system and Russia had nothing to do but to choose a democratic way of development. In spite of this, in Russian politics the harmonized collaboration of statesmen and clergy was still important. The Church agreed to serve democratic Russia but required Orthodoxy to occupy the place of the ruined Soviet ideology and elaborated appropriated thesis on special mission of Russian Nation in the world for implementing Orthodoxy.

In the 1990s the clergy, supporting the Russian theocracy, established organization “General Russian Church Meeting”, aiming to popularize the theocratic ideology and develop the Orthodox globalization project.

The project was called “Neo-imperial-Orthodoxy” in modern science. Three main regulations were distinguished in this project: Orthodox Messianism, rejection of human's liberty and ambition of Russia being a judge in “Dialogue of Civilizations”. The project envisaged division of world according to territorial-religion principle.

In the post-Soviet epoch, the attitude of Russian Church towards Georgia did not change. Russia still threatens the territorial integrity of Georgia and Russian church is quite inactive in this case.

Present opinion of Georgian society on Russian Church is mainly negative. Georgians feel religion intimacy, remember common historical past, respect Russian Saints and divine wonders but simultaneously remember aggressive attitude of Russian Church towards Georgia. So they are careful in their relations with Russia. The above situation was seriously hardened by the events in Abkhazia and Samachablo during the last two decades. It must be the result of Byzantium-Imperial sense of Orthodox globalization deeply adopted by the Russian church.

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Towards the Linguistic-Culturological Analysis of Conflicting Regions of Georgia

Manana Tabidze

Identification of Georgia and the Caucasus, due to their ethnic and linguistic peculiarities, as one of the most diverse and multiple regions in the world, already contains a kind of notification, that regulation of these multiple characteristics is a difficult task and it needs interference of "many arbiters", in order to obtain internal balance, regulate and protect it.

It should be noted at the beginning that while speaking about diversity, beyond the compliment, one can hear hidden reproaches that Caucasian peoples' integration is complicated and the population living in this area tends to cultural isolation. It should be noted that such image is imposed and unnatural for the Caucasus. Furthermore it is an injustice for Georgia, which is often blamed to be at the heart of such tendencies.

Rich historical past of these regions and in particular of Georgia revealed perfect examples of social integration. One can find the world ideal of an atmosphere of tolerance, defense of other peoples' rights and internal integrity revealed in relations with even alien, who came here to find refuge. Since staying in this country for a long time, nobody could complain that under existing circumstances they were forcibly assimilated with the native ethnoses, or anyone made them forget their country of origin, or change the religion and language. Only in the 19. century, the precedent was set of describing Caucasian peoples as independent nations according to their local and dialectal varieties, distinguished even from their own brothers.¹ Imperial administration treated Georgian population that way and began to make demographic corrections in administrative units. The mechanism of moving the population from one place to another, mass migrating and settling came into operation and gradually the centers of non-Georgian population were artificially formed. Russian was "offered" to those peoples as an integrating language. Being under the colonial regime of the Tsarist Russian Empire and later under the regime of the Communist Empire, Georgia (sometimes with the status of province and sometimes of republic) was making efforts to pursue its own language policy only through social activities and limited administrative manipulation. Though it never managed (for mentioned

¹ For example we will bring an annotation of one typological article: Journal of Refugee Studies 1995 8 (1):48-74; doi:10.1093/jrs /8.1.48 © 1995 by [Oxford University Press](#)

B. G. HEWITT, Demographic Manipulation in the Caucasus (with Special Reference to Georgia) ; SOAS, University of London ; The Caucasus contains Europe's richest patchwork of peoples, languages and cultures. As the Soviet Union collapsed, a number of ethno-territorial problems needed to be handled with extreme sensitivity if open conflict was to be averted. The gross insensitivity on the part of nationalists in Georgia that led to the bloody wars in South Ossetia and, primarily, Abkhazia are examined and placed in the historical context that has seen mainly North Caucasian minorities subjected to frequent demographic manipulation by two of the region's imperial powers, Russia and Georgia, who have regularly acted in concert over the last 200 years. Parallels between Shevardnadze's war in Abkhazia and Yeltsin's assault on Chechnya are drawn, **and the case of such minorities in Georgia as the Mingrelians, the Armenians and the Meskh(et)ians is touched upon.** The West's blind adherence to the principle of 'territorial integrity' is criticized for abandoning minorities to the whim of the local bully.

two centuries) to declare loudly, officially, the demand, such as the compulsory knowledge of Georgian language for all persons living in Georgia and living an active social life (demands similar to any European state, concerning the level of knowledge in language, from the viewpoint of social activity). Georgia couldn't declare this demand under the pain of being blamed for nationalism through the influence of Russian propaganda machinery.

Contemporary society is infected with strange disease: when they speak about the Soviet Union and the communist regime, they negatively evaluate those ideological and military measures, which Soviet Union carried out towards Eastern Europe and generally towards the West. But it is tabooed to raise the doubts about the legitimacy of the official borders and existence of the so-called autonomous structures inside the Soviet Republics.

The Soviet Union has carried out many lawless and treasonable acts from the viewpoint of outlining the state and internal state borders. Criminal negligence was characteristic of Russian linguistic policy, accomplishing Russification of the population, stage by stage, and introducing the Russian language as a rival of the constitutional state language. On the basis of specific logic, it encouraged creating centers of ethnic diasporas and autonomous units, so the force was in Russia's hand.

Introduction of Russian language in Georgia acquired massive character since the 20. century, when after sovietization (since 1921) of Georgia, the Soviet Union started all Soviet "cultural revolution" and accomplishment of a general educational program. Just according to this program, Russian language became a compulsory subject at all schools. This program was to ensure, together with Russian schools, the knowledge of Russian language among the population. Statistic data of 1989, (National Composition of the Population of Georgia, Statistic Collection, according to All Soviet census of population in 1989, the committee of Social- economical information, at the Supreme Soviet of the Georgian Republic, Tbilisi, (1991) clearly shows, that the part of non-Georgian population, who underwent assimilation, while making choice between native and foreign languages, acknowledged foreign as a native language instead of their ethnic language. Due to 1989 data, Georgian in comparison with Russian language was on the second place (the only exception were Georgian Jews. 657 persons out of 14 314 qualified Russian as a native Language).

In 1989, there were 341 172 Russians in Georgia among whom 336 718 acknowledged Russian as their native language. For - 4 000, Georgian language was native and for 454, different national languages of the USSR.

The second language fluently known by the Russian population was: Russian for 2 436 Russians, Georgian for 76 898 Russians and other languages for 9 166. The 252 672 Russians living in Georgia knew none of the languages of the Soviet peoples.

Russian was acknowledged as a native language by: 2 212 Abkhazians (Georgian by 1 233 Abkhazians); 4 246 Ossetians (Georgian by 33 694 Ossetians); 23 069 Ukrainians (Georgian by 1 259 Ukrainians); 3 716 Byelorussians (Georgian by 176 Byelorussians); 3 972 Azeri (Georgian by 2 899 Azeri); 40,312 Armenians (Georgian – by 24,947 Armenians); 1,464 Tatar (Georgian by – 169 Tatar); 5 926 Jews (Georgian

by 3 065 Jews); besides 14 314 Georgian Jews, among whom only 657 named Russian as a native language; 1 261 Assyrians (Georgian by 1 520 Assyrians); 35 084 Greeks (Georgian by 4 987 Greeks, other language by 3 023 Greeks); 4 105 Kurds (Georgian by 3 834 Kurds). According to the data of 1989, Russian was named as the second fluently spoken language:

Nationality	Constant population	Russian	Georgian	Did not know a second language
Georgian	3787393	1203788	-	2565532
Abkhazian	95853	77193	2283	15921
Ossetian	164055	60004	53518	42769
Russian	341172	-	76898	252672
Ukrainian	52443	21805	7377	18581
Byelorussian	8595	3217	949	3672
Azeri	307556	105083	28598	171511
Armenian	437211	187666	88699	145467
Tatar	4099	2037	574	1228
Jew	10481	2517	2905	4542
Georgian Jew	14314	7086	-	6683
Assyrian	6206	1934	2234	1915
Greek	100324	44822	15456	29763
Kurd	33331	8720	14592	9279

This statistic clearly points to the fact that putting the blame on Georgia for quasi imposing Georgian language upon the non-Georgians residing in Georgia is groundless. On the contrary, due to Russia's interventionist policy, Russian school represented the institution, which brought up not a citizen of the republic of Georgia but a citizen of Russia, inculcating the Veliko-Russian ideals through Russian history, geography and Russian literature (interesting indeed, but not native). Europeans will better understand, if we offer them such analogy: What will be the reaction of any of the West European countries in case, if it is intervened purposefully by a foreign country, for opening schools for the migrants moved at different times (term of migration is not short), totally ignoring the official state language, controlling the text-books and planning the whole educational processes?

It is evident that in such a situation Georgia, since fastened with interventionist Communist regime, wouldn't be able to have formative influence on the state consciousness and self-awareness of the non-Georgian population living in Georgia. Therefore, generations were brought up in the Republic of Georgia, who instead of natural striving towards unity and might of the republic, were aspired by the feeling to disintegrate the republic.

Even today, among the problems of globalization, the regulation of the linguistic situations (if there were such points²) appeared to be one of the burning questions

in the post-soviet republics.

The territories of the national autonomies, population and density of separate territorial groups, obviously point to the fact that a large percentage of autonomies is noticeable just in the Caucasus. Here the number of population, territory and density of population significantly lagged behind the regions where the vast areas and historical territories, belonging to various nations and nationalities. Only one or two autonomous republics (the more, autonomous region) are created. E.g. the North European part (territory 574 811 sq.km, population 471 891, density 0,8%) – National Autonomies: Komy (Zirian) Autonomous Region, the Autonomous Republic of Karelia. From this point of view, the situation in Georgia is special with two autonomous republics and one autonomous region. To make it presentable, a large statistic picture is enclosed:

1. The North of Siberia – (territory - 4 023 407; population - 278 809; density -0,06 %), Autonomous Republic of Yakutsk.
2. Volga-Ural (territory - 382 962; population - 8 171 850; density - 21,3 %) the Autonomous Regions of Marri, Votsk, Kalmyk and Chuvash, Tatar, Bashkir, Volga-embankment Autonomous Region of the Germans.
3. The South European part of Russia (territory - 34 063; population - 1 287 333; density - 37,3%) Autonomous Republics of Crimea and Moldova.
4. The South Siberia (territory - 505 200; population - 622 093; density-1,2%) Autonomous Republic of Buriat-Mongolian and Autonomous Region Oirat.
5. The North Caucasus (territory - 97 900; population - 1 745 621; density- 17,8%), The Autonomous Republic of Dagestan and the Autonomous Regions of Ingush, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachi, North Ossetia, Chechen, Cherkez.
6. Trans-Caucasia (territory - 23 050; population - 643 829; density-26.8%), Autonomous Republics of Achara, Nakhchevan, Abkhazia and the Autonomous Regions of Mountainous Karabakh and South Ossetia.
7. Kazakh and Middle Asia (territory - 3 378 133; population - 8 619 586; density 2,5%) Autonomous Republics of Cossack, Kirghiz, Tajik and Kara-Kalpak and the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Badakhshan.

For today, the Russian Federation consists of 16 autonomous republics (Bashkir, Buriat, Dagestan, Kabardo-Balkar, Kalmyk, Karel, Komi, Mari, Mordov, North Ossetia, Tatar, Tuva, Udmurt, Chechen-Ingush, Chuvash, Uakutsk), 5 Autonomous Regions (Adyghe, Mountainous-Altai, Jews, Karacha-Cherkez, Khakas), 6 regions, 49 oblasts and 10 national okrugs (districts).

The former USSR consisted of the following Autonomous Republics: Bashkyr, Buriat-Mongol, Daghestan, Cossak, Karelia, Kirgiz, Crimea, Volga- embankment of Germans (in 1928 it was entered in Lower-Volga-coastal region), Tatar, Chuvash and Yakutsk.

Autonomous regions:

In the SSR of the Ukraine: Moldova;

In the SSR of Georgia: Abkhazia and Adjara;

In the SSR of Azerbaijan: Nakhichevan

In the SSR of Uzbek: Tadjik

Autonomous regions of RSFSR: Votsk, Kalmik, Kara-Kalpak, Komi, Mari, Oirat (in Siberia) and of the North Caucasus: Adyghe (Cherkez, Ingush, Kabardo-Balkar, Karachi, North Ossetia, Cherkessk and Chechen.

In the SSR of Georgia: South Ossetia; in the SSR of Azerbaijan: Mountainous Karabakh; in the SSR of Uzbek: Mountainous Badakhshan (in the Tajik Autonomous Republic)

"The Soviet linguistic policy, with its harmful results, was manifested particularly on the conflicting territories. In Georgian-Abkhazian and Georgian-Ossetian interrelations, Russian language became the reason of conflict. Those Abkhazians and Ossetians who had received education in Russian language transmigrated to the Russian language speaking world. Thus, they actually became part of Russian nation and in the process of widening the state sovereignty of Georgia, they opposed Georgians and the Georgian oriented Ossetians and Abkhazians" (Pukhaev, 1989, 4²).

"Those Abkhazians and Ossetians, who knew Georgian, i.e. who had become part of the Georgian culture, showed faithfulness and defended the interests of Georgia. Georgian language, besides communication, was the language of culture, religion and education. Replacement of Georgian language by Russian language caused ethnic alienation of Abkhazians and Ossetians, who set off against Georgian (Bakradze, 2005, 314-315⁴) (This material is brought from Nino Markozia's work, Language discussions in Georgia of the 1970s to 1990s", supervised by professor M.Tabidze).

Bilingualism was a serious danger for the native languages and this is attested by statistic data, e.g. according to census of 1959, in the whole Soviet Union, about 10 million non-Russian citizens declared Russian as their native language. Due to census of 1970, the figure raised to 13 000 000 (The problems of bilingualism and poly-lingualism, 1972, 24⁴), due to census of 1979 the number reached 16 300 000 (Topuria, 1989, 11⁵). According to the data of the same year in the Soviet Union, 214 800 000 people i.e. 82% of the whole population, fluently spoke Russian (Khidasheli, 1989, 6⁵).

According to the data of 1989 in Georgia, Russian was acknowledged as a native language by 8 877 from 3 787 393 Georgians; 2 212 from 95 853, Abkhazians; 4 246 from 164 055 Ossetians; 3 972 among 307 556 Azeris; 40 314 from 437 211 Armenians etc. (National composition of Georgia; 1991, p.62-63).

From this point of view, the situation was especially difficult in the autonomous republics and regions.

Taking into consideration the above indicated, it becomes clear that "the mixing of nations", i.e. their Russification, disappearing of the languages under the hegemony of Russian language, were the real facts. "During the first Soviet census of population in 1926, more than 190 ethnic unities and about 150 languages were registered. Due

2 Anzor Pukhaev; "Brotherhood must be taken care", "Soplis Tskhovreba". #192, 19.VIII.89.

to the census of 1959 the number of ethnic unities decreased to 90" (Demographic encyclopedic dictionary, 1985, p.433). It was written in 1972: "Loosing of Karelian (their number is more then 100 000) language is taking place under our eyes. They are transferring to uni-lingualism (Russian becomes the native language)" (Problems of bilingualism and poly-lingualism, 1972, p.24). The analogous situation was with Abkhazians. Many Abkhazians did not know Abkhazian language. Russian was a colloquial language for some mixed Abkhazian-Georgian families. Such transmission of the population from one language to another was considered to be a natural phenomenon in Soviet Union" (Problems of bilingualism and poly-lingualism 1972, p.24).

One of the key issues that should be envisaged in Georgian reality, while qualifying the so-called unwritten languages of minorities, is to evaluate those perspectives, which are contained in the following measures of evaluating Georgian speeches, as languages (in particular, unwritten language of minorities);

According to international standards, un-written languages must be saved via making them written. I.e. it must be delimited from a bookish language. It means that the history of education and culture must begin from a clean page and the first note will be the folklore of a local region. The creation of a written version is connected with many measures:

- a) Define a status of a language and relevantly of an ethnos and formulate the juridical aspects of its using;
- b) Formation of writing coin: it is a complex problem, as it needs tradition. But the deficiency of tradition complicates the standardization of a newly created literary language. Generates discussions on prevalence of different sub-dialects. Issues of educational system and media working language are artificial.
- c) The newly created language cannot develop the branch languages and apply some other "medial language" as bookish language. (This happened to e.g. Abkhazian, which uses Russian on the second stage, 3 - 4 grades, of primary education and its linguistic situation gives the interfered variants of functional styles. At home and in some social spheres Abkhazian is used but in scientific branches and political and economic spheres Russian is used.)

Now, let's discuss the difficulties arising while moving from an unwritten language to a written one.

Which language problems are mostly discussed in the North Caucasus?

1. Which dialect must be the basis of a written language? How many written languages can one ethnos have? For example in Dagestan, over the last period, three new languages were distinguished. Kabardians and Circassians are denominated as one or two nations with two literary languages, which are known under the name Kabardian or Kabardian-Circassian languages. Ossetians have two literary languages: the basis of one language is the Ironian dialect of the other the Digorian dialect etc.
2. Which alphabet can be exploited by people with same nationality and same spoken language but residing in different places (in different states)?

3. The key issue of the linguistic discussions is the cultural belonging of the so-called Russian-speaking writers. The lingual structure and the language policy of the educational system in the North Caucasus supported the creation of a specific literary culture of North Caucasian peoples: a Russian-speaking writer. The discussion contains several aspects, from which the most noteworthy are: 1) Do the Russian-speaking Caucasian writers "translate" or "create" their works? 2) Who these works belong to? Are they Russians (the language used in the creating process) or to Adyges, Dagestanians, Ossetians and others (whose culture fed the authors understanding and taste)? It seems difficult to resolve the problems connected with state language and actual fulfillments of the relevant regulations of constitution or subordinated legislative documents.

Linguistic situation needs to be evaluated and regulated in the sphere of education. The following issues will be set forth: the language of education, the languages to be learned, bilingual education, providing education in the official state language in all segments of education etc. Among the disputing themes, one of the burning questions is the educational language in the North Caucasian Republics. Existence of more than one state language in each republic and impossibility of setting the whole educational program into operation on the language of autochthon population (in spite of a state status), makes this problem difficult. Education in the language of the titled ethnos is possible only on primary grades. On other grades, education is carried out in Russian and national languages are taught as subjects (educational discipline: -language and literature)⁶. For example, after receiving the so-called sovereignty of Karach-Circassian within the Russian Federation, the following languages were declared as the state languages: Abaza, Karachi, Noga, Russian and Circassian, i.e. the languages of education on primary grades are five.

The republic counting 428 600 people has 189 secondary schools, 5 vocational lyceums, 3 vocational schools, 10 evening schools, 12 children sport schools, 20 children school-out institutions, 86 pre-schools and 38 departmental institutions. The linguistic situation in these institutions is the following: after incorporating Karach-Circassian into the Russian federation, in 99 schools education is carried out in Russian in accordance with educational plans of national schools. Abazian language is taught as a subject in 13 schools, Karachian in 57, Nogai in 10, Circassian in 20 secondary schools.³ Besides, in 53 schools (with multinational composition) the conditions are created for teaching the native languages (there a "mother language" is a subject and not a language of education). In 9 secondary schools several languages of the peoples of the Republic of Karach-Circassian are taught.⁴ Abundance of languages makes consolidation of population difficult.

³ from 5 till 7 o'clock in a week

⁴ In Hable Adyghe School the Kabardian-Circassian and Nogudian Languages are taught, in Plizh schools #1 a #2 – Abaza and Kubarhan-Circassian languages. A National boarding-school teaches through making a choice Abaza, Karachian, Balkarian, Nogahan and Kabarhan-Circassian. In regional schools of Habez for the first time in the Karach-Circassian all subjects in the primary schools are taught in Kabardian-Circassian. The state languages are taught in the Karach-Circassian state pedagogical institutions where the "History and literature of the peoples of Karach-Circassian republic," "Culture of the peoples of Karach-Circassian republic," "Etiquette of mountainous countries. There are also facultative courses for deep learning the Russian and other national languages of the Karach-Circassian republic.

Instead of integration we have disintegration. Applying of the state languages in the secondary, special and high education seems to be impossible at this moment, owing to multinational composition of the population and the lack of teachers." (Shishkanova A.B., 2003, 187-188)

Ossetian literary language is not uniform. It consists of two dialects and both dialects are literary (and accordingly, educational). These are: the Ironian and Digorian dialects (now, languages) (which are native, accordingly for 70% and 30% of North Ossetian populations).

In 1992, the draft law of North Ossetian Autonomous Republic was published in the republic newspaper: "About the languages of peoples of the

North Ossetian SSR". It was of major importance for the society of the republic, especially for Ossetians speaking the Digorian dialect.

In 1934, the Ironian dialect was applied as basis of literary Ossetian language. At the end of the 1980s and at the beginning of the 1990s, the Digorian society wanted Digorian to gain the status of separate (independent) language. This problem became burning in the period of discussing the above mentioned law (a language law).

At the beginning of 1996, a new commission was formed in the republic to work out a new draft law "On the languages of the North Ossetian peoples". In 2000, the membership of the commission was significantly renewed. In 1998-2002, parliamentary committees and the whole Ossetian social-political movement "Alanti Nikhas" discussed the variants of the law many times, but the final variant has not been processed until now. In 1999, according to a decree of the president of North Ossetia, the commission on protection and development of the Ossetian language was formed, though no tasks have been fulfilled by this commission yet.

In 1994, the constitution of the Republic of North Ossetia, Alania, was declared. Here Ossetian (together with Russian) is announced as a state language (item 15, paragraph 10). "The Ossetian language (Ironian and Digorian dialects) is the basis of protecting the national consciousness of the Ossetian people. Protection and development of the Ossetian language is the main task of administrative organs of the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania." (paragraph 15,2)

Despite the constitutional decree, owing to some objective and subjective reasons, the status of Ossetian as a state language is often nominal.

According to the supposition of linguists and sociolinguists, the modern ethno-linguistic situation in North Ossetia and the dynamics of its development are not optimistic i.e. the Ossetian language (like the languages of much numerous titled ethnos in the Russian Federation) cannot gain an equal status to Russian, in its own Republic, in the nearest decades.

"The concept of national schools development in North Ossetia" is connected with a language law, which was brought for public discussion in 1992. The stages of school development were planned to embrace the period up to 2000. According to the

project, the teaching of Ossetian language must have begun from 2000 in secondary, special and high institutions. Though the conception, envisaging the real situation has not been worked out. In August 2000, a law "about education" was adopted. Out of the 60 paragraphs, only two deal with the issues of language and culture (item 6 "educational language (languages)" and item 7 "upbringing": teaching the history and culture of the North Ossetia - Alania.

The issue of Ossetian language in comprehensive educational schools was as follows: in 2002-2003, primary education of Ossetian children in the native language was carried out in 62 schools of the Republic in mainly two regions inhabited by a majority of Ossetians speaking the Digorian dialect. In 22 primary schools from 28, education is carried out in the native Digorian dialect.

In 2002-2003, in primary schools of North Ossetia, 4 000 pupils were educated in Ossetian, i.e. 17% of the pupils of Ossetian nationality. Ossetian language is taught (as a subject) in primary schools of all regions of the Republic, besides the "Russian" Mozdoki Region (where 9% are Ossetians and 50% Russians)⁹.

Georgian school counts 117 years of existence in Vladikavkaz, in which education is carried out in Georgian. In 2000-2003, there were 250 pupils (at the beginning of 2002, in the North Ossetia, mainly in Vladikavkaz resided 12 300 Georgians).¹⁰

In 2000-2002 a 30% of telecasts on TV-company "Alania" was broadcasted in Ossetian, 50% of radio broadcasting was in Ossetian.

In 2002, in North Ossetia, 2 Republican newspapers were published in Ossetian ("The Rastdzinad" in Ironian dialect, and "The Digora" in Digorian dialect). Some other newspapers are in Ossetian: "The Alanti Nikhas", "The Nog Gazet" (a new newspaper), "The Iri Nipsi" (Hope of Ossetia) etc. The magazines of the "Union of Writers" are published in both dialects: in Ironian and Digorian. There are several theatres in the North Ossetia: the Dramatic Theatre of North Ossetia (in Ironian dialect) and the Digorian theatre of North Ossetia (in Digorian dialect), the North Ossetian Musical Theatre (in Russian), the Children's theatre "Sabi" (in Russian and Ironian) and the Russian Dramatic Theatre.

The linguistic problems manifested in North Ossetia are familiar to other multi-lingual state entities. The language, which tends to function as a state language, should respond to so-called basic conditions, specified in special literature:

- Energetic potential provides communicative potential of the language. It has 1) Linguistic aspect: an inner structure, dialects, types of speech action; 2) Linguistic-cultural aspects: writing, literary form, recorded written history, social functions;
- So called transporting character (allows to express and to disseminate information in this language);
- Demand on protection (existence of self protecting means of this language);
- Productivity (implies the volume and importance of the texts existing in this language) and informative natures (is implied readiness to

percept and reflect the new knowledge).

In the list, the energetic potential is considered to be the most important aspect (Karaulov Y.N.2005). For a deep study of the language situation in the North Caucasus all the above mentioned aspects, first of all energetic potential, are to be analyzed particularly.

It's a fact, that the demographic situation of Shida Kartli was always in favour of Ossetians (since 1926 till 1989) and not of Georgians or other. This is clearly seen in the statistics that are enclosed below. Furthermore, the mentioned period is the period of the Soviet regime, when the republics could not govern their own inner or external policy. Provoking of ethnic conflicts is the fault of that regime and not of the course 'adopted' by the republic.

Russian Language Policy in Abkhazia and Its Results

Teimuraz Gvantseladze

The present work, by recalling the history, serves the purpose of revealing the linguo-cultural arsenal of modern anti-Georgian and anti-Abkhazian politics of Russia that was inherited from Tsarism and the Soviet regime.

Once Tsarism gained power in Georgia, it started a massive "russification" of the local population. The ideologists of the empire had elaborated various plans. For example, in the 1830s, one of the most influential ideologists of Tsarism, Platon Zubov, wrote: *"...Assuage [i.e. obedience - T.G.] of the mountainous population imply the following: introduction of predilection for luxury among them by means of developing trade relationships; making luxury as their necessity and enlighten the mountainous with the light of Christianity. [...] The mountainous will live in valleys, far away from the main roads... and first of all they will receive - with the help of the government - necessary houses, especially beautiful churches in all important villages; ... schools shall open in these churches, for them to learn Russian, even if for the beginning the service is carried out in their native language; however, step by step we shall turn the situation so that they abandon their dialects and get acquainted with the Russian language, which will become a dominant language for their heirs, as their dialects without writing will easily vanish in time"* (Gamakharia, Gogia, 1997, p. 308-309). As we see, several major methods of russification of the Abkhazian population are named in this plan: a) moral corruption of the population by generating love for luxury; b) their resettlement from mountains (that is difficult to control) to valleys and their concentration in areas far away from central roads; c) converting this population to Christianity and domination of the Russian language; d) use of church-based schools so that populations forget their own language. Tsarism had used almost all of these methods except the first one (for the inculcation of luxury great sums were needed) and even elaborated new methods later:

At the beginning of 1860s, when it became obvious that long lasting war between Russia and the Caucasus, ongoing in North Caucasus, would end by the victory of the Empire, Tsarism commenced active work in Abkhazia to change ethnic and demographic situation there. It also separated the Abkhaz and Ossetian population from the Georgian cultural world and counter-positioned these two ethnoses to Georgian people. The following means were used to reach these goals: creation of Russian graphic-based alphabets for the Abkhaz and Ossetian languages, withdrawal of Georgian missionaries from the Abkhaz and Ossetian villages, announcing the Georgian population of Samurzakano (currently Gali region) as Abkhazians, restriction to use Georgian language in churches and at schools etc.

Abkhaz language was not a written one before 1862. The Abkhazians were using the Georgian literary language for official correspondence, for religious and cultural purposes. The representatives of the Abkhaz aristocracy as well as parts of lower social layers of the society knew Georgian language very well. Moreover, the Abkhaz archons and other nobles were using only this language during the 19. century for conducting official correspondence with the Russian authorities, whilst the intelligentsia considered Georgian language and written culture as their native language and culture. For example, the son of the last principal of Abkhazia, Giorgi Shervashidze, perfectly knew Georgian literature and was writing splendid poems in this language himself. Naturally, close relationship between Georgians and Abkhazians was unacceptable for the Russian authorities and that is why in the mid 19. century, a special accent was put on destroying this relationship and generate animosity among these two ethnoses. Already in 1862, general of the Russian army, Peter Uslar, started scientific research

of Abkhaz language but encountered a problem: which writing was to use to express Abkhaz sounds? The general knew that the Georgian alphabet was the most appropriate one for those Caucasian languages, which had no writing. However, he did not want to use this language for purely political reasons. He wrote: „... [Georgian alphabet] is the most perfect among the existing alphabets... each sound has an equivalent sign and each letter always means the same sound. There exists an obstacle in every European language, this is orthography. Georgians have almost no such difficulty thanks to their alphabet...This means that the Georgian alphabet system may be taken as common basis for all Caucasian languages that do not have writing so far. If we borrow from Georgians not only the alphabet system, but the graphics of their letters, we will accidentally create difficulties, which will become more obvious upon spread of the Russian language in the Caucasus (Gamakharia, Gogia, 1997 p.353). He added: „If contrary, we create a risk to establish Abkhaz autonomy along with Georgia and other autonomies“ (Gamakharia, Gogia, 1997, p.720). P. Uslar did not hesitate long and created Russian graphics-based (Cyrillic-based) alphabet for the Abkhazian language. It is interesting to mention that at the same time the group of authors under the leadership of general I. Bartholomei was working to create the first book of alphabet on the same language. General Bartholomei took the decision to use Georgian graphics for writing down the Abkhazian words, extremely irritating P. Uslar by this. Uslar forced the group of Bartholomei to change their decision and use the Russian graphics-based alphabet, newly created by P. Uslar (Abkhazian alphabet of I.Bartholomei was published in 1865). It is worth mentioning that the Abkhazian alphabet was never used in practice until 1912, when Dimity Gulia first published his book of poems in Tbilisi, which marks the start point of the history of the Abkhaz literature. Because of this very reason it was impossible to organize national and religious education in the Abkhazian language: there existed no literature in this language for pupils to learn. Like this, the dilemma was artificially created: the authorities were announcing that since Abkhazians were not Georgians, it was inadmissible for them to learn Georgian language and conduct church service in this language. Since Abkhazians neither had their own original or translated literature, thus it was appropriate for Abkhaz children to learn and pray in Russian language. Such quintessence of russification and „*divide and rule*“ was voiced by numerous Russian clerks. Here is the proof, a quotation of one of them, Evgeni Veidenbaum, who honestly admits: “Abkhaz language, which has neither writing nor literature, by all means is deemed to vanish in the nearest future. The issue is as follows: which language will replace it? It is obvious that in [Abkhaz - T.G.] population the role of inculcator of cultural ideas and notions shall be played not by the Georgian, but by the Russian language. This is why I consider that the establishment of the Abkhaz written language shall not be an end in itself, but it should become, with the help of the church and the school, the means of weakening the need for Georgian language, and its [i.e. Georgian - T.G.] replacing by the state language [i.e. Russian].” (Gamakharia, Gogia, 1997, p.720)

Identification of the true objectives of Tsarism helps explain why Tsarism ignored proposals of Georgian national and religious leaders to conduct education and divine services in Abkhaz language in Abkhazia. For example, prior to official annulling of the principality of Abkhazia by Russia, when it already strictly controlled the situation in this region, the personal priest of the Abkhaz principal, deacon Johane Iosseliani, raised the issue of establishing a religious school in village Likhni, where Abkhaz children would learn the native language along with other subjects. This project was denied by the Russian authorities. Similar proposals were often made later as well, but always remained unresolved. Here is another example: some 100 years after, at the beginning of 20. century, the episcopo of Abkhazia, Kirion (Sadzaglishvili), was supportive of the idea of creating an Abkhazian literature and establishment of divine service. The same proposal was made by the great Georgian pedagogue and statesman Iakob Gogebashvili in 1907: “Some newspaper correspondents are negative about translation of the religious books and church services in this language. This extremely surprises me. It is true that Abkhazia, for many centuries, was a part of the political body of Georgia, with church services in Georgian. Writing was in Georgian as

per will of the Abkhazians themselves, but it is a doubtless fact that Abkhaz language is not a Georgian dialect, but an independent language, though it relates to Georgian language. As an independent language it has the doubtless right to be the language for church services, right for being a written language, right for its folk [i.e. national - T.G.] literature". I Gogebashvili was calling on Georgians from Sukhumi to assist the Abkhaz statesmen in creating school manuals in Abkhaz, and if they faced difficulties in printing such books, asked them to send the texts to Tbilisi, where the Educational Society would publish them at its' own expense (I.Gogebashvili was member of the Society's board) (Gamakharia, Gogia, 1997, p. 473-474).

Thus, creation of the Abkhaz alphabet in 1862 though was an extremely important fact in the history of the Abkhaz language, but it was not an event caused by natural historic development of the ethnos that was the carrier of this language. Abkhaz writing was created based on political views and aimed at, on the one hand, to isolate Abkhazians from the Georgian cultural field and, on the other hand, to create basis for their final russification by getting used to Russian graphics. The correctness of this conclusion is proved by the fact that the officials of Tsarism often rejected even the mere fact of existence of the Abkhaz language. Restricted use of Abkhaz and Georgian languages at schools and churches of Abkhazia forced Georgians and Abkhazians to study and serve in Russian language etc. For example, in 1864, the "Society for Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus" issued "Rules of Parishioners' Schools", which allowed such schools, that opened under the aegis of this society, to use native language as well. However, in Samurzakano, where absolute majority of population was Georgian, only small number of these schools used Georgian language. In other schools, as well as in Abkhaz villages of Abkhazia, children were taught in unfamiliar Russian language, which was not giving any result. In 1884, the same society had totally banned education in Georgian and Abkhazian in Samurzakano and Abkhazia. According to the order of "Georgia-Imereti" synod office of March 17, 1889, the services in churches and parishioners' schools of Abkhazia and Samurzakano, were to be organized only in Russian. Similar restrictions were periodically repeated afterwards: in 1896, 1898 (for more, please see: Gvantseladze, Tabidze, Sherozia, Chanturia, 2001, p.105-106; Gamakharia, 2005, p.669-672). Tsarism was justifying these restrictions by the following "logic": under the official decision of 1868, Abkhaz language was announced as an undeveloped language, as it had no writing. There existed no literature, neither religious nor national in this language. This is why Abkhazians should study and pray in Russian. Abkhazians were not Georgians, this means there was no need for them to learn and pray in this language. As for the population of Samurzakano, according to the empire's ideologists, they were not Georgians but Abkhazians, and for this same reason they did not require education and religion in this language. Thus, Samurzakano population as well shall study and pray in Russian. In such way the empire was trying to totally "russify" the population of this region. Unfortunately, after the mass deportations of 1878, Abkhazians, who turned into a minority in Abkhazia and resided in two reservations only, were officially labelled as "guilty people". They were restricted from inhabiting the territories adjacent to coastline and main roads, had almost no intelligentsia and leaders and were not able to oppose the "russific" policy of the empire. This is why the burden of fighting to save Georgian and Abkhazian language-religious-cultural identity was undertaken by Georgian leaders residing in Abkhazia-Samurzakano:

When "Georgia-Imereti" synod office restricted again the use of Georgian language for education and church purposes at parishioners' churches and schools of Sukhumi districts on March 17, 1898, this was followed by a tough protest of the Georgian population of Abkhazia-Samurzakano. The protest was so powerful that this fact reached the Russian Emperor himself. The Emperor requested the Holy Synod of the Russian Church to solve the matter. The synod issued order of September 3, 1898, which determined that those congregations of Sukhumi district with the Georgian parish had to use Georgian language for educational and religious (service) purposes, whilst in the Abkhaz congregations ... in old Slav language. This order was implemented only in 3

congregations out of 42. Georgian statesmen continued their fight. One of them, Tedi Sakhokia, managed to publish a protest article in the Petersburg newspaper "Sanct-Peterburgskie Vedomosti" in which the author demanded introduction of Abkhazian and Georgian languages. In a response the authorities initiated a criminal case against T. Sakhokia and other leaders of the "Georgian party". In a result, the Council of self-governor of the Caucasus sentenced on May 1, 1904, eight "guilty" persons to termless deportation from the Caucasus (for more, please see: Silagadze, Gurugli, 1999). During investigation of this case military governor of Kutaisi "gubernia" (province), Gershelman, was demanding the permission from the highest authorities to send only Russian (or at least Abkhaz) religious personnel to Georgian- and Abkhaz-inhabited congregations, to foster the process of "russification" and to replace Georgian teachers of the district by Russians. (Silagadze, Guruli, Document N°2, p.83-84).

The main characteristics of the language policy carried out in Abkhazia by the Tsarist Russian authorities were their aggressive and "russificatory" nature. The result of this policy was observed already during the revolution of 1905-1907, as first indications of resistance between the Abkhaz and the Georgian population of the region occurred.

On March 4, 1921, the Soviet regime was founded in Abkhazia and continued the provocative language policy of Tsarism. The most important methods all over the Soviet Union were: 1. Split-up of ethnos according to false language and ethnic signs; 2. Self-willed declaration of autonomy of regions and administrative-territorial division provoking conflict between various ethnos; 3. Intensification of the problematic of legal language status in poly-ethnic regions; 4. Modification of parochial schools and creation of the so-called „national schools"; 5. Change of graphic bases for the written languages (first into Latin after into Russian); 6. Imposing of the Russian language to the entire population of the Soviet Union, attempts of wide-spreading Russian mono-linguism after the stage of national-Russian bilingualism; 7. Support the artificial increase of percentage of „rusizms", „sovietizms" and „internationalisms" in non-Russian languages; 8. Provoke „toponymic-onomastic and historiographic wars" between the neighbouring ethnos; 9. Resettlement of Russians and so called Russian-language populations on the territories of other ethnos and fostering poly-ethnicity of regions; 10. Achieve domination of the Russian language in mass media; 11. Limiting triage of the national-language literature; 12. Labelling of entire ethnos as „guilty people" and their massive deportation from places of origin and many other similar methods. Almost all of these methods were used in Abkhazia. It is worth mentioning that the tactics of rotational „privileges" between Georgians and Abkhaz was paid a special attention in this region, which was typical for all above mentioned methods. With the help of this method the „Methropolia" was able to maintain permanent animosity among these two ethnos and to prevent their unification to fight against the imperialistic policy.

For example, in the 1920s, a mass campaign commenced all over the Soviet Union to change the writing of newly created literary languages (written languages) to Latin-based graphics. This campaign followed the objective of fulfilling a tactical manoeuvre to make these people believe that Russia never planned their russification. This massive process of changing various alphabets to the Latin continued till 1936. Afterwards, all of them were changed to the Russian alphabet (Cyrillic) again. The process of „latinisation" tackled the Abkhaz alphabet as well: it was turned into „Analysed Alphabet" invented by N. Mari in 1926. As from 1928 it started to use a Latin based alphabet unified by Prof. N. Jakovlev and since 1938, when the process of massive use of Cyrillic was ongoing, writing of Abkhaz and Ossetian languages, spread in Georgia at that time, were changed to the Georgian graphics instead of the Russian ones. This measure was planned in Moscow in the Central Committee for New Alphabets (The Central Soviet Committee of new alphabet) and was carried out in Abkhazia and South Ossetia under their supervision.

The mentioned fact was preceded by a special order adopted in the mid 1930s. According to this order, Latin alphabet of the „title nations" of the autonomies, making part of the Soviet republics, as well as alphabets of those ethnos without autonomies,

should have been changed from Latin to graphics, which represented the bases for the language of the „title nation“ of a given Soviet Republic. Only two languages all over the USSR - Georgian and Armenian - had original, different from Russian, alphabets. Based on this reality, only Abkhaz and the southern version of Ossetian were changed to Georgian graphics during the process of russification of alphabets. Whilst in Armenia the Kurdish language was changed to the Armenian alphabet. (See for more: Essays, 2007, p.324-327). The most important here is that the Empire skilfully managed to direct dissatisfaction of the Abkhazs regarding this issue towards Georgians.

The Abkhazian separatists blame the Georgian for closing the Abkhazian schools and restricting the teaching of Abkhazian language in 1945. It was impossible to close down Abkhazian schools for a simple reason that unfortunately there never existed such an institution called „Abkhazian School“ neither in times of the principality of Abkhazia and during Tsarism era, nor in Soviet times. What is the most surprising even nowadays - in so-called „Independent Abkhazia“ - there exists nothing like that. The school which was functioning in 1945 and functions from 1954 till present is a Russian school, with certain elements of teaching Abkhazian language. The majority of subjects on its first level (grades I-III) are taught in Abkhaz. In parallel, with the intensified teaching of the Russian language, as from stage two and three (as from grade IV), all humanitarian, nature-sciences and technical disciplines are taught only in Russian. Abkhaz language and Abkhaz literature are taught in Abkhazian. In 1945, teaching of Abkhaz language and literature was not cancelled in the so-called Abkhaz schools. Georgian language had only replaced Russian, which was a result of delayed implementation of the 1938 decision of the Central Committee organisation bureau of the Soviet Union Communist Party. The decision said: „...it is necessary to reorganise national schools by means of introduction of standard soviet manuals and teaching programs, in the language of the given republic or by means of introducing teaching in Russian“.(see Essays, 2007, p.327). However the empire again reached its objective: many people believe, that cancelling Abkhazian schools did occur in reality.

Let us stop here and answer the main question: what were the results of the language policy, implemented by Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union for more then two centuries for the Abkhaz people?

Let us start from the positive ones:

- a) Creation of the Abkhaz alphabet was of obvious importance, despite the political purposes of this act;
- b) Publishing of the first Abkhaz language original novels in 1912, creating a basis for Abkhaz literature. However it's worth mentioning that Russian authorities did not take any part in this action;
- c) It was doubtlessly a positive development that right after the establishment of the Soviet rule, the population of Abkhazia was granted a massive possibility to receive school education. School manuals were created and published and later, the Abkhaz section of the philological faculty was opened at the Sukhumi pedagogical institute.
- d) State-sponsored edition of newspapers and magazines, as well as publication of various original or translated literatures has to be evaluated as a positive development. The establishment of the Abkhaz theatre and opening of Abkhaz editorials boards for TV and radio were as well very important facts, etc.

Negative results of almost 200 years old imperialistic language policy for the Abkhaz people are heavier and more numerous. We will draw your attention to the most essential ones:

- a) Abkhazian language, culture and identity became the target of well planned aggression coming from Russian language, culture and identity, which - if it continues so - questions the existence of Abkhazian people;
- b) The so called Abkhaz school, which is actually Russian and represents a strong

tool of "russification", made many generations used to the world-images system and separated them from national roots. A majority of modern Abkhazians do not read newspapers or literature in their native language, do not listen to radio programs or watch Abkhaz-language TV programs, laugh at specific characteristics of its own language, is not able to talk about nature-sciences, technical and other issues in Abkhaz. They prefer to write, read and speak, even about daily life issues, in Russian. This type of school is the modified variant of the Tsarism parochial school. Its aim is the russification process of the non-Russian ethnoses (the so-called national schools still exist in Tskhinvali region, in the non-Russian regions of the Russian federation and in the countries of Middle Asia).

c) It is true that Abkhaz language is granted the status of the official state language as from 1925, but neither it nor Georgian fulfilled functions relevant to this status. The Abkhaz language remains as a non-prestigious language and it is used by a very limited mono-ethnic society. The most alarming is the fact that the Abkhaz youth neither learns nor uses this language. Even in villages, where as a rule any language is preserved best in its ecology and natural origin, youth does not speak Abkhazian well enough and use a Russian-Abkhaz conglomerate instead.

e) The quasi-state, seeming independence of which was provocatively recognized by Putin-Medvedev's Russia, makes no practical efforts to widen the area of functioning and increasing the prestige of Abkhaz language among local population. Pseudo-authorities of Bagapsh do not dare and will never be able to work seriously on these issues, as Moscow will never allow them to do so (as the Kremlin might lose the result of the efforts of its language policy, carried out in the region over 2 centuries. And besides, people of the North Caucasus would as well demand protection of their languages!).

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Some Aspects of the Geopolitical Strategy of Georgia (On Politicization of the Kartvelological Studies)

Prof. Tariel Putkaradze

Introduction

Every normal country has its **geo-strategy**, according to which **geopolitical interests** are defined. On the basis of the latter, **geopolitical strengths are defined** and the strategy is worked out. Some authorities, having excessive ambitions, build their strategy to the detriment of the vital interests of other countries and peoples.

Traditionally, the following are regarded as basic geopolitical strengths: the strategic value of the given land, the ability of the society/country and **self-identity of the population** (in general, demographic data).

Cf. The **basic criteria** of geopolitical strengths are regarded to be: strategic territory, outlet to the sea, natural resources (minerals, supply of fresh water...), financial strength, the level of development of economy and technology, political stability, the level of social integration, **number of population, ethnic homogeneity and national consciousness**.

In order to secure the long-term control of the areas of their interest, aggressive geopolitical players, as a rule, primarily try to change the **demography** of the region of their "interest" for their own benefit. The plan may be of two kinds: the barbarous form is **genocide**; whereas the **manipulation of public opinion** is the comparatively civilized one.

Due to geopolitical interests, **the manipulation of public opinion** occurs in two directions:

- Regulation of the **self-identity** of the population in the geopolitically interesting region;
- Manipulation of the opinion of the rest of the world concerning the population of the geopolitically interesting region (by means of misinformation).

In the present paper, on the basis of scholarship, the Russian schemes of manipulating the mood of Georgia's population and the attitude of other peoples of the world towards Georgia are analyzed.

First of all, a brief overview of the history of Georgia in the geopolitical aspect should be presented.

Geopolitical retrospection: Eurasia, Caucasia

In the world's geopolitical space, Eurasia occupies the central place. In Eurasia, one of the regions of outstanding strategic importance is Caucasia and in Caucasia – Georgia, as the junction between modern sea, overland and energy resources routes.

At different times, Georgia was an object of struggle for Persia, Byzantium, the Arab Caliphate, Mongolia, Ottoman Turkey, Russia...

For the geopolitical space of the region **since ancient times the Greater Caucasus mountain range, as the natural boundary, has been of tremendous**

importance. Cf. according to ancient Romans, the **Caucasus Mountains are the boundary between the civilized and the barbarian worlds** (Pliny).

The Georgians (The Kartvels) represent the autochthonous population of the Caucasus. Since immemorial the main passes of the Caucasus and other principal routes of Transcaucasia were controlled by Georgians. Along with this, Georgia **since the early centuries to the present days has been the outpost of Christian culture and consciousness.** In fact, these two distinct functions define the regional essence of the Georgian state.

Various empires always tried to "get a share" in carrying out this control. Sometimes when the Georgian state was deprived of this historical role, namely from 1801 to 1990 the geopolitical strengths of Georgia were in fact controlled by Russia.

In the 1980s, as a result of the geopolitical struggle with the West, the Russian empire (the Soviet Union) weakened. Against this background, in Georgia the National-Liberation Movement strengthened, which headed by Zviad Gamsakhurdia went into power by the legitimate way. On the basis of the nation-wide referendum of March 31, 1991, the legitimately elected government restored the independence of Georgia on April 9, 1991.

The great geopolitical players were presented with a "fait accompli": Georgia put on the agenda the necessity for change in the geopolitical situation in the Caucasian region. In particular by the "Act of Restoration of Independence" of April 9, 1991, the population of all regions of Georgia showed the entire world: **whole Georgia wishes to control its own geopolitical space independently.** In parallel, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia declared the **Russian** troops, present in Georgia, as occupants.

Transcaucasia is one of the main directions of the aggressive geopolitical strategy of Russia. Naturally, **Russia was not resigned to the outlook of going away from Georgia in 1991 either.** In spite of the successful referendum and the declaration of the act of the restoration of independence, in 1991-93, Georgia was forced to remain in the Russian geopolitical space. Namely:

Under the **Malta Agreement (03.12.1989)**, Eastern Europe and the Baltic countries were involved in the geopolitical field of the West, whereas Caucasia, Ukraine, Moldova and Central Asia remained in the actual ownership of Russia.¹

At the turn of 1991-1992, **the legitimate authorities changed by force** in Georgia. In the geopolitical space "assigned" to it, Russia also overthrew by force the legitimate powers of Azerbaijan and Ichkeria.² Afterwards, by provoking conflicts in Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali area, the Russian military troops drove away from these historical Georgian lands the majority of the autochthonous population (Georgians, Abkhazians not supporting the Kremlin...).

In spite of this, Shevardnadze's authorities removed the occupation status from the Russian military troops. Furthermore, the conqueror was declared as **a friendly country** and in the so-called Georgian-"Abkhazian", in fact: **Georgian-Russian conflict zone, the Russian army was charged with the peacemaking mission.**³

1 See: T. Putkaradze, "What God wills not, or on the Current Processes" (Newspaper *Sakartvelos Respublika*, September 28, 1991; see also: Collection *From Absyrtus to Gamsakhurdia*, Tb., 1999, pp. 61-68).

2 Noteworthy, certain forces to the present day are hushing up the essence of this event and refer to the military coup staged by the Kremlin in Georgia as "Civil War".

3 E. Shevardnadze participated in many agreements against Georgia; see e.g., the meeting of Shevardnadze and Baltin on November 3, 1993, on a Russian ship in Poti port; on Shevardnadze's some other treaties; on other materials see also: T. Putkaradze, *From Absyrtus to Gamsakhurdia, or in the Desert of the Present*, Tb., 1999; T. Putkaradze, *Imerkhevi Speaking Land*, Kutaisi, 2007; T. Putkaradze, *Ethnolinguistic Terms and the European Charter on the Languages of Minorities*, Kutaisi, 2005.

From 1993, a new stage of the Russian expansion begins. After genocide and overthrowing of the legitimate authorities, the time comes for the Russian capital: **Russia in the main gets control over Georgia's strategic strengths.**

The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and the Baku-Tbilisi-Batumi routes are of vital importance for the West, cf.:

Eastern Europe for the USA and Western Europe was more a question of dignity and security, whereas **the resources of Central Asia** and **the energy carriers of Transcaucasia** were of paramount importance for them and Turkey too:

Only if Russia leaves Transcaucasia, Europe will be energetically independent.

After Shevardnadze's 10-year rule, these and other factors soon led to the necessity of a certain correction of the **geopolitical balance** in Transcaucasia:

By supporting the "Rose Revolution" in 2003, the West considerably strengthened in Georgia the Euro-Atlantic powers. As a result, the role of the authorities of Georgia, as geopolitical players, increased. In Russia this strengthened even more the wish to gain back influence in Transcaucasia, which **resulted in** the aggression of August 2008: **a stage of Russian revenge.**

Thanks to the United States and the European Union, the Russian aggression was stopped at the outskirts of the capital Tbilisi. This historical event brought with it many negative and some positive results for Georgia:

A lot of citizens of Georgia (of Georgian and Ossetian origin) were killed and thousands of Georgians were turned into refugees. Georgia in fact lost more territories (the Dali/Kodori Ravine, i.e. Upper Abkhazia, the Akhagori district, the Georgian villages of the Tskhinvali region, village Perevi of the Sachkhere district...); Georgia was weakened and great damage was done to the military potential. The probability of the division of the Georgian state by means of the "separatist" forces manipulated by Russia grew.

In addition, with the recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia by Russia a real danger emerged that North Caucasia may become an outpost of constant chaos, terrorism and radical Islam.

The restoration of **the occupant status** regarding the Russian troops by the Georgian authorities and the increase of the activity of the European Union in Transcaucasia should be regarded as the positive and **fair result** of the August events.

What does Russia Wish Today?

After the Russian-Georgian war of August (2008), **the Kremlin is controlling** a greater part of Georgia. At present **Russia still controls** a great part of Georgia. Russia of Putin-Dugin-Medvedev is not content with this. The aggressive authorities of Russia wish to get control not only over Transcaucasia but entire Eurasia as well. It should also be noted that for the purpose of the complete isolation of Georgia Russia works actively in the direction of Russian-Armenian-Iranian and Russian-Azerbaijani-Armenian-Turkish relations too. **Multilateral geopolitical vectors take shape** in the region, which complicates the prospects of Georgia's pro-Western course even more.

It is clear:

In 1801-1917, 1921-1990, Russia unlawfully and without alternative enjoyed **geopolitical control** over Transcaucasia and now it cannot tolerate the appearance of other great geopolitical players in the region.

For more than two centuries, the Georgian nation wishes to establish good-neighboring relations to the Russian people, but the present authorities of Russia also by all illegitimate methods are trying to satisfy its **geopolitical ambition** at the expense of the vital interests of Georgia.

The Georgian nation will never put up with the infringement of its vital interests.

Russia is aware of this. Therefore, it permanently tries to change the **demographic situation in Georgia** and, **by the manipulation of the demographic strength**, to establish a foothold in Caucasia for ever. In particular:

- In the 19. - 21. centuries, first by the so-called Muhajirism and then by the Russian-Georgian war of 1992-2008, Russia committed **genocide on Georgians** and the anti-Russian-minded **Abkhazians** in the historical region of Georgia Abkhazia.⁴ At first, within the artificial boundaries it created there the Abkhaz Autonomous Soviet Republic. Now it tries to finish this process though the formation of a satellite "state", which instead of the basic population exiled from Abkhazia, Georgians, will be inhabited by pro-Russian Abkhazians, migrant Armenians and newly settled Russians.

- In the 20. - 21. centuries the Russian authorities managed to settle from Ossetia (North Caucasia) to Inner Kartli: the Tskhinvali-Java area. The Ossetes supported them and for whom they illegitimately and illogically created the so-called "South Ossetian Autonomy". Now they try to base on this artificial formation Kokoiiti's Russian-language "state". About the history of the question, I would like to note briefly that in the soviet period as well as at present in the nominal autonomy too (called the Autonomy of North Ossetia, real Ossetia), the Kremlin is in fact killing Ossetian language and culture. E.g. in Ossetia, there is no possibility of receiving secondary or higher education in Ossetian language and the prospects of revival and development of Ossetian culture are almost absent. The active policy of Russification is under way in Ossetia too. In parallel, the Beslan tragedy demonstrated that the Kremlin is committing the genocide of the Ossetes too, along with that of the Chechen-Ingush.⁵

- Over the last 150 years, on the order of the Russian imperial authorities the politicized linguists, ethnologists and historians have been distorting the real language-cultural and ethnic-political history, thereby trying **to declare great part of the Georgians as non-Georgians and their historical homelands as non-Georgian lands. To achieve this goal, the authorities of the Russian empire work in three directions:**

1. By the propaganda of pseudo-scientific provisions in Georgia they try to change the national identity of at least parts of Georgians. **E.g.** persons financed by Russia have tried, to the present day unsuccessfully, to persuade the Svans that their mother tongue is not Georgian and that they are not Georgians⁶;

2. By the **powerful information** propaganda, they try to convince the entire world that Acharans, Megrels, Laz, Svans, Khevsurs, Meskhs, Tushs etc. are not Georgians. According to their evidence, in the state called Georgia **these "ethnic groups are oppressed" by Georgians (Kartlians) as they have no written culture.** By the so-called "Kartization", the language of the "conqueror" Georgians is imposed on these "peoples"; the world must help these "oppressed ethnoses";

3. **With "scholarly studies" of dubious value**, they try to persuade the world's elite circles that **there is no single Georgian culture**; that Georgia is a small empire; that in the past Georgians (Kartlians) conquered and to the present day continue "to oppress the peoples having unwritten languages": Meskhs, Acharans,

4 In spite of Muhajirism, the Georgians of Achara escaped the genocide.

5 On the language policy of Russia see: M.Tabidze, *Problems of the Georgian Language and its Functioning Factors in Georgia*, Tb., 2005; T.Gvantseladze, *The Question of Language and Dialect in the Kartvelology*, 2006.

6 For documentary materials see: T.Putkaradze, N.Nakani, *The Svans on the Literary Language and the Svan Speech (The National-Linguistic Self-Designation of the Georgians)*, part I, Kutaisi, 2005; T.Gvantseladze, *The Question of Language and Dialect in the Kartvelology*, 2006; M.Tabidze, *Linguistic Situation in Georgia and Issues of Functioning of the Georgian Language*, Tb., 2005; R.Gujejani, Father Besarion (Nizharadze), *Newspaper of Mestia and Upper Svaneti*, June 4, 2007; T.Putkaradze, *The Mother Tongue and Dialects of the Georgians*, Kutaisi, 2008.

Megrels, Laz, Svans etc.

After creating such a background, with the aid of the political forces, they wish to give autonomy to Georgian regions and divide Georgia the so-called federation-confederation method.

In a word, with the inadequate terminological evaluation of the events and distortion of the essence of facts⁷, **Russia tries to convince the whole world** that Georgia is "a small empire" which must be broken down and that the Georgian "aggressor" will oppress other "undeveloped ethnic groups" etc.

What does Georgia Wish?

For many centuries, Georgia has been repelling aggressive empires. The Georgian nation took shape in this struggle. **At present, Georgians wish to defend their national-cultural identity and statehood.**

It is obvious from the documentary sources created over the centuries that the inhabitants of various regions of Georgia: Megrels, Laz, Meskhs, Pkhovians, Rachans, Lechkhumiens or Kakhetians perceive themselves as parts of the Georgian ethnons and Georgian culture. Not a single Georgian needs to be reminded of this, because he is proud that he is a **representative of a nation having a centuries-old state history and culture.**

It is also attested in the documents that for at least **15-20 centuries, Georgian nation has been creating Georgian written culture**, being formed itself in its mother tongue. This **single Georgian written (secular and spiritual) culture is based on the common Kartvelian language existing since the 1st millennium BC.** In addition, many facts show that this culture was created qualitatively equally by all historical communities of Georgia. Exactly this defined the remarkable stability of Georgian national culture in all regions of Georgia: in Abkhazia (before Russia's entrance into Caucasia), Samegrelo, Achara, Lazeti, Tao-Klarjeti, Meskheti, Kartli, Kakheti, Tusheti, Saingilo, etc.⁸ Since old times, the population of these regions was referred to with the ethnonym "Georgian."⁹

It is also a well-known fact, that even after the division of united Georgia in the 16. - 18. centuries, the resulting formations - kingdoms and principalities - still **considered themselves as small Georgians** and as far as possible developed traditional Georgian culture. There has never been any attempt in any region to replace the historical mother tongue by a dialectal speech.

Along with the historical documents, modern academic scholarly researches also demonstrate that in ancient Georgian sources the choronym "**Kartli**" and in foreign sources choronyms "Colchis" and "Iberia" correspond to the state called at present *Sakartvelo* by the Georgians (Eng. Georgia). **The formation and revival of Georgia as a whole state occurred by the activity of Georgians from exactly those regions (Megrels-Laz, Svans, Meskhs...)** who are declared by the Russian misinformation machine as non-Georgian "ethnic groups" "oppressed" by the "Karts".

7 Russia called the coup d'etat and the genocide of the Georgians committed by itself a civil war between Georgians and referred to its aggression as a peacemaking mission etc.

8 For the analysis of scholarly literature see: T. Putkaradze, *The Georgians*, part I, Kutaisi, 2005; T. Gvantseladze, *The Question of Language and Dialect in the Kartvelology*, 2006; M. Tabidze, *Linguistic Situation in Georgia and Issues of Functioning of the Georgian Language*, Tb., 2005; M. Nachqebia, *Ethnolinguistic Terms of Georgia*, Tb., 2006; R. Sherozia, *On Some Issues of the Kartvelian Literary Language and Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani's "Sitqvis Kona" (Dictionary)*, Georgian Heritage, XI, 2007; T. Putkaradze, *The Mother Tongue and Dialects of the Georgians*, Kutaisi, 2008; R. Topchishvili, *The Ethnogenesis and Ethnic History of the Georgians*, Tb., 2008.

9 E.g. on the inhabitants of Egrisi: Iovane Minckhi and Stepane Sananoisdze concerning the analysis of the 10. century documentary material, see: D. Muskhelishvili, *On the History of the Self-Designation of the Georgians, Foreign and Georgian Terminology Denoting Georgia and the Georgians*, Tb., 1993, p.360.

Today too Georgians wish to defend their unity because they are well aware that **the national energy of Georgia lies in their unity.**

What Kind of Evidence is Available on Georgians and Georgia in the Modern World?

One could say with confidence that with the great "efforts" of Russia the scholarly-information space of the modern world to the present is almost without alternative dominated by politicized anti-Georgian provisions, **servicing Russian geopolitical goals**; several qualifications are offered below for illustration:

1. In the Atlas "France and the World" (La France et le Monde, Atlas), published in Paris in 2000, Georgians, Abkhazians, Megreles, Svans and Ossetes are represented with different colors and ethnic designations.

2. In the book "Europe of the Peoples", published in Spain in 2002 by "The Centre of European Languages", Georgians, Abkhazians, Megreles, Svans and Ossetes are shown with different flags and ethnic designations.

3. According to the basic ethnological encyclopedia of the world's global network (on the basis of the evidence of 2008), Georgia is inhabited by the following ethnoses/peoples:

- Azeri – 308 000
- Assyrians – 3 000
- Abkhazians – 101 000
- Batsbs – 3 420
- Greeks – 38 000
- Laz – 2 000
- Megreles – 500 000
- Ossetes – 100 000
- Russians – 372 000
- Svans (using Georgian and Russian as written language) – 15 000
- Armenians – 448 000
- Urums (Muslim Greeks) – 97 746
- Georgians (Imeretians, Rachan-Lechkhumians, Gurians, Acharans, Imerkhebian-Kartlians, Kakhetians, Ingilos, Tushs, Khevians, Khevsurs, Pshavians, Mtiuls, Fereidanians, Meskh-Javakhs) – 3 901 380
- Georgian Jews – 20 000
- Kurds – 40 000, etc. (Ethnologue report for Georgia <http://www.ethnologue.com>).

4. A part of Georgians (Megreles, Laz, Svans) are declared as non-Georgians at the modern site of the world's virtual history; namely, on the webpage of Georgia in the Asian Department the following map of settlement of the "ethnic minorities" living in Georgia is published:



According to the explanations of the map: 1) Chechen; 2) Tsova-Tush; 3) Khundzakhian; 4) Udian; 5) Azeri; 6) Armenian; 7) Laz, i.e. Chan; 8) Megrelian; 9) Abkhazian; 10) Svan; 11) Ossetian are regarded as the languages of minorities in Georgia. Noteworthy, the author (P.J. Hillery) worked nine years (1996-2004) to elaborate these qualifications. Mr. Adrian Brisku, the author of the webpage on Georgia has also worked for years in Georgia (see: <http://vlib.iue.it/history/asia/georgia.html>).

5. In 2007 a collection «Историографический диалог вокруг непризнанных государств: Приднестровье, Нагорный Карабах, Армения, Южная Осетия и Грузия» (Historiographic Dialogue on Unrecognized States: the Trans-Dniester Region, Nagorno-Karabakh, Armenia, South Ossetia and Georgia) was published with an introductory article of Mr. Kimitaka Matsuzato, Doctor of Juridical Science, Professor of the Slavic Research Center, University of Hokkaido (Sapporo, Japan). In it (p.7) one reads: "If western countries tried to overcome international differences on the level of the formation of other social possibilities with the help of non-territorial measures too, directed to wards individuals, in the USSR the status was given to ethno-territorial formations. Republics with the union status (e.g. Georgia) had perfect conditions for development, the territorial formations with the autonomous status (e.g. Abkhazians) were less successful, whereas the **ethnic groups** without territorial formation (**e.g. the Megreles**) overcame tremendous difficulties in order to preserve their language and identity"¹⁰...

6. The Georgian public has been aware of the anti-Georgian activity of Prof. G.Hewitt for a long time. At this stage he appears with a "new" initiative. In his view, by the recognition of the Megrelian language as state language, the buffer state of Samegrelo must be created, which will serve to settle the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict... It is also necessary to create the Caucasian confederation¹¹ (subjects of which are supposed to be Abkhazia, Samegrelo, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Karabakh, Armenia, South Ossetia...)¹².

7. In the project "Linguarium Register" implemented by Prof. Yuri Koriakov, the Kartvelian linguistic-ethnic world is represented as 5 living and 1 dead language. Megrelian, Laz, new Georgian, Upper Svan (the Bal language) and Lower Svan are independent languages. Dead language is old Georgian. In the opinion of the same author, Megreles, Laz, Georgians, Balians (Upper Svans) and Lower Svans are also independent ethnoses (EG).

It is surprising too that for the description of the modern Kartvelian linguistic world one finds Y. Koriakov's production without alternative even in the Georgian-language Wikipedia (evidence of October-November, 2008). See the link on Georgian Wikipedia "Atlas of Caucasian Languages, Kartvelian Languages." Here, one has access to the

10 The material with critical analysis was presented by Prof. Vazha Kiknadze at the enlarged session of the Academic Council of I.Javakhishvili Institute of History and Ethnology on December 3, 2007.

11 G.Hewitt expressed this view in 1999 in his paper: Cases of Cooperation in Favour of Caucasus (the paper was submitted for review to Arn. Chikobava Institute of the Academy of Sciences of Georgia in 1999 by the editorial staff of the journal *Chvneburebi* issued in Turkey); see also: Hewitt, B.G. Abkhazia: a problem of identity and ownership. *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 267-323, 1993; Hewitt, B.G. Demographic manipulation in the Caucasus. *The Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 48-74, 1995; Hewitt, G. (ed.) *The Abkhazians*. Curzon Press, 1999. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/2273647/Conflict-in-Abkhazia-Cases-of-Cooperation-in-Favour-of-Caucasus-or-again-Confederation-of-Caucasus>). By the provoking the idea of the "Buffer State of Samegrelo" the Russian imperial circles wish to take away Abkhazia from Georgia once and for all.

12 Cf. e.g. the opinion of A. Dugin concerning the territorial structure of Georgia (Moscow: Арктогея-центр, 1999): A new political order in the Caucasus supposes a complete revision of the now existing political realities and transition from the model of the relationship state-state or nation-nation to the purely geopolitical system centre-periphery, whereas the structure of the periphery must be defined not by the political, but ethno-cultural differentiation. **This may be realized by means of creating the "Caucasian federation", which would include the three Caucasian republics of the CIS as well as the inter-Russian autonomous formations.** The Centre would give this entire region cultural-economic autarchy, but would provide the strictest strategic centralism...(pp. 351-352).

following map (<http://linguarium.iling-ran.ru/maps/1-all.gif>):



Whereas the link to "Map of Kartvelian Languages" (<http://linguarium.iling-ran.ru/maps/14-kartv.gif>) leads to the variant given below¹³:

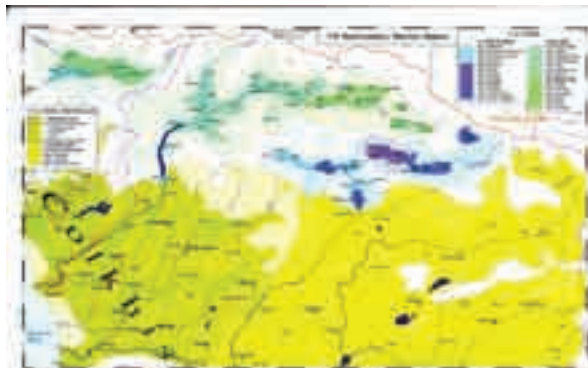


Cf. J.Gippert's creation of many years is almost the same. (<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/didact/karten/kauk/kaukasm.htm>):

¹³ In the second map, for some reason, the Eastern Georgian dialects and Imeretian-Gurian-Acharan-Imerkhevian-Taoan are represented in different colours... In addition, Taoan is regarded as the dead dialect. Elsewhere, Y .Koriakov singles out 6 Georgian languages: Megrelian, Laz, Old Georgian, Middle Georgian, Ecclesiastic Georgian, Svan (Y.Koriakov, 2006, p. 39-42; cf. in the same place Y.Koriakov instead of 1 Darguan language singles out 18 languages: he declares Darguan dialects as languages).



Y.Koriakov's third map is also available in international circulation regarding Georgia.¹⁴



The essential "novelty" here is that the terms Samegrelo and historical Colchis (Colchis) are equal to each other, which stresses the allegedly long history of the separation of Georgian and Megrelian. According to Y. Koryakov's map, it follows that linguistically, culturally and ethnically the Megrelians have been separated from other Georgians for at least 3000 years.

In reality, the boundaries of Colchian archeological culture and ancient Greek-Urartian historical evidence attest the fact that the Georgians' historical state Colchis as well as Colchian culture, created on the basis of the common Kartvelian language, covered the main part of historical Georgia. At that time too the ancestors of the present-day Megrelians, Meskhs, Acharans, Svans, Laz or Taoians represented a single Georgian (Kartvelian) ethnos and created a common culture.¹⁵

No one should think that Y. Koryakov is not familiar with the Kartvelian reality and for example he supposes that the Upper and the Lower Svans are different ethnos. It

14 On the advice of Prof. Kevin Tuite this map was sent to me for comment by Patrick Lemonnier, French specialist of linguistic maps.

15 The assumption seems reliable that **Kulkha** originated in the Chorokhi valley and the Kola-Artaani area in the middle of the second millennium BC; for the history of the question see: M. Inadze, *Terms: "Colchis" and "Kolkheti" in Ancient Literature; Foreign and Georgian Terminology Denoting Georgia and the Georgians*, Tb., 1993; T.Putkaradze, *The Georgians*, Kutaisi, 2005.

is obvious from Y. Koryakov's maps and comments that he is perfectly knowledgeable about Georgia's history as well as its present. It is evident as well that Y. Koryakov has a clear idea of the location of all Georgian villages and of the characteristics of the vernaculars spoken by the inhabitants of one or another village.

Naturally, Y. Koryakov also knows that Svans, Megrels, Gurians, Acharians and Georgians of other regions too consider themselves as creators of the single Georgian written culture. He is aware as well that **the idioms**, which he refers to as languages, **are considered by some scholars as dialects of the Georgian language**. In spite of this, for some reason he still declares Megrelians, Laz, Upper Svans and Lower Svans as non-Georgians, as ethnoses different from the Georgians, and represents their dialects as independent languages.¹⁶

In my view, this is not accidental. Y. Koryakov's qualifications are not based on the results of scholarly research, they are made by the inertia of the soviet, politicized scholarship (purpose: "Divide and rule!").

Conclusion

At present, Georgia is at the centre of the world's attention. One might say that this small Caucasian state has never been the object of such a dangerous global confrontation. Nowadays Georgia is considered in the US-Russian, European-Russian, Turkish-Russian and Eurasian geopolitical contexts. Accordingly, many interested parties study the history, demographic and linguistic-ethnic situation of Georgia.

Georgia is not a powerful geopolitical player of this region yet. Russia still manages to control **a part of the geopolitical strengths** of Georgia. **At the same time it tries:**

- To legalize the ethnic cleansing of autochthonous Georgians in Abkhazia and Inner Kartli (Tskhinvali area);
- To manipulate a part of the political spectrum;
- By declaring some groups of Georgians as non-Georgians and by using of the educational system, to direct the consciousness of a part of the population in some regions for their own benefit;
- By spreading pseudo-scholarly ethno-linguistic qualifications in the global information and scientific network to mislead the rest of the world: to make Georgia notorious under the name of a "small aggressive empire";
- Against the will of the Georgians, to impose on Georgia a federative or confederative structure, where "subjects" will be separate regions of Georgia: Achara, Samegrelo, Imereti, Kakheti, Meskheti, Kartli, Svaneti, etc.¹⁷

In order to restore the geopolitical control over Transcaucasia, Russia is again planning a new aggression, which endangers the vital interests of the Georgian nation and state.

Only by the existence of whole and powerful Georgia is it possible to liberate Transcaucasia from Russian dictates, **to restore the safe state area linking Europe and Asia and to maintain in the region the space of mentality based on Western values** (Christian, democratic).

The deployment of the EU observers in Georgia, face to face with the Russian

¹⁶ In recent decades there is an attempt to establish synonymous terms **Kartvelian** and **Georgian** with different semantics. In particular, by the analogy of the terms: **Roman-Germanic**, **Indo-European**, some scholars or political experts purposefully use **Kartvelian** to denote "ethnoses", "independent peoples" of common origin: "Georgians", "Svans", "Laz", "Megrels"... (see e.g. Y. Koriakov's qualifications), and **Georgian** – to refer to the "Georgians proper"; cf. in the recent period the term **Georgia proper** (the land remaining without Abkhazia and Tskhinvali area) originated. This problem will be discussed more deeply elsewhere.

¹⁷ Georgia must necessarily give autonomy to the Abkhazian people.

occupation troops, should be regarded **as a new stage in the geopolitical history of Caucasia**.

In order to prevent Russia from **changing with barbarous method** the demographic situation in Transcaucasia (genocide of Georgians and Abkhazians) and to make it possible for 500 000 refugees to return home, the following is necessary:

- By the full operation of democratic institutions, Georgia's aspiration towards the European Union must continue intensively; Georgia must in reality become a partner of the Euro-American alliance. Instead of the Russian occupation troops, the peacemaking mandate must be handed over to the EU police units;
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministries of Georgia, through the embassies accredited in Georgia, should provide adequate information to the world community concerning the current processes in Georgia. E.g. it is obvious from the friendly life together of **ethnic Abkhazians and Georgians** in Achara and other regions of Georgia as well as **the ethnic Ossetes and Georgians** in Tbilisi or Kartli and Kakheti that there are no so-called Georgian-Abkhazian and Georgian-Ossetian ethno-conflicts in Georgia. It is an inadequate **terminological evaluation** disguising Russian aggression in Georgia etc.

Finally, the topic which was brought to the forefront in the present paper:

To prevent the Russian empire from "**demographic manipulation**" of Georgia, it is necessary:

To establish in good time scholarly qualifications about the linguistic-ethnic identity of Georgia and the Georgians through the efforts of the governmental and scientific-educational institutions of Georgia, in the school textbooks, as well as the world's scientific-encyclopedic space, instead of the Russian-soviet **materials**.

In parallel, the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia should actually carry out one of the basic recommendations of the "Bologna Process": study and propaganda of national cultures.¹⁸

18 Cf. At present in the school-educational space not only the teaching of sacred literature is limited qualitatively, but even of the spiritual treasure of the Georgian nation *Vepkhistqaosani* (The Man in the Panther's Skin). In addition, with rare exceptions, at many universities and public schools **the history of the Georgian nation and the Kartvelian linguistic world** is still taught according to soviet qualifications etc.

EPIGRAPHY AS THE SOURCE OF ETHNOCULTURAL HISTORY OF ABKHAZIA AND SAMACHABLO

Lia Akhaladze

Epigraphic monuments often play a significant role in studying the historical past as one of the most important and reliable historical sources.

Ethno-political history of modern Abkhazia and the so-called South Ossetia cannot be studied without investigating the rich Georgian epigraphic material of this area. Majority of the given inscriptions are located on the Christian architectural monuments, tombstone epitaphs, church articles and other items of material culture. The mentioned materials contain important information on the history of ethno-political, social-economic, cultural and spiritual life of the native population of the region.

From this point of view, among the material-cultural monuments remaining on the territory of modern Abkhazia and Tskhinvali, should be distinguished the lapidary and mural inscriptions carved out on Georgian Christian architectural monuments. They expose unambiguously the true history of the cathedrals: about wardens of the church, architects and builders. Besides, both regions have retained a significant amount of embossed inscriptions, remained on the embossed monuments: icons, crosses and various types of church items.

It is characteristic, that the epigraphic monuments remained on the territory of Abkhazia and the historical "Kingdom of Abkhazians" (West Georgia) are presented in three languages: Georgian, Greek and Turkish. Among them the Greek and Turkish monuments have survived only in the form of lapidary inscriptions. There are about 22 Greek inscriptions (Kaukhchishvili, 2004, p.59-79), 6 Turkish (Bgazba, 1967, Akhaladze L, 2005(b), p.71), and about a 100 inscriptions in Georgian language (Akhaladze, 2005, a 4). Their chronology makes up 9. - 19. centuries. Scientific literature applies Georgian inscriptions of "The Kings of Abkhazians» in old Georgian "Asomtavruli" writing (Akhaladze, 2004, p.56-64).

As for the territory of Shida Kartli, the so-called South Ossetia (Tskhinvali, Java, Akhalgori and Kornisi regions) there are about 50 lapidary and more than 20 mural medieval inscriptions, remained in scientific literature (Otkhmezuri G., 1994, p.112-142).

The inscriptions have paramount paleographical value, since they clearly reflect a united line of development of Georgian writing and writing culture in general. From the paleographical point of view, the epigraphic materials of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region are important acquisitions for Georgian epigraphic fund. Among multiple inscriptions of Abkhazia must be distinguished those of Mskheta, Hopa, Anukhvi, Likhni, Mokvi, Bedia, Ilori, Tsebeldi, Ghumurishi, Gudavi, Tskelikari, Dikhazurgi, Tsarch etc. as they are of special importance for the study of ethno-cultural history.

Among them, the Msigkhua inscriptions (46 inscriptions) from Gudauta region belong to the oldest Georgian writings found in West Georgia. (pic.1)

Historical source and scientific analysis confirmed that in the 9. century in Gudauta, near the village Sanapiro on the mountain Msigkhua, was erected St. Michael Archangel cathedral. In 929-957, Giorgi II, "King of Abkhazians", built St. Nikoloz cathedral in Khuapi, in token of Queen Gurandukht's birthday. According to the inscriptions, the wardens of both cathedrals, the builders and masters and parish, belonged to the Georgian ethno-cultural world (Akhaldze, 2005a, p.140-153). Besides Khuapi, cathedrals were built in Martvili and Kiachi by Giorgi II, who is mentioned on the inscription of the Kiachi cathedral (pic.1a).

In the 10. century, "King of Abkhazia", Leon II built the Virgin's Cathedral in Mokvi and established an Episcopal school (pic.1a). Mokvi became the most important center of Georgian Church and culture. It is evidenced by inscriptions and manuscripts, among which the Mokvi Bible occupies a special place (Kh.Bgazba, 1967; Akhaldze L., 2005a, p.109-116). The Archbishop Grigol, the son of Gudzani, served there in the 12. century. His warden inscriptions are placed on the bell tower built by him (pic3). Since the 13. century, due to difficult geopolitical situations in East Georgia, the importance of Mokvi, as a center of Georgian culture and church, was increased. In the most difficult period for Georgian culture, a remarkable Bible of Mokvi was created and decorated with miniatures, by the initiatives of Daniel Mokveli. Based on postscripts of Mokvi Bible and other sources, the names of archbishops of Mokvi cathedral were specified, whose activities made Mokvi to become the most significant center of Christian culture in medieval Georgia (Khorava, 199, p.52; Kalandia, 2004, p.134; Akhaldze, 2005a, p.116).

Large amount of lapidary, embossed and mural inscriptions survived from the famous Georgian architectural monument, Bedia Monastery complex (Akhaldze L., 2000, p.43-54). The mentioned inscriptions tell that the present building of the cathedral must have been built under the reign of the first king of united Georgia, Bagrat III (978-1014), in 989-999 by the architect at court of the United Kingdom of Georgia, Svimeon Galatsoztukhutsesi. On the verge of the 10. - 11. centuries, the institution of Galaktoztukhutsesi was a constituent of the administration of the royal court. Inscriptions of King Bagrat III and Queen Gurandukht are carved on the famous Cup of Bedia the masterpiece of Georgian goldsmiths (pic5).

According to Bedia inscriptions, on the verge of the 13. - 14. centuries, in 1293-1327, due to the initiative of King Konstantine of Likht-Imereti, substantial restoration-reconstruction was carried out in the monastery complex. This fact is confirmed by archaeological excavations carried out in the 1960s and restoration results. The mentioned restoration is connected with the name of Nikoloz Gonglibaisdze, Catholicos of Abkhazia (West Georgia), and the Archbishop of Bedia: Sopron Gonglibaidze. Bedia bell-tower was built at that time, the cathedral walls and the fence were repaired and mural paintings were restored in the interior of the cathedral. The following restoration of Bedia Cathedral is connected with the names of the "Queen of the Queens", Marikhi, wife of Eristavt-Eristavi" the Prince of Odishi-Vamek I (1384-1394), her son -"Eristavt Eristavi" and "Mandaturtukhutesi" Giorgi Dadiani.

In the 16. century, Anton and Kirile Zvanisdzes carried out their activities in Bedia Cathedral. Anton was one of the most important figures of the church of late medieval Georgia, who carried out wide cultural-educational, building and church warden activities in Bedia Cathedral. By his initiative, in 1540s and 1550s, Bedia Episcopate was built, which is confirmed by relevant lapidary inscriptions. A famous archive of Bedia was renewed and filled with new manuscripts. Many Georgian relics were embossed. Among the Archbishops of Bedia Episcopate, he was the first who was conferred the dignity of Metropolitan, instituted in West Georgia since the mid 1540s (Akhaldze, 2005 (a), p. 52-59).

In the 17. century, Germane Chkhetidze was the honorable successor of activities of Anton Zvanisdze. The information about him is kept in various written sources, including the inscription carved out on the communion cup stalk of Bedia. With the purpose of updating the archives and the manuscripts in the cathedral, Germane Chkhetidze brought from Shavsheti a famous group of people, well-known for their calligraphy at that time. They updated old archives, including the famous menaion of Bedia. The repeated embellishment of the golden communion cup stalk of Bedia, dated by 999. The 17. century is connected with the name of Germane Chkhetidze. The mentioned golden stalk was stolen in the second half of the 19. century.

The epigraphic material of Bedia cathedral and the data of other historical sources allowed to specify the chronology of the Archbishops of Bedia (Akhaldze L., 2005). From the second half of the 18. century, Bedia was no more the center of Georgian church and culture, due to the difficult political situation in Georgia.

On the verge of the 10. - 11. centuries, by the initiatives and assistance of ecclesiastic and civilian persons, one of the most important churches, St. George cathedral of Ilori, was built. On the epigraphic monuments the names of church wardens are depicted: ecclesiastic persons, Archbishop Giorgi and priest Giorgi Kocholava. From the civilians are named a local feudal and ruler of the region Giorgi Gurgendize, a builder Giorgi Galatozi etc.

From the epigraphic monuments of Abkhazia, a special attention should be paid to the inscriptions of the St. George Cathedral of Tskelikari built in the village Rechkho-Tskhiri of Gali Region. In the inscriptions, the names of the initial builders of the cathedral, ecclesiastic and civilian persons, are damaged and are difficult to read. But in the 16. - 17. centuries Tskelikari Cathedral was renewed by rich nobles. Their mural images with damaged inscriptions are placed in the cathedral's interior. There is also a fresco of a local prince, church warden Chichua, with a fragment of inscription.

According to Georgian "Asomtavruli", inscriptions survived on the facades of Michael and Gabriel Archangels Cathedral in the village Anukhvi, Gudauta region. In the 11. century, Giorgi, the son of Basil, and his feudal family members had owned the village Anukhvi and its surroundings of Gudauta Region. As a result of their church warden activities, a stele-cross was built and then on its place Michael and Gabriel Archbishops church of Anukhvi.

From the perspective of Georgian church historical researches, Tsebelda region is of key importance, famous for its three lapidary and three embossed inscriptions found

up today (Akhaldze, Silogava, 2004). The mentioned inscriptions say that several cathedrals used to function simultaneously in the region: churches of St. Theodore, St. Andrew Apostle, St. John the Baptist and St. George. Among them cathedrals of St. Andrew Apostle and John the Baptist had existed here since early period. In the 11. century and at the end of the 12. century, the churches of St. Theodore and St. George were built respectively.

The Gudavi and Tsarche inscriptions represent interesting materials (Silogava, 2004, p.292-296; Akhaldze, 2005, p.131-138). According to their historical analysis, Gudavi church was built by local nobleman Rabia and his wife Nugamtsira (pic.17).

Cathedral of the village Likhni of Gudauta region is a real epigraphic collection of more than 17 inscriptions placed in the interior. The temple was painted with frescos accompanied with explanatory inscriptions in Georgian (picture 18a). Among Likhni inscriptions, the one from 1066 about the appearing of a comet, deserves attention (pic.19). In the inscription are mentioned historical persons, Georgian Kings: Giorgi II Kurapalati (1072-1089), Bagrat IV (1027-1072), Mtsignobartukhutsesi and Chkondideli, Vache Ipertimos, Petre- former Patric and others (pic.18b).

In the church yard of village Chlou (Chala) in Ochamchire Region was depicted the epitaph on the grave stone, of high nobility, statesman at court, Eristavt-Eristavi Ozbeg Dadiani, (pic.19). In the village Dikhazurga of Gali Region was found an epitaph with the inscription of Mikhael Galaktozokhutsesi (pic.20a) which is one of the oldest sample of Georgian Mkhedruli writing on the territory of Western Georgia.

The social spectrum of historical persons named in Georgian inscriptions is diverse. In the inscriptions we meet the names of almost all layers of population: kings, region rulers, high church hierarchy, priests, church wardens and common prayers. In the inscriptions are named the kings of kingdom of "Abkhazians" and the united Georgia: Giorgi II (**922-929**), Bagrat III (**978-1014**), Bagrat IV (**1027-1072**), Giorgi II Kurapalati (**1072-1089**), "King of the Kings" Konstantine (David, the son of Narin). Royal officials, region rulers and local feudals: Eritsvt Eristavi and Mechurchletukhutsesi Abusalan (the son of Iob), Mtsignobartukhutsesi and Chkondideli Giorgi (the son of Basil). Giorgi Gurgenidze, "Queen of the Queens" Sagdukht, Eristavt Eristavi and Mandartukhutsesi Giorgi Dadiani, "queen of the queens" Marikhi, Eristavt Eristavi of Racha - Niania, Eritsvt Eristavi and Mandatartukhutsesi Ozbeg Dadiani, Levan I Dadiani, the main rabbi of "Anakopia". Ecclesiastic persons: builder of Khopi Cathedral - stranger "mamadmtavari", Archbishop Giorgi, Catholicos of Abkhazia Nikoloz Gonglibaisdze, Sofron Bedieli, Archbishops and Metropolitans Anton Zhuanisdze, Germane Chkhetidze, Grigol Mokveli, the priest of Ilori church Giorgi Kocholava, the priest Merkili of Tskelikari Cathedral, the archpriest of Gudavi Church and so on. The church builders: Svimon Galatoztukhutsesi, Giorgi Galatozi, Luka Martineva, Saba (the son of Mleli). On the inscriptions are mentioned common prayers, the local population, Michael, Giorgi, Pashadze, Rosha, Nugamtsira and so on. This is the incomplete list of historical persons, creating material and spiritual culture, on the modern territory of Abkhazia during medieval centuries.

Magnificent monuments of Georgian architecture, built in the Tskhinvali region are distinguished by multiplicity of Georgian inscriptions maintained till now. From this

point of view, Georgian inscriptions on the cathedrals of Nikhozi, Armazi, Eredvi, Ikorta, Largvisi, Kanchaeti, Kabeni, Tighvi, Tiri, Kvemo Kitreuli, Dodoti, Tsirkoli, Tbeti, Ikota, Kheiti, Kvaisa, Kozha, Charebi, Doretkari, Gomarta, Dzeglevi, Ozgara, Sokhta, Zemo Lisi and others are of key importance.

One of the oldest epigraphic monuments in Georgia is the inscription of the church located in the village Nikozi, three kilometers away from Tskhinvali. Zakaria the Archbishop is named in this inscription (Shoshiashvili, 1980, p.70-71). There are two churches in Nikozi: Gvtaeba and Mtavarangelozi churches. Gvtaeba was an Episcopal Cathedral in medieval Georgia and was built by Vakhtang Gorgasali in the second half of the 5. century. According to the X century inscription, carved on the cathedral, the restoration of Gvtaeba was carried out by the Bishop Michael in the 10. century. Two inscriptions are carved on the facades of Nikoz Mtavarangelozi (Archangel) Church, telling us the history of building carried out by Nikozian bishop and his nephew.

Among the inscriptions of Shida Kartli, Armazi inscription dated from 864 is the oldest. In this inscription, Giorgi I is mentioned (861-868) (Shoshiashvili N., 1980, p.168). The indicated inscription, given by the unknown author of "Annals of Kartli", proves that since the 960s, the Kings of Abkhazians began an active fight for the possession of Kartli (Kaukhchishvili, 1955, p.258).

There are two churches in the village Eredvi in the Liakhvi Ravine. On the facade of St. George Cathedral the four Georgian "Asomtavruli" inscriptions are carved (Shoshiashvili, 1980, p.170-174; Otkhmezuri, 1994, p.120-121). The inscriptions have great historical value for the study of the church history and the political situation developed in Qartli at the beginning of the 10. century. From the inscriptions, it has been revealed that the cathedral was built by the architect Tevdore, the son of Taplai under the reign of Konstantin the King of Abkhazians (893-922). At that time, Qartli was held firmly by the King of Egris-Abkhazia, which was ruled from Uplistsikhe by the Eristavi of the King. This fact is proved by another epigraphic inscription of Samtsevisi Cathedral performed on the twentieth anniversary of King Konstantine's ruling, in 912 (Shoshiashvili, 1980, p.222-223). According to Eredvi inscription, Eredvi and its surroundings was the domain of Tbelis, the Great feudal family of Shida Kartli, who had built the cathedral. The inscriptions of the cathedral shape a very precise picture of the social hierarchy of ancient Georgia: King - Konstantine - King of Abkhazians; great feudal Tbeli; architect Theodore Taplaidze and the builder and prayer Kvarkvare.

We meet the name of the King of Abkhazians Leon III (957-967) in three fragmental inscriptions of the church relieves in the village Tsirkoli. The figure of the king is depicted with angels (Chubinashvili, 1939, p.207-208; Shoshiashvili, 1980, p. 221). According to the content of the inscription, Tsirkoli Church was built by Leon III, who held Shida Kartli and Javakheti at that time. The joining of Javakheti by the King of Abkhazians is proved by the inscription of Kumurdo cathedral, situated in Akhalkalaki Region (Silogava, 1994, p.39). In general, the active church warden activity of Leon III is evidenced as by Georgian epigraphic monuments and narrative works. According to these sources, Leon III was the builder of Mokvi, Tsirkoli and Kumurdo Cathedrals.

There are more than ten Georgian inscriptions on the Bortsvijsvari Church of Tbeti near Tskhinvali, giving rich information about the history of church building and the great feudal family of the region, the Tbelis, in the 10. century (Shoshiashvili, 1980, p.175-178; Otkhmezuri, 1994, p.121-123). From the content of the inscriptions it can be found out that in the 9. - 10. centuries, Tskhinvali and its surroundings was the domain of the Tbelis. The names of the Tbeli family members are indicated in the inscriptions. Besides them, the historical persons Ivane and Kobul Abazaszze are also mentioned in the inscriptions. Here are the names of the representatives of lower social layers. Actually, in the inscriptions of Tbeti, three social layers are shown: great feudal, nobles and common handcraftsmen.

The name of Dodoti Tskhrakari Church, which is situated seven kilometers away from Tskhinvali, is connected with the old folklore epos. Three "Asomravruli" inscriptions of the church say that it was built by the local feudal Ivane Tbeli and his son Kavtar Tbeli (Shoshiashvili, 1980, p.175- 178). Bieti Sameba (Trinity) Church in the Tskhinvali Region keeps four Georgian inscriptions, where are mentioned Church wardens, historical persons Eristavt Eristavi Ioane, his father Bakur Kanchaeli, Vache and Beshken (Shoshiashvili, 1980, p.192-195; Otkhmezuri, 1994, p.118-119).

In the inscription of Kabeni Monastery, from the beginning of the 10. century, Karthlian prince, Eristavt Adarnase and his daughter Latavri, Ashot Bagrationi's sister, are mentioned (Otkhmezur, 1994, p.114-115).

For identification of ethnical composition of the population, important information is kept in the epigraphic monuments of Java Region, as the inscription of Kasagina, Sokhta, Kvaisa and Krozha churches. They depict the building history of the mentioned cathedrals by the local feudal and masters. Largvisi Monastery was one of the important cultural centers of Shida Kartli. In the 9. century, the famous calligraphers worked there on restoration and renovation of the manuscripts.

The most important epigraphic monuments, from the point of ethno-cultural historical researches, are Lisi Jvari, Tskhratavi, Ozhara, Zeglevi, Gomarta, Zghuderi inscriptions. According to these monuments, the builder and church warden was Febronia, a daughter of the local feudal Tualoi (MepisaShvili, Tsintsadze, 1975, p.103-104; Shoshiashvili, 1980, 1990-1991). According to the inscriptions of the 12. - 13. centuries, the church wardens of Ozhara Church were local feudal Tinati, Fadlon and their sons (Mepisashvili, Tsintsadze, 1975, 126). Significant information is kept in the inscriptions of Tighvi Monastery. According to the inscription in the 9. century, the first builder of the monastery was Bishop of Ruisi, Giorgi Mroveli. In the 12. century, it was renewed by Tamar, the daughter of David Agmashenebeli (1089-1125) in 1152.

The building inscription dated from 1172 is kept in Ikorta Cathedral, which belonged to the local feudal-church wardens Beshken and Vardan. Here is the prayer inscription of Eristavt Eristavi Arsen, Chiaberi, Basili and Tvalisguga. These historical persons are known in other historical sources, they carried out their activities during the reign of Giorgi III. Later, in 1673 Rodam the Queen of Kartli (the wife of Vakhtang V) and Iese Eristavi renewed the cathedral.

In Tskhinvali Region, in the famous Monastery complex of Tiri, are contained the Virgin Cathedral, the bell tower and the cells carved in the caves. The inscriptions of different epochs are carved on these buildings. Tombstone epitaphs of the daughter of Zurab Machabeli dated from 1654 and the prince Rostom (the son of Giorgi XI) dated from 1689 and etc. are found there.

The lapidary inscription of Ikoti Church tells us the history of its restoration in 1798 by Ketevan Tsereteli, the daughter-in-law of the king. The epitaph of the late 18. century, which belongs to Magdan Korinteli, the daughter of David and Nana Korintelis, is kept in the church.

There are some Greek and Armenian inscriptions on the modern territory of South Ossetia. The Greek inscriptions belong to the early period, and the Armenian inscriptions to the later period and are connected with the settlement of the Armenian population in Karthli in the late medieval centuries. The inscriptions kept in other languages have not been found on this territory.

The Georgian inscriptions mentioned above, clearly point to who was the historical population of this region. In the inscriptions there are mentioned local feudal lords, clergymen, architects of the cathedrals, masons and common population. The fact that we often have to deal with tomb epitaphs that are the funeral farewell words of the local population in the lapidary inscriptions of Tskhinvali Region. As it has been mentioned above, the population that created the material culture of the region had depicted those historical events in its native language. It left the history of the construction of the cathedral for the posterity. It was in this language that it asked for favor and mercy. It was in this language that it wrote the tomb epitaphs. It is natural that the population ethnically belonged to the Georgian world.

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One Example of Demographical Management: History of Muhajiroba in South-West Georgia

Tamaz Putkaradze

Muhajiring as a specific form of displacement of population (Muhajir in Arabian means an emigrant, who has left his homeland) was used in historiography as a term of resettlement from the Caucasus to Turkey in various periods of the 19. century. The muhajir Georgians themselves call their natives "chveneburebi", i.e. "ours", "relatives" (Sh. Putkaradze, 1993, p.9).

The first wave of Muhajiring is related to resettlement of Muslim population from Samtskhe-Javakheti to Turkey that took place during the Russian-Turkey War in 1828-29 and afterwards. The second period started during the well-known War of 1877-1878 and lasted till February 3, 1992 (M. Svanidze, 1996, p.5), though this period spontaneously continued till 1921.

The mentioned period of Muhajiring was presented in literature as the **Turkish** and **Russian** stages (I. Baramidze, 1999, p.49). **At the first stage (August-September, 1878), migration of population in the depth of the Ottoman Empire was caused by the Turkey-Porto actions. But from August-September of 1878 the Russian colonialist policy became the main reason of resettlement of the population.** Even after establishing Russian ruling, the Ottomans fearing to loose their privileges continued agitation-propaganda with the help of the threatened Molls. This process certainly influenced the migration of a new wave of population from this region.

It was very hard for the Georgians to leave the country but the existing circumstances caused them "to obey to a cruel fate and to resettle" (Z. Chichinadze, 1914, p.2-4). After the issue of transferring Ajara and Batumi to the Russian Empire was clarified, the process of eviction and resettlement of Georgians was somehow speeded up. Ottomans even used force. According to the order of Dervish Pasha more than 160 horsemen were involved in the process of Kobuleti population resettlement by force (Droeba, #190, 1878). Nuri Tavdgiridze informed Gr. Gurieli about forced immigration of the native population, while the last blocked the way to the Ottomans and the exiled people returned to their homes (Droeba, #190, 1878).

The Georgian population tried to rebut the Ottoman's violence by their own strength as well. On August 14-15, 1878, the Kobuletiens levied war against Ottomans ("Obzor" (review), #231, 1878). Despite such resistance and protests many villages had been ravaged. **This process was suitable for both (Russian and Ottoman) empires.** That was why the Ottoman government unhurried to leave Ajara and presumably, Russia "generously bore" existence of Turks "within its frontiers" until achieving its final purpose (to depopulate Georgia in this part).

On August 25, 1878, Batumi was officially given to Russia. The Russian officials declared the will of the Russian Empire to the Ajarian population, that their (Georgians) property and religion would be inviolable. They were imposed the same obligations towards Russia as it used to be during Ottoman's rule. The local governance would remain unchanged. Those willing to resettle would be given time and opportunity to sell out their property (Kh. Akhvlediani, 1978, p.13). **That announcement was not fulfilled as the major goal of Russia was to evict the natives/Georgians and settle there ethnicities appropriate to them.** It became evident from the report sent by the Russian official Sviatopolk-Mirsk to the imperial government (October

15, 1878). Due to this, the principle task of the Empire was to get rid of population in Batumi district, while the 21st article of San-Stefano Peace Treaty gave them such opportunity." As strict as possible measures should be carried out towards the local population, including the use of arms aiming at their implicit obedience. Application of such means will enable us to clean the region from those elements that are inadmissible for us". (CSA of Georgia, p.416, ext. 3, case 1172, p.2-4) The mentioned announcement was the main acting doctrine of the Empire. The Russian government objected traditional norms, which existed in local population for centuries. That finally caused discontent of the native population. Besides, by reuniting Ajara to Georgia, Ottoman and Russian Georgia was united under the Russian state flag, i.e. the non-Georgian elements, grown up in non-Georgian system, were combined in the non-traditional union (I. Baramidze, 1999, p.50). **Such state was well-admitted by the Ottomans and by means of inciting the Muslim Georgian population against the Christian Georgians (as of "unbelievers"/"Ghياuri") deliberately provoked the religious hostility and hatred among them.** That was why Muslim Georgians preferred to stay under ruling of the old governance instead of the "patronage of ruthless Russia" (even along with brothers) (I. Baramidze, 1999, p.50-51). From this point of view Muhajiring, though caused by various factors, included free-will elements as well.

After establishing Russian authority, **Ajara still remained to be a bordering territory with enemy. That was why the imperial authority gave special importance to the issue of eviction and resettlement of the native population.** "Veliko-Russian Chauvinism" successfully hid its true purposes under messianic phraseology, tried to conceal the objective reality and by reason of "natives' ignorance" continued the resettlement process. (J. Vardmanidze, 2002, p.84)

The Russian-Turkish peace treaty gave an official face to the colonial activity of Russia. The new administration needed to justify its deeds, to find its ideological cover. Officially, Russia was considered as a protector of the oppressed people. There raised an issue of justifying such policy to be carried out towards the natives. The alternative was found soon – **the Tsarist government accused local population of "Turkism"**. Though Ottomans incited hatred among Muslim Georgians towards Christian ones they did not consider them Turkish, while, on the opposite the Russians called them Turks. **Such policy was held by Tsarist authority little earlier in another part of Georgia: in Samtskhe-Javakheti.** This policy of Russia was admitted by E. Veidenbaum as a big mistake. In his opinion, "there would not be repeated those mistakes in Ajara that were made in Akhaltsikhe in 1829. We did not acknowledge, or probably forgot again that there are many islamized Georgians" (Veidenbaum E., 1901, p.122). Russian policy towards the native population remained unchanged.

The government of Tsarist Russia created unbearable conditions to the Georgians in order to enforce them to flee the region and to resettle in Turkey (M. Svanidze, 1996, p.7). **The colonialist policy of Russia served as the main reason of Muhajiring in Georgia.** Further artificial aggravation of economic conditions in Ajara in the post war period also served such policy. Out of 20 villages in Kobuleti region, many had been ravaged and burnt as were Khutsubani, Qaquti, Kobuleti, Tsikhisdziri, Mukhaestate, Leghva, Sameba, Kvirike. Village Gvara did not exist at all ("Golos" (Voice), #102, 1879). Houses, gardens and plough-lands had been destroyed. **In such distressed conditions, Russia rendered taxes on the local population, while the Ottoman authority promised them benefits in case of resettlement.** This circumstance increased the will of emigration.

Due to the same reason, Russia knowingly aggravated/levied taxes on drinks, salt and tobacco trade in Kars and Batumi (CSA of Georgia, p.416, ext. 3, case 849, p.2), as well as for navigation on Chorokhi. Soon afterwards the taxes in kind were replaced by money taxes (CSA of Georgia, p.7, ext. 4, case 1107, p.27), i.e. **Russia turned all the promises into pure sheets of paper.**

Muhajiring was somehow conditioned by **agitations of some ecclesiastics**. As Z. Chichinadze states, "if not for the provokers, the Georgians would have never left the country" (Z. Chichinadze, 1914, p.42). **Turkey successfully exploited the negative attitude of the local population towards the new invaders (the Russians) and with the help of agitators incited fear, hatred and distrust among the population**, which could be noticed amongst the part of elderly people so far. Even nowadays, in certain mountainous villages, the children are frightened by the "Russians" ("stop the Russian's coming") that ascertains the then attitude towards them. Briefly, **from this point of view the Russian and Turkish interests coincided with each other. By resettlement of the natives/Georgians, Russia could easily fulfill its colonialist tasks. As to Turkey, by settlement of the population with high agricultural experience, they could improve economic development in particular regions of the country. At the same time, regarding a war against Russia, the muhajirs could have been recruited by the Ottoman army.**

"Religious fanaticism" was named to be one of the reasons of Muhajiring in the literature, but "what had happened with Christians as 200 families intended to resettle from Artvin this year?" ("Droeba", #131, 1880). Could it all be explained by "fanaticism"? A person, regardless which religion he practices, first of all seeks calm life" (Sh. Megreldze, 1964, p.79). Wrote Gr. Orbeliani, I. Chavchavadze, Gr. Orbeliani, S. Meskhi, N. Nikoladze, G. Tsereteli and others named the barbarous treatment of ruling circles towards the Georgians as the main reason of resettlement. **Religious fanaticism supported this process but it was not its stipulating condition.** As Great Ilia said "because of war Ajara and Kobuleti endured disaster, ravage of forests and fields, burning of villages, fleeing of the threatened population, which finally caused ruining of their property, destroying of arable farming, death and bloodshed and all these deeds will last for long" (I. Chavchavadze, 1987, p.467).

Scholar I. Baramidze considered that one of the reasons of Muhajiring, together with political grounds, was giving the status of Porto Franco to Batumi (I. Baramidze, 1999, p.61). The same idea had risen earlier by the rear admiral Greve and V. Sichinava.

Changing Batumi into Porto Franco aggravated the economic conditions of the population. That was clearly reflected in press materials of that time. According to the newspaper "Droeba", "leaving Batumi as Porto Franco finally destroyed life, people turned exoriated and denuded, everything was too over-priced... To buy cloths for family, one should pay tax for that" ("Droeba", #35, 1879). This regime naturally played the role of a stimulator, though reckoning it as a determinant of Muhajiring would be unfair. **There was no Porto Franco regime in Sukhumi or Akhaltsikhe but it has not impeded to mass displacement of Georgians from these regions.**

The Russians deprived the local (Georgians) Begs (princes) of political rights, privileges, and abolished the pensions granted by the Ottomans. This small part of the society possessed the most part of the best lands. Therefore, they fell under interest of the Russian government. By means of getting rid of them, the Russian empire wanted to catch two rabbits at one time: on one hand, the Russians could have owned the deserted lands and on the other hand, the fleeing of the authoritative persons would have stipulated similar processes of displacement of the lower layers of society (J. Vardmanidze, 2002, p.35). Such attitude of Russians influenced the political orientation of Begs. Though they had lost privileges, they still maintained their authority and they became the opposition to the Russian government. Many of them headed the resettlement process, though the leaders (among them were Muslim spiritual leaders) and the part of Begs (Qedi confessor (mufti) Ahmed Khalipashvili, Khulo clergy Nuri Beridze, mufti Loma Kartsivadze (phadi-shah teacher in Stambul), Nuri Beg Khimshiasvili, Tevphik Beg Atabag, Dursun Beg Tavdgiridze, Tufan Beg Shervashidze, Ahmed Khalvashi, Gulo Kaikatsishvili, Dede Nizharadze and many others) **ambiguously confronted the resettlement process of**

Muslim Georgians. But “the petty officials which were greedier, meaner and more gluttonous than all the dragonflies together” (I. Chavchavadze, 1987, #136) always created unbearable conditions for their co-existence. During Ottoman ruling, people maintained independence in domestic affairs, but the Russians immediately compelled the Georgians to flee to Turkey seeking better fate (I. Baramidze, 1999, p.74).

In the result of such politics bigger part of historical Georgia: Shavsheti, Nigali/Ligani/Livani, Machakheli, Murghuli, Ajara lowlands, Tao and other had been devastated. Since resettlement in 1879, out of 2000 residents only 500 were left in Kobuleti. Kvirike, Ereguna, Arsenauli and other villages were totally emptied (I. Baramidze, 1999, p.77). Based on various authors and statistics, Sh. Megrelidze determined 30 000 migrants from Batumi district and 10 000 – from Ajara, out of which 4 000 were Lazeti Georgians and Abkhazians (Sh. Megrelidze, 1964, p.61-63). It is worth to note that there exist different and mostly controversial statistics regarding the number of resettled persons. It is impossible to define the exact number and this is not our task either. But if we consider the number of population at that time and compare with the mentioned statistic data, rather big scales of Muhajiring will become evident.

It was distinctly figured out the “stabilizing” role of the Russian Empire, later of a “great Soviet Union” and now of the Russian Federation (on the background of the lastly developed events) in Georgia. The Caucasian nations fall only under ethnological qualification criteria in Russian political or “intellectual” thinking. That is why mass media publish such maps or transmit the mutilated false “information” that would serve against Georgian political interests. (T. Putkaradze, 2008)

The entire history of the Caucasus shows that Russia fulfilled its imperial purposes via declaring local population as “guilty nations” and by their resettlement-destruction. Besides, Russia used to achieve its purpose only when there was certain confrontation among Caucasian people. The time came for us to think over not only the mistakes that have been made by the Caucasian nations towards us, but our mistakes towards them as well. We should also foresee that the Georgian Islamic societies, that really exist, can provide us with their invaluable service (notwithstanding in which country they operate). We should principally include them in service of the Georgian state interests.

Muhajir Georgians have chosen such residing places that were similar to their ancestors’ living places. Families which were displaced from Ajara mountain region as were Gogitidzes (Ozdili), Vakhtangidzes (Bashturk), Putkaradzes (Phortokali), Davitadzes (Unuer), Gochitidzes (Akhiskhaloghli), Beridzes (Chavdaroghli), Qamadadze (Aiteqni) and other family representatives chose those villages in Inegol Region which were rich of forests and the cold springs as are Baghchakaya, Phazarilyn, Hilmie, Mezit, Günekestan, Tupekç Konak, Kaysen, Hayri... Villages of Adaphazar Vilayet: Ahmedie, Kahramanmaras, Küchuzcek, etc. Those families, which had migrated from lowlands of the region as were: Lominadzes (Erol), Khevrades (Yenilmazi), Margadzes (Sutchi), Meskhidzes (Shahini), Kvitashvilis (Veliashvili), Shavishvilis (Qara), Mighmadzes (Sarachi) and other settled in lowlands, along the coast line (in villages of Pars, Samsun, Sinop, Izmir and Adana regions. (Sh. Putkaradze, 1993, p.18)

In the second half of the 19. century and at beginning of the 20. century there were often published materials about Muhajir Georgians in the Georgian press. Newspaper “Kvali” informed us about the number of Georgians living on the Black Sea coast line of Turkey. In Hopa there were 10 families, in Birkav – 100, in Mafaura – 120, in Irosa – 100, in Sürmene – 150, in Öpha – 120, in Trabzon – 100, in Phlatan – 100, in Beygvelman – 120, in Tripoli – 100, in Giresun – 100, in Ordu – 100, in Unia – 1000, in Terme – 100, in Chersheghmesh – 100, in Samson – 140, in Sinop – 120 [302] . According to the same newspaper, in Bolaman about 200 families spoke Georgian (“Kvali”, #49, 1895). In 1912, one of the issues of “Sakhalkho

Gazeti" (Public Newspaper) published "a map of the Georgian population in Turkey" ("Sakhalkho Gazeti (Public Newspaper), #108, 1912), which gives us information about the Georgian family settlement in Izmit gulf on the Sea of Marmara. In addition to the map, there was provided the names of villages and the list of Georgian families residing in those villages.

Descendants of the Georgian Muhajirs (Vardidze, Cholokashvili, Naskidashvili, Saghridze, Dabelidze, Zurabidze, Tavdghiridze, Beridze, Lominadze, Vakhtangadze, Putkaradze, Dolabidze, Shavishvili, Gorgoshadze and others) live in many towns and villages of contemporary Turkey, namely these are Trabzon, Giresun, Samsun, Sinop, Zonguidak, Izmit, Izmir, Iznik, Kütahya, Balıkesir, Adana, Konya, Eskişehir, Adapazar, Bolu, Çorum, Amasya, Tokat, Ordu, Unia, Bursa, Inegöl, Düzce, Yalova, Gemlik, Mezipor, Patkha, Gonen, Chumara, Gülbaş and other places. There are many Georgian nationals in Ankara and Istanbul, which are mainly descendants of the migrants from Ajara and Tao-Klarjeti. Rarely but still, there could be met descendants of the displaced population from Guria, Samegrelo and Kartli, e.g. in Tokat region there live families from Giorgi Saakadze's surroundings (Sh. Putkaradze, 1993, p.18).

There is not exact data about the number of Georgians in contemporary Turkey. Various opinions have been expressed in this regard. According to data of 1965, there lived 17 698 Georgians in Artvin, 4815- in Ordu, in Sakaria – 451 543, in Amasya – 1378, in Balıkesir – 1281, in Sinop – 1144, in Istanbul – 846, in Tokat - 412 (R. Bakradze, 1995). (It is meant that, the Georgians live in towns and their regions).

Due to the latest Turkish statistical data, recently there lived 130 000 Georgians in Turkey. Those are the descendants of Muhajirs, so Georgians residing on their own ethnic territory (within the frontiers of Turkey). This people had declared their native language being Georgian (and Lazi) (A. Totadze, 1993, p.11). But the language is not the sole criterion for defining nationality. Many people do not know Georgian, though they consider themselves "Gurjis". Thus, the number of Georgians living in Turkey might be much more than named (though in publications, the information, without any arguments, about the number of Georgians settled in Turkey (5-10 millions) is too much exaggerated).

More than a century has passed since the process of Muhajiring. The biggest part of Muhajir descendants has not broken off the spiritual links with Georgia and till now they nurse all native with pure Georgian tender. From this point of view, a narration of Dursun Ozdili (Gogitidze), the descendant of Muhajir from Goginauri (Shuakhevi Region) is very interesting: "Georgia is our earth. Our people (relatives) are settled in Ajara. One of six brothers stayed there, 5 moved to Turkey. How many of us had moved to Turkey? Many. They came to Turkey and founded Georgian (gurjistan) villages. They always used to speak their native Georgian language... May God give them enough wit to maintain relations with each other" (Sh. Putkaradze, 1993, p.19).

Thus, **migration-Muhajiring of population in alien-ethnic environment is one of the major stages of displacement of Ajarian population. It was conditioned first by the Ottoman/Porto violent and ideological (bribed agitation) activity and then by the Russian colonialist policy (artificial aggravation of economic situation for colonialist purposes, pre-term taxation policy, Porto Franco Russian regime, unemployment, depriving begs (princes) of privileges, unruliness of Russian officials, neglect of Islamic norms, etc.)**

The descendants of Muhajirs live in seaside towns and villages and in inland regions of the country. "Chveneburebi" have not lost their native language, habits and traditions. They have maintained up to now the archaic elements of Georgian being and culture, names of places (N. Tsetskhaldze, 2000), language, traditions, family names and customs.

It should be considered, that assimilation process in Turkey is held in a speeded

manner and the unique Georgian ethno-cultural values are gradually lost. That is why we should maximally use the neighborly relations between Georgia and Turkey with the aim to study the existing culture of descendants of Muhajirs.

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From the History of Armenian Diaspora in GEORGIA

GURAM MARKHULIA

The Georgian-Armenian relationship has a long history, lasting through many centuries. Due to their geographic location, Georgia and Armenia, along the whole length of history, create an important geopolitical area. Georgians and Armenians belong to the peoples who were fighting for liberation and for obtaining and preserving independent statehood. Due to historical fate, it turned out that the Georgian nation was able to preserve its three-thousand-year statehood and existed till the beginning of the 19. century either as an unified Georgian Kingdom, or in the form of separate Georgian kingdoms or principedoms. While the great empires were disappearing from the political map, small Georgia continued to exist. Armenians had a different fate. During centuries, the very existence of the Armenian nation, not to mention the Armenian statehood, was often questioned.

During the millennia, in the bloody wars, Georgia was one of the central regions of the Caucasus. None of the world's existing nations had to fight so many battles and wars as Georgians had in order to live on their own land and to repel the aggressors, to preserve their existence and maintain national pride.

The beginning of the 2. century B.C. brought new geopolitical changes. The Roman legions defeated the armies of Antioch III in the battle of Magnesia in 190 B.C. The defeat of the Seleucids contributed to the break-up of their empire. The Armenian military commanders, Artaxias and Zariadres used the momentum to betray Antioch III, stop obeying his orders and declare independence of the provinces which had been given to them for governing. Thus, for the first time in history, the Armenian state was created on territories of ethnic Georgians. From the very beginning Armenians started to expand the controlled territories. According to Strabo, Artaxias and Zariadres expanded (Armenia), cut off the lands from their neighbours and took Parnabaz, Khordzena and Gugareti from the Iberians. This was the beginning of the Armenian-Georgian wars that lasted for centuries. Georgians, who did not yield to the greater aggressors, of course were not going to surrender their lands to the Armenians.

In 95 B.C., the Armenian throne was taken by Tigranes II (95-55) who, owing to the geopolitical situation, was able to establish his control over a significant part of Minor Asia. Later, Armenian historians, on a larger the scale than it was done by Tigranes II, fantastically expanded the territory of "Great Armenia" from the Caspian Sea to the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. The same historians, were working out the idea of the restoration of "Great Armenia's" borders.

Due to the military and political situation, Armenian settlements began to appear in Georgia from the 5. century. In the 7. century, the divine service in Tsurtavi eparchy was conducted both in Georgian and Armenian. It proves that the Armenians, which were forced to leave their homeland, found asylum in Georgia.

From the 7. century, Persian rule in the South Caucasus was replaced by the Arabian

one. Exactly at that time, the Armenians offered their help to the Arabs in collecting levy and taxes. The Caliphate considered the Armenian "Ishkhan" as one of the main tools in establishing control over the South Caucasus. Therefore, the Caliphs were interested very much in prolonging and preserving its functioning. The consent of both sides became the basis for the strengthening of "Ishkhan" institute and its further transformation into a state. Thus, under the aegis of the Arabs, Armenian statehood was restored. Later, in the second half of the 10. century, the Armenian political organization, claiming to act in the Arab's interests, took over significant Georgian territories and established two kingdoms there: Tashir-Dzorageti (Lore) Kingdom and Vanand (Kars) Kingdom. With that, the Arabian invasion was joined by the "Great Armenian invasion".

In 1045, the Byzantine Empire abolished the Armenian political organization, Kingdom of Ani and resettled the Armenians into the inner provinces of empire. Great number of Armenians asked for refuge in the Georgian Kingdom. King of Georgia met the refugees with great respect, allowed them to settle in different parts of the country and saved them from annihilation. Thus, after abolition of the Armenian statehood, Georgia became a second homeland for the Armenian nation.

Armenians living in the inner provinces of the Byzantine Empire soon were able to create a self-governmental body. Afterwards it was "raised" to the rank of Armenian state in Cilicia by Armenian historians, who notified the whole world about the foundation of the new Armenian state in a different geographical environment.

Arabian rule allowed Armenians to settle on the territories of the present-day Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt. Using the method of unconditional surrender, they moved to Central and Eastern Iran. During the greatness of Byzantine Empire, they began to appear in Constantinople, Thrace, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Transylvania and Crimea. The Crusades allowed the Armenians to settle down in Cyprus, Crete, and Italy. Thanks to the Tamerlane's campaigns, the Armenian Diasporas were founded in Kazan and Astrakhan. Armenian maps refer to all of the above-mentioned territories as parts of "Great Armenia".

In the second half of the 15. century, the united Georgian feudal kingdom broke up. The newly-created Georgian kingdoms and princedoms continued to fight against the Turks and Persians. While defending their homeland, many Georgians fell at the battlefields and many Georgian provinces became depopulated. The Armenians took advantage of the situation and seized Georgian lands, houses, churches. Using these methods, the Armenians were trying to found the Armenian statehood on Georgian territory, which was proven by further development of events.

In the second half of the 18. century, Erekle II cleared Eastern Georgia from the Persians and created the strong Georgian Kingdom of Karthl-Kakheti. The Yerevan Khanate became subservient to Karthl-Kakheti Kingdom and practically became part of it. From that time, Armenians had placed all the hopes of liberating Armenia on Erekle II. Even the Armenians living in India asked Erekle II to create a Georgian-Armenian federal state, but the Armenian Patriarch, fearing that he would lose his small domain, foiled that plan, and reported about it to the Iranian Shah.

At the end of the 18. century, Russia joined the fight for the South Caucasus. Erekle II had to sign an agreement with Russia. This step aggravated the situation of Karthl-Kakheti Kingdom. It soon became clear that Russia was not interested in strengthening her ally. At the same time, the Persian Shah decided to punish Karthl-Kakheti and moved to plunder it. It should be mentioned that the Armenian Catholicos Luka gave 100,000 roubles to Agha Muhammed Khan in 1795 in order to cover the war expenses and asked him not to harm the Armenians living in Georgia.

The first battle ended with a Georgian victory. Fearing an ultimate defeat, Agha Muhammad Khan retreated. But because of the betrayal of the Armenian Meliks Mejlun and Abov, the Persians would be able to take Tbilisi. After Agha Muhammad Khan took Tbilisi and ruined it, a new wave of Armenians with the new goals entered Georgia.

The well-known Georgian historian I. Javakhishvili was writing with bitterness: "During the reign of Erekle, the nature of the Armenian immigration in Georgia is obviously changing: if previously their resettlement was spontaneous and had no political inclination or significance, from the end of the 18. century it obtained certain political aspects. Formerly, the Armenians were moving to Georgia seeking protection and were subservient to the Georgian state; from this time on they are looking for the patronage of the outside force, in order to achieve their goals in Georgia.

From this time on the strange situation arose: Armenians were establishing double connection. From one side they had relations with King Erekle II or King Giorgi and were coming to Georgia as refugees but at the same time they had secret protection from Russia and with the help of Russian government they were following their line."

In 1801, the Russian empire abolished Karthl-Kakheti Kingdom. In the following years, the other Georgian kingdoms and principalities shared the same fate and Georgia became part of the Russian empire.

Georgia paid a high price for peace, which was established after the disposition of the Russian troops in the country. "The Russian government relied on the Armenian Diaspora in Georgia and artificially increased Armenian population. The Armenians helped a lot the Russian government in suppression of the 1812 Kakheti uprising. The emperor Alexander I considered the Armenians as the Russian bulwark in the matter of subjugation of Georgian "disobedience", and sent them gratifying letters".

The Russian government had new plans against Persia and Turkey. Such a policy was advantageous for the Armenians and they continued to come to Georgia. In 1828-1829, when Russia was conducting wars against Persia and Turkey, the main clause of the truce was the free resettlement of the Armenians in Georgia. All the Armenians received these news with a great pleasure and began to migrate immediately to Georgia. Despite the opposition from the Persian government, Colonel Lazarev and General Paskevich, acting under the orders of the Russian emperor, were able to move more than 40 000 Armenians into Georgia. Three Turkish provinces: Beyazit, Erzurum and Kars were nearly completely cleared from Armenians, who also migrated to Georgia (their number was around 70 000). Armenians were settled in various

Georgian provinces, including Abkhazia, but the main part of them, due to Russian geopolitical goals, stayed in Samtskhe-Javakheti, near the Turkish border.

Because of this, the Russian publicist Zagurski wrote with bitterness: "After settlement of the Armenians, Georgian villages in Akhaltsikhe district became like oases. The region looks as if Armenians had lived here from the beginning. The Armenians were free in their actions: they were destroying churches, monasteries and became so impudent that they wanted to rename Akhaltsikhe into Nor-Erzurum."

L. Velichko could not hide his resentment and wrote: "The Armenians do not miss an opportunity to praise, in a parasitical way, their historical "services" or present virtues. On the way they try to shadow their neighbouring peoples, who have a much brighter history and more dignity than the Armenians themselves. Armenians are robbing the Georgians historically and archaeologically they try to delete Georgian inscriptions from the historical monuments, misappropriate the ancient orthodox chapels and deserted churches... fabricating historical nonsense and trying to represent the places, where every stone shows the past of the Georgian kingdom, as the old Armenian domains. Avoiding the convincing testimony of the historical monuments, they were trying to steal, use all the methods and the rich past of the Georgian historical province of Saatabago, which was the domain of the Jaqeli Atabags and which is part of Akhaltsikhe district nowadays. This is despite the fact that all Caucasians know about the still existing traces of the reign of King Tamar in these places... that the most part of the Armenians are refugees from Turkey since the 19. century and not indigenous population."

Exactly from that time begins the creation process of Armenia's new history. With the legends about "Great Armenia", they try to draw attention and convince the whole world that they had possessed the lands from the Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean Sea since ancient times. Regarding this Velichko was writing: "The Armenian intelligentsia comprehends well that their kin is not enjoying a good reputation. It is not a coincidence that they represented themselves as Georgians, or sometimes as Circassians to the people, who were not well-informed about Caucasian matters. It is also not coincidental that some publicists, who sympathize with the Armenians, try to avoid naming them as "Armenians" and refer to them as "natives", "Caucasians", and often as "Christians". They create a history, persuading that the Armenians are originating directly from Noah... Pages of their history are full of the names of "great persons", who are unknown to history. Sometimes, historically absolutely insignificant persons are depicted as the "greatest figures."

In 1840, the Russian empire carried out an administrative reform in the South Caucasus and renamed Georgia into the Province of Georgia-Imereti. The leaders of the Armenian nationalistic forces, who wanted to restore "Great Armenia", got angry that the "future territory of Great Armenia" became merely a district in the province of Georgia-Imereti. In 1849, after the negotiations with the Russian government, the Province of Yerevan was established. This was the first victory of Armenian nationalism on its way towards the creation of "Great Armenia". The leaders of the Armenian nation, with a great zeal, began the expansion of the borders of the new administrative unit. According to their plan, the Armenians demanded to create a

new Armenian province of Alexandropol from the Borchalo and Akhaltsikhe districts. The imperial administration definitely could create a new Armenian province of Alexandropol on Georgian territories, but owing to geopolitical goals, the Armenians' attention was drawn to the Eastern provinces of the Turkish Empire, which were densely populated by the Armenians. Thus, the Armenians were pointed out about the possibility of liberation of the so-called Turkish Armenians and creation of the unified Armenian state. The Armenian nationalistic parties and organizations began to convince the Turkish Armenians that mighty Russia was going to liberate them from the Ottoman yoke.

With the aim of restoring "Great Armenia", the Armenian population in Turkey began to prepare ethnic area. It was the Turkish population that was impeding to the realization of the old idea. On February 21, 1914, following their goals, Armenian bands killed 30 000 Turks in Kars and Artaani. Armenians were taking off their children and throwing them into fire. The organizer of this action was Stepan Ter-Danielian, a member of the Turkish Parliament.

In 1914, after the beginning of First World War, the Armenian population of Turkey decided that the time of liberation had come and began an uprising in the Eastern Turkish villages of Trebizond, Erzurum, Erzinjan, Van and Bitlis. Armenian bands started to kill the peaceful Turkish population. The Dashnak groups did not even spare women, old people and children. During a few months, Armenian terrorist groups killed 90 000 Turks, among which 14 000 were children.

Gagik Pasdirmajian, former Member of the Turkish Assembly (Parliament), was stating in his addresses: "The Turkish children have to be slaughtered. They are a threat for the future Armenia." Seeing this treachery, on April 24, 1915, the Turkish government decided to deport the Armenian population.

300 000 Armenians decided to take refuge in Georgia. The Georgians received them and settled them near the border, in Samtskhe-Javakheti. Exactly in three years, the newly established diaspora "forgot" how they came to Georgia, claimed that they lived in Armenia and demanded the integration with Armenia. Despite this, the Georgian government did not take any measures against the Armenians, as it had been done by the Turks previously. Moreover, it created even more favourable conditions for the Armenians. It should be mentioned that the descendants of those Armenians today have the same demands as their ancestors.

After the 1917 Bolshevik coup d'état, the Russian empire broke up and Russia came out of war. This was a menace to the idea of "Great Armenia".

On March 3, 1918, Soviet Russia signed the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty with Germany and gave Ardagan, Kars and Batumi to Turkey, who was a German ally. The Trans-Caucasian government did not recognize the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and tried to make peace on more agreeable terms but failed to get Turkey's consent at the Trebizond Conference.

According to Turkish demand, the Trans-Caucasus proclaimed its independence but this did not stop the Turkish troops who took over the territories given to Turkey by the Brest-Litovsk Treaty and continued to occupy even more parts of the Trans-

Caucasian Republic.

The Turkish plans towards Georgia and the whole Caucasus caused a diplomatic struggle between Germany and its ally at the Batumi peace conference. Despite the geopolitical disputes, Turkey could not openly confront Germany because of Georgia. The Georgian politicians used this situation and asked the German government to protect Georgia. Germany agreed to do so. The Georgian social-democrats, who had lost all the hopes of restoring the democratic Russia, began their preparations for the declaration of independence. Dashnaks became desperate, since they could not agree with the course of Georgian social-democrats, and also could not count on the Germans in the realization of their grandiose plans. There was no unity between the political parties of different nations in the Trans-Caucasus and this caused the break up of the federative republic.

Due to the existing political situation, the independence of Georgia was declared on May 26, 1918. It caused great rage among Armenian politicians. They blamed the Georgian social-democrats for leaving them alone against the Turks and for not helping in the fight for the creation of "Great Armenia". The situation was aggravated by the new Turkish ultimatum about the revision of the borders. The Turks wanted to seize the territories considered by Armenia but owing to the political situation, the Turkish government had to make some corrections in its plans. The Turkish government made a great mistake and agreed on the creation of an independent Armenian state in the part of Yerevan province. On May 28, 1918, the Armenian National Council, which was operating in Tbilisi, declared the independence of Armenia. After many centuries, the Armenian statehood was restored, but the plan of "Great Armenia" failed. Although, the Armenian government was not satisfied with the achieved goals and was seeking for the allies in order to expand its territory.

After declaration of independence, the Georgian government decided to put the border troops on the South boundaries of Borchalo, Signaghi and Tbilisi districts. Despite the fact that the historical frontiers of Georgia were passing even more Southern, the Armenian government protested against this decision. Armenia was categorically against drawing the border along with the historical boundaries, since it would endanger the very existence of the newly established Armenian state. Dashnak politicians thought that the Georgian government, by taking the historical territories, was confronting the "democratic principles" and definitely impeding the self-determination of the Armenians on Georgian lands. With this protest the Armenian government demanded from the Georgian government to accept the fact of the ethnic occupation of Georgian historical provinces of Lore, Giumri, Vanadzor, Akhaltsikhe, Akhalkalaki by the Armenians.

In order to determine the state borders, a joint Georgian-Armenian commission was created. The Armenians demanded the placing of Lore and Akhalkalaki districts and 2/3 of Borchalo district inside the Armenian boundaries. The Georgian side protested and the commission stopped functioning.

In June and July of 1918, the Georgian government seized the historical Georgian territories between Sochi and Tuapse. The local Armenian population sided with Denikin and fought against Georgia. Thus, they once more showed their treachery

for which they were thrown away from Turkey.

On December 5, 1918, Armenia, without declaration of war, attacked Georgian territory. On December 29, the successful attack of the Georgian troops cleaned the road to Yerevan. Due to the critical military situation, the Armenian government had to agree on stopping the hostilities and restoring the status quo. On December 31, 1918, the Georgian troops offensive was stopped.

On January 1, 1919, British troops took over the territories of Lore and Borchalo regions from the station Airum to the station Shagal and declared that line as a "neutral zone". On January 9, 1919, the Armenian-Georgian peace conference was opened in Tbilisi. It specified the terms of the armistice. The administration of the Lore neutral zone was formed from both Georgians and Armenians. The control over the administration was performed by military representatives, first by the British, then by the American ones. The temporary armistice was signed on January 22, 1919. It ended the Armenian-Georgian war and officially legalized the creation of the Lore neutral zone.

Despite this, the Armenian government succeeded in its policy of reaching the expansion of Armenia's borders with the help of Western countries. In August of 1920, the Treaty of Sèvres was signed. According to the Treaty, Armenia got a part of the Eastern province of Anatolia and the outlet to the sea. The "noble-minded" European diplomats increased the territory of Armenia at the expense of historical Georgian lands. At the same time, the Dashnaks were waiting for receiving Karabakh, which was in Azerbaijan, and the so-called Lore "neutral zone", which was established by the English directly after the end of Armenian-Georgian war.

Facing the national liberation movement in Turkey, Britain decided to use the Dashnak Armenia against the Kemalist forces. Soon Armenia began the war against Turkey, in order to get the territories given to her by the Treaty of Sèvres. However, Armenia lost the war and her troops retreated to the Georgian border. On November 26, 1920, after the defeat in the war against Turkey, Armenia signed a declaration, according to which it renounced the Treaty of Sèvres. In a few days, the Soviet regime was established in Armenia. Soon the Armenian People Commissar of Foreign Affairs demanded from the government of Georgian Democratic Republic the withdrawal of Georgian forces from the Lore region. The struggle for the old goals continued in another way, under another flag and using another ideology.

After the establishment of the Soviet regime in Georgia, on July 7, 1921, the plenary session of the Caucasian Bureau adopted the decree on passing the former Lore neutral zone to Armenia. In that way, the 3812 square kilometres of historical Georgian territories were cut off Georgia.

Moscow's official anti-Georgian policy became apparent in cutting off the original Georgian territories from Georgia. Russia itself seized significant territory (even if we do not take into consideration the territories from Sochi to Tuapse) from Georgia, namely the Western part of Gagra Region (present-day Sochi). Georgia had lost overall 19 491 square kilometres of its original territories.

In the 1980's, the leaders of the Armenian nation understood that the break up

of the Soviet Union was inevitable. In 1985, they gathered at the 23rd congress of Dashnaksutiun and discussed the expansion of the future independent Armenia. At the gathering the Dashnaks set two directions of Armenian expansion: Azerbaijan and Georgia. It seems, they were afraid of history lessons regarding the Turkish direction. During the voting they choose the Azerbaijan direction because the Highland Karabakh enjoyed the status of the Autonomous Region in Azerbaijan. From their point of view, it would less irritate the society.

The Soviet Armenia offered its geopolitical area to the official Moscow. Based on the Russian interests, Armenia got the military guarantees for the realization of her plans in exchange. Hence, Armenia started the war against Azerbaijan and with the help of the Russian army, cut off 20% of territories of the neighbouring country. More than million Azerbaijanis became IDP-s in their own country.

During the 1992-1993 war between Russia and Georgia in Abkhazia, the Armenian Diaspora, living in Abkhazia, stood out against the Georgian nation and the Georgian state. They created the so-called Bagramian Battalion and fought against Georgians with special cruelty.

In November 2001, a meeting of Dashnak leaders took place in Basel (Switzerland). They discussed the question of annexing the Samtskhe-Javakheti region. The meeting decided to give the region autonomy. With this purpose they created the "Javakheti Renaissance Fund", where considerable amounts of money were transferred. As a result, the population of Javakheti began to held meetings and demonstrations and demanded autonomy. Later they demanded the joining of Javakheti to Armenia.

The Armenian political circles, in order to prove their rights on this Georgian region, are distributing the works of questionable quality in Javakheti saying that Armenians here are the autochthons. Such a movement is caused by the present-day Russian-Armenian geopolitical union, and it has a purpose of occupying Javakheti. The Armenian Diaspora is ideologically prepared for this event. On the background of the Russian-Georgian war of August, 2008, such ideological diversions are especially dangerous for Georgia.

Hence, throughout history, the Armenian nation always used Georgian statehood to create a densely populated ethnic land to ensure territorial demands in future against the state, which saved and supported them. These are the desires of the Armenians in Georgia. Despite this, we express the hope that in future the two nations can deepen good neighbouring relations and build peaceful, democratic states.

Essence of the Abkhazian Conflict – The Russian-Georgian War

Dazmir Jojua

The Russian-Georgian War of August 7-12, 2008, may become the beginning of an absolutely new geographical-strategic calendar, not only for our region but in general as well, because this event includes the perspective of initiating a new geopolitical process: the changing of the existing model of the world order.

The Russian military intervention in Georgia and the occupation of the Georgian territories evidently emphasized new global geopolitical outlines:

- An attempt to restore the Euro-Asian Empire of Russia and to form a new global pole around it;
- The Russian plan to create a conflicting "archipelagos" (Ukraine, Baltic States, Poland, Romania, Central Asia).

Provision of Georgia with a strategic assistance and liquidation of the August War results should be discussed, as a prevention of a global geopolitical revolution. If Georgia does not get serious help and if dynamic of support is not proceeded in the strategic protection regime (especially it relates to the multi-dimensional military guarantees), then the imperial project of Kremlin will become unique. As a result, the Western civilization will enforce the Russian-Eurasian model of International relations, transatlantic system – strong impulses of disintegration and the European Union – a new wave of "threats' strategy"; the process will mostly damage and reduce the geographical-strategic interests of the USA.

One of the principle stages of the Russian conquering policy was the war in Abkhazia in 1992-1993. It must be directly stated that this war was a typological "matrix" of Russian imperialism. There are no real grounds in order to discuss this conflict as an "ethno-conflict", "Georgian-Abkhazian armed conflict", "civil war" or "war among Tbilisi and Sukhumi for the Abkhazian economic wealth distribution".

The "Abkhazian crisis" was developed during the entire period of the 20. century in the form of a "diversifying evolution" that was carried out by means of periodical changes of the Abkhazian ethnic "separatism" rises and delaying phases, ruled by Russia. Alliance of the so-called separatism and the Russian imperialism, ruled by Russia, had an obvious anti-Georgian character ("Plan of Sutin – 1922; the so-called "Resort Republic" establishing plan of 1945-47 to be implemented by means of uniting Sochi district and Abkhazia; "Suslov's Doctrine" – 1961; series of the civil-political putches in Abkhazia in the 1950s to the 1980s etc).

In August 1992, the "crisis of Abkhazia" was turned into a war by Russia:

On June 24, 1992, at the meeting of Shevardnadze and Eltsin in Dagomis, there were discussed Russian-Georgian relations in a general context, except the principles of Georgian-Ossetian conflicts settlement. In the adopted "communiqué" it was mentioned that, "the law-enforcement bodies of Georgia and Russia, within the territories of their competence, would prevent the illegal presence and activities of the military and semi-military formations" ("Saqartvelos Respublika" (Republic of Georgia), June 27, 1992). By that agreement, E. Shevardnadze received a sanction from B. Eltsin to launch the military operations on the territory of Abkhazia, and presumably with a neutrality guarantee from the Russian side.

On July 18, 1992, at the "Bocharov Ruchei" state residence in Sochi there was held an unofficial secret meeting between B. Eltsin, V. Ardzinba and some other

representatives of the Abkhazian elite (S. Lakoba, 2001, p.25). Already in five days after the meeting, V. Ardzinba's regime adopted the separatist legislation. We think it is doubtless that at that confidential meeting, the separatists received a sanction of war against the central authority of Georgia (with the guarantee of military interference from Russia).

Following to the Resolution of August 10, 1992 about the establishment of extraordinary rules on railway transport, relying on a decision of August 11, 1992 of the State Council Presidium of Georgia (E. Shevardnadze, J. Ioseliani, T. Sigua, T. Kitovani, V. Goguadze) and according to a special plan (with code title "Makhvili" (Sword)) prepared by the Ministry of Defense General Staff Operations Department, the armed forces of Georgia moved to the territory of the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic on August 14, 1992. A group of Abkhazian combatants opened fire against the armored column with a limited contingent near the village Okhurei, Ochamchire Region, which resulted in the first victims. The first serious attacks took place near Agudzera, Gulripshi Region, where the so-called "Interior Forces of Abkhazia" special battalion stood up to the Georgian army and exploded one armored car (G. Gasviani, T. Gasviani, 2005, p.161).

Thus, the Abkhazian War started.

It must be underlined that the action of the 14th of August was not an intervention act from the part of the central authorities, nothing to say about its occupation character. From the formal and legal aspects, this was the state army displacement, or if speaking with military terms, it was re-dislocation within the frames of the state territorial supremacy.

At the same time, from the point of view of international law, this action shall be described as "inter-governmental reprisal", a military sanction that was used by the Georgian authorities, in response to the one-sided illegal action (separatist decision of July 23) of the autonomous entity of Abkhazia, finally aiming to delay the factual result of this action (as was the state dissolution).

In order to determine the essence of the Abkhazian War and to create its conceptual model, it is important to note ahead few priori postulates:

1. The Abkhazian armed conflict of 1992-1993 was the sixth Georgian-Russian war during the last 2 centuries – after the wars in 1804, 1812, 1819-1820, June 1918, February 1919 and February-March 1921. All these wars finished with a victory of the Russian Empire. "A hierarchy" of the negative results for Georgia is as follows: during the wars of 1804, 1812 and 1819-1820, the Georgian monarchic nationalism of the first half of the 19. century was defeated, a process of restoration of Bagrationi dynasty was blocked, Georgia was entirely incorporated into the Russian Tsarist Empire; during the War from June 1918 to February 1919, the territorial integrity was infringed at Gagra zone; in the War of February-March 1921, Georgia was forcedly changed into a soviet republic and was occupied, lately it was annexed; during the War in 1992-1993, Abkhazia was temporarily lost.

2. The armed conflict of Abkhazia was a reaction of Russia on the geographical-civilized choice of Georgia, the main characteristics of which are positive nationalism, pro-western liberal-democratic ideology and integration strategy into the Western system. Besides, the central aspect in the Georgian geographical-civilized choice is a non-participatory course in the regional blocks formed by Russia.

After the putsch failure and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in August 1991, replacement of the "Gorbachov's Centre" by the "Eltsin Centre" in the Russian higher authority practically did not change attitude of the Empire towards Georgia, so as the "Abkhazian card" had not been thrown into the historical garbage. On the opposite, the new Russian elite even deepened relations with the Abkhazian "ethnicity".

Shortly speaking, the Abkhazian War served as a blocking opportunity of the

geographical-civilized choice of Georgia from the side of Russia, as Georgia refused to join a new neo-imperial strategic block, the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States). In response, Georgia was imposed the military punishment.

In the geographical-civilized dimension of war, the Russian goal has a bigger place. That as is to ruin a new order in the process carried out by the initiative of Georgia in the Caucasus, as its basement was the Georgian-Chechnya alliance established in autumn 1991. While a position of the West was not signified strategically yet, the idea to create a Caucasus geographical civilization, as the strategic block, was an alternative to the Russian-Eurasian, Turin and Pan-Islamist strategies. By means of bringing into effect the factor of "Caucasian Mountaineer Peoples Confederation" Russia stroke a serious blow to this project and practically frustrated it with the Abkhazian War. It is absolutely clear that, the Abkhazian War seriously harmed the Iberian-Caucasian consciousness as well.

3. From the point of geopolitical theory and the world geopolitical structure, Abkhazia (as well as Georgia and almost all the Caucasus) is situated in the zone of our planet, which was called "Rim Land", i.e. "frontier zone". In this zone, one sector of which was Georgia and H. Kissinger called it "discontinuous zone", are included Eastern Europe, Balkans, East Mediterranean, Caucasus, Afghanistan, Iran, India and Korea¹.

Thus, the Abkhazian War, from the international geopolitical dimensions point of view, represents a starting phase of the "Hartland restructuring"² process. It was the Abkhazian War that showed implementation of Talasocratic and Telurocratic dualistic law in its infancy within the Caucasus area. Unfortunately, this was just the embryonic phase, as the Abkhazian War, in the timing aspect, entirely "fixed" that regime of guarantees, which was accepted by Russia within the scopes of the "Malta

1 Strategic meaning of "Rim Land" first was defined by the founder of American geopolitics direction N. Speakman. He stated that, "the one who controls Rim land, controls Eurasia and thus, controls the face of the entire world... Rim Land is a key for ruling the world".(A. Dugin, 1999, p.62).

Though during the Abkhazian war, Georgia was not included in the "Rim Land" strategic sphere, but after dissolution of the Soviet Union such perspective was clearly figured out. Indeed, "Rim Land" was not a static and invariant sphere, because its essence was determined by geo-strategic "region management" character of Talasocracy (i.e. the USA-the West) and Telurocracy (i.e. the USSR-Russia) confrontation. While the Soviet Union existed, the "Rim Land" function was carried out by Eastern Europe, but since the mid 1990s (Yugoslavia crisis, Eastern Europe and Baltic States' integration in NATO), the "Rim Land" territorial changes took place: "Rim Land" line, i.e. the confrontation base of Talasocracy and Telurocracy moved to the Baltic-Black Sea-Caspian circle. This change was certified by the August 2008 war, together with the Russian preparation for geo-strategic pressure on Ukraine. Thus, it is absolutely clear that at present stage, the basic geopolitical tendencies will be led exactly on the Baltic-Black-Sea-Caucasus "triangle" and this sphere represents a platform of the Russian expansion delay. This started with the Abkhazian war.

At the beginning of the 1990s dissolution of the Soviet Union, International regime of the "cold war" and destruction of the double-polar global order, put on the agenda the need of a new world order formation. Because of Georgia's "Rim land" function the pending military-political, economical and cultural processes were given the decisive meaning in the matter of formation of the new world order regional architecture.

The latter developed events in Georgia and especially the military overturn of December-January 1991-1992 and the Abkhazia War, were exactly the results of concrete projection of "Rim land" law, certain international forces and global target-group activities.

In this configuration Russia was naturally in a central place. On the eve of the 1990s century the Russian imperialism received a sanction of the former soviet imperial sphere reintegration from the western establishment (excepted the Baltic States). G. Bush-Senior and M. Gorbachov confidentially agreed and founded "Malta Format" that Eltsin inherited. A factual neutrality of the West in the Russian-Georgian relations until 1997 was exactly the logical product of this "format". Strategy of Russia foresaw the overthrow of Zviad Gamsakhurdia's government and territorial-governmental dissolution of Georgia via provoking the Abkhazia conflict and its weakening. At the same time, within the conflict regulation format it ensured presence of military force with the medial mission imitation.

2 "Hartland Restructuring" meant distribution of particular Eurasia territories and geo-strategic influence sphere among Russia and the West.

Format" to reintegrate the former Soviet sphere, except the post-imperial legitimism and Baltic States. This explains an absolutely unjustified neutrality of the West and let's say peripheral character of the Georgian issue, at the beginning of the 1990s during the Russian-Georgian War.

The so-called major factor of the Abkhazian War was participation of the Russian Federation in it, especially when the last participated, not in a distance-minimal format or with a status of the pro-Abkhazian interested side, but in form of the immediate combating party. Exactly this moment influenced the Abkhazian conflict determination, as it was defined de facto as a Russian-Georgian War.

From the international legal point of view, the reason for the Russian reactive operations was reoccupation and re-annexation of the Caucasus. It was a geopolitical project, the central thesis of which was to restore control over Georgia. The Abkhazian War was considered as a military remedy to achieve that goal. This war was one of those main circles in a chain of events (Karabach War, Tskhinvali conflict, overturn of Z. Gamsakhurdia government in Georgia and A. Elchibey authority in Azerbaijan, establishing the pro-imperial regimes there). That caused blocking of formation of the progressive tendencies of the Russian alternative geopolitical structures and restoring of the Russian influence zone (fortunately, temporarily).

At the same time, an important aspect of the mentioned geopolitical project was a Geographical-strategic plan worked out in president Eltsin's administration in autumn 1991. The plan aimed at a long-term insurance of the military existence of Russia on Georgian territory by means of creating a network of the geo-strategic enclaves (military bases, especially the militarized centers, the so called peace-keepers) with the diversified status. This network ensured the military control on territory of Georgia and development of the political processes in our country favored by Russia. As a result, the geo-strategic goal of Russia was to absorb the Caucasian geopolitical zone, to carry out the territorial expansion (i.e. "creeping annexation") against Georgia and to involve Georgia coercively in the external buffer zone of the imperial geographical area together with Moldova (with the Dniestr Conflict) and Azerbaijan (with the War in Karabakh).

Russia participated in the Abkhazian War in two major directions as were the military-strategic and the political-diplomatic ones. Namely, in 1992-1993, Russia used military force against Georgia as follows: the Pskov special division; the 345th airborne unit (regiment); the 643rd antiaircraft-rocket union; the 529th military air forces dislocated on the Bombora Base; the Black Sea navy warship; battalions dislocated in Qvemo (lower) Eshera and Ochamchire and also the special force divisions.

The "separatists" and the volunteers combating against Georgia were provided with ammunition and military equipment by Russia. We represent only one document, which is based on data provided by M. Demianov, an Advisor to V. Ardzinba, which stated: at the beginning of the war, the 643rd antiaircraft-rocket union of the Russian armed forces supplied the separatists with 984 submachine guns, 267 pistols, 18 machine guns, more than 500 missiles, 600 signal rockets, more than half a million bullets, military trucks, military-engineering etc. (Labyrinth of Abkhazia, 1999, p.208)

The "separatists" were provided with military-expertise assistance (by means of the military units' strategic management) from the Russian Generality (G. Kondratiev, R. Chindarov, A. Kvashnin, I. Sigutkin, others) and the Officers' corp.

Russia organized the volunteer groups through its territory and dislocated them in the conflict zone. Besides, Russian air and naval forces bombed the Georgian army positions and those territories that were populated by ethnic Georgians.

At the same time, the Russian Higher Authorities (e.g. Vice-President A. Rutskoy, Speaker of the Parliament R. Khazbulatov) periodically threatened the Georgian authority to bomb Tbilisi and other cities.

At the beginning of the 1990s, political-diplomatic format of Russia's participation in the Abkhazian War meant to strengthen the diplomatic-treaty basement of defeating Georgia by means of the political pressure on the Georgian government and suggestion of the false guarantees, during negotiation processes (the Moscow Agreement of September 3, 1992; the Moscow Agreement of May 14, 1993; Sochi Agreement of July 27, 1993, etc.).

In the starting phase of the Abkhazian War in 1992-1993, a bigger part of the Abkhazian territory was controlled by the Georgian civil authorities and the armed forces. Gudauta grouping, which obeyed to Russia, controlled only the Gudauta-New Athens line and Tkvarcheli zone.

The Gagra operation of September 1-6, 1992, against the Georgian armed forces was ended with a victory of the "separatists" military forces, that was followed by immediate movement to the Russian border. This action was commanded by Colonel-General G. Kondratiev. At the same time, there is information, according to which, the general commanding of the Gagra operation was provided by the head of the Joint Staff, a Colonel-General M. Kolesnikov.

On December 9, 1992, the Russian air forces launched bombs against the inhabited regions and the crowded market-place in Sukhumi, in result of which 13 peaceful citizens died. On December 11, the Russian air forces attacked a village Akhaldaba in Ochamchire Region, which resulted in the death of 11 peaceful persons; more than 60 were wounded (G. Gasviani, T. Gasviani, 2005, p.180).

The Russian air-forces attacked the Georgian troops, especially in the zones of Sukhumi and Ochamchire Regions, which were densely populated by Georgians. Thus, Russia violated series of international treaties such as the 1949 Geneva Convention articles (about prohibition of use of carbonic missiles and cluster bombs during war).

The attacking operation in the frames of the Russian-"Abkhazian" confederative coalition took place on March 14-16, 1993 at the Gumista frontage. After the mass bombing of Sukhumi and the Georgian army positions by the Russian air-forces and the "separatists" heavy artillery, the united "Pro-Russian Abkhazians"³ confederates and "Slavbat" forces started attacks. Following the bloody battles, the enemy managed to break the Georgian military units' resistance in the central and south areas of Gumista frontage and invaded the territories that were occupied by Georgian troops. The Georgian forces besieged enemy: brilliantly implemented operation of the heavy artillery caused mass fire and in result the loss (as of the human forces, so as of military equipment) of the separatists and confederates.

It should be noted that 1992-1993, Abkhazian War was finished on the base of a special plan elaborated by the Joint Staff of the Russian Armed forces. The Russian military leadership processed a qualitatively new strategy, which foresaw a combined tactful format: simultaneous attacks on each area of both frontages, with preliminary disorientating military maneuvers. According to unofficial data, this plan was elaborated by the Ministry of Defense of Russia in the second half of June 1993. The secret plan consisted of 4 items: 1. to grasp a highway of Ochamchire Region by the Tkvarcheli grouping; 2. to land the navy troops near Tamishi and to unite it with the Tkvarcheli grouping; 3. to launch the parallel attacks from Gumista and to seize the strategic heights around Sukhumi; 4. in result, to besiege and to take Sukhumi" (Labyrinth of Abkhazia, 1999, p.150).

The plan was implemented in several phases:

On July 2, 1992, the Russian navy forces landed the Russian-Abkhazian landing troops near Tamishi, which set their control on parts of Ochamchire-Sukhumi highway. At the same time, the enemy launched mass attacks in the left sector of Gumista frontage. The Russian-separatists forces managed to set control on the Komani, Akhalsheni and Guma strategic heights. On July 9, the enemy occupied Shroma and the Tsugurovka and Akhbiuk heights. Sukhumi was almost at siege.

³ Some Abkhazians were on the Georgians' side.

The second stage of implementation of the Russian plan, when the enemy took an advantage of the Sochi Agreement of July 27, 1993, started the following actions on September 16: the Russian-separatists unit- Tkvarcheli grouping set control over the highway and the railway bridges of the River Kodori. On September 17, the Russian-Abkhazian-confederate coalition started attacks against Gumista front. It should be paid attention to the operational aspect of an offensive action:

If a strategic structure of enemy attacks was united before, at this time this action was of echeloned form: the first echelon consisted of the Russian regular army special divisions and the confederates' detachments; the second echelon was the so-called Abkhazian battalions. Besides, there was the third separate reserve echelon of the Russian armed forces, which united the infantry, tank and artillery divisions. It was planned to use the reserve echelon only in case of defeat of the first and the second echelons. As a result, the operational (strategic) depth of the Russian-Abkhazian-confederate coalition attacks was of several kilometers. Against all the above mentioned, the Georgian side managed to mobilize its forces of lesser number, mainly from the local population and without any equipment. At this period, it was impossible to restore the tactical zone of the echeloned defense. In fact, the implementation frame of the Sochi Agreement (signed by the Georgian side) excluded such possibility (D. Jojua, 2007, p.198). On September 27, Sukhumi fell and on 28-30 September, entire Abkhazia.

During the War in Abkhazia, in 1992-1993, when Georgia was defeated and the armed forces and the Georgian population had to leave the Autonomous Republic territory, the Georgian jurisdiction over this region stopped. Today, Abkhazia is a recessive local zone that was forcibly detached from the Georgian central authorities' political sovereignty and jurisdiction, which in the name of Gudauta grouping, unambiguously disregards any form of revealing to restore supremacy of the centre (Tbilisi), while been backed by the Russian military-strategic support.

Secession of Abkhazia from Georgia has not taken place on the ground of self-determination, international legal mechanisms or domestic plebiscite processes. By means of unconstitutional insurrection and military disobedience of the separatists, incited by Russia, all this was addressed against the central authorities of Georgia.

Thus, "independence" of Abkhazia indeed was an action, directed against the Georgian government and accordingly, recognition of an anti-constitutional creation is an international offence.

A basic feature of the political conjuncture of separatist Abkhazia is the de facto protectorate of Russia. Strategic interests of Russia in Abkhazia are logically connected to the neo-imperial policy, in order to restore a control over the Post-Soviet space. The problem of Abkhazia is one of the acting mechanisms in this restoring process. The issue is to stop sovereignty of Georgia till a certain extent, to block Georgia as geopolitical core area of the Caucasus and to maintain possibility of reoccupation and re-annexation of the entire Caucasus.

By means of maintaining control over Abkhazia, it is insured to block the progressive geopolitical tendencies of configuration the Caucasus region and the south sector of "Hartland". From this point of view, the function of Abkhazia within the global geopolitics is identical to the functions of Kaliningrad enclave, Dniestr and eastern Ukraine.

Adding to that, Abkhazia has an extra value for Russia, which is its local sub-regional geopolitical meaning: Abkhazia is some kind of a "tower" for Russia, which consolidates the Black Sea coast and the Caucasus in its entire systematic unity. The Sochi-Adler-Tuapse zone cannot have such a "consolidating" geopolitical function because of the low percentage of the population autonomy. If Russia "yields" Abkhazia, then there will be created polychromatic ethnical policy in the sub-region and the Sochi-Adler-Tuapse Russian zone will become a certain kind of buffer that will cause separation of

the Kabardino and Adighean ethnic zones from their "brother Abkhazians". In result, they will attack this zone in order to liquidate its buffering type and all this will lead Russia to create of a new area of destabilization on the Sochi-Maikop-Cherkessky line.

As we have mentioned above, Russia had unofficially set its protectorate over Abkhazia. In fact, there is the external government regime operating, while Russia entirely controls the political processes in Abkhazia and the important decisions are made on the base of coordinative consultations with the administration of the Russian President and State Duma. Unfortunately, Russia has enough resources to block any undesirable decisions. In that case, the imperative "Veto groups" are the President's administration, the Joint Staff of the Ministry of Defense and the Committee on CIS issues of the State Duma. These structures are exactly the ones having influence on the political spectrum of Abkhazia. Besides, a strong lobbying network of support of the separatists within the Russian establishment is provided by the State Duma fractions "Rodina" and "LDPR" and the CIS Strategic Research Institute of the Academy of Sciences of Russia. Thus, the unofficial protectorate governing Abkhazia by Russia and political colonization signs are evident.

The Russian destructive policy became especially radical on the eve of 1999-2000, after V. Putin and his militarist grouping came to power. Since that time, Russian policy gained an intentional annexation character.

In October 1999, V. Putin annulled the December, 19, 1994 resolution of the Russian Government about the economical, border and finance blockade of the Abkhazian separatist regime. With this action, Russia practically expressed its support towards the so-called "Independence Act of Abkhazia" of October 12, 1999, as it was the "independence" for uniting with Russia.

Since January 1, 2000 parallel to setting the visa regime with Georgia, Russia maintained the visa-free frontier regime with Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region. From 2002, by means of breaching all the international norms, V. Putin's administration started granting the Russian citizenship and distributed Russian passports to the population of Abkhazia. This unexampled delictive process was a humanitarian intervention directed against Georgia and annexation of an organic part of its civil space.

It's absolutely clear, that from the Eltsin strategy of informal support to the "Abkhazian separatism", Russia started setting of special relations with Abkhazia, finally striving towards its gradual annexation. If on the earlier stages, the main goal of Russia was not secession of Abkhazia but "catching" of Georgia in its political influence zone with the Abkhazia factor, henceforth Russia oriented a disintegration process on Georgian territory. This strategy is an indivisible part of a new geopolitical project of Russia. Goal of this project is to create its own geopolitical and geo-strategic interests zone in the south sub-region of "Hartland" and together with Iran and Armenia to involve the unrecognized post-Soviet separatist enclaves within this system. According to the Russian plan, Abkhazia ought to become one of the parts of the pro-Russian geopolitical zone. This is exactly a function of Abkhazia for Russia, certainly together with breaching the Euro-Atlantic orientation of Georgia.

After the War of 7-12 August in 2008, Russia actively started the realization of this strategy. Following to the military intervention in Georgia and its post-intervention occupation on August 25-26, the Kremlin grouping adopted absolutely illegal and criminal acts (from the international legal point of view) about recognition of the so-called "independence" of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

The only alternative way of regulating the "Abkhazian crisis" is a radical orientation on the Euro-Atlantic course and parallel to receiving of the international guarantees within this course, neutralization of the "mediatory" mission of Russia. As to speak about improving the relations with the present authorities, it is absolutely unproductive, as dream have no perspectives.

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The Geopolitical Role of the Caucasus Mountains from a Historical Perspective

Giorgi Leon Kavtaradze

If we throw a glance through the main - Eurasian - part of the Eastern hemisphere we can easily find the Trans-Caucasus located between the two seas. It has quite an extraordinary, I dare say, even central position on the hemisphere. In North of it, across the Great Caucasian Range, is situated Russia; in the South, genuine Near Eastern Turkey and Iran; in the West, the Black Sea divides it from Eastern Europe and in the East, the Caspian Sea from Central Asia. Such an intermediate location of the Caucasus should be the reason of its ethno-cultural diversity noticed already by Greco-Roman authors.

Georgia (ancient Colchis and Iberia), the country of the Golden Fleece in Classical Greek mythology, is located in the central and Western parts of the Trans-Caucasus. It is chained to the Caucasus like Prometheus, who found his last abode in the same mountains. Even on the former state emblem of Georgia, under the hoofs of the horse of *Tetri (White) Giorgi* (the image of Georgia), the Caucasian mountains are depicted (instead of the dragon of St. George's icon - a symbol of natural challenge of the country, representing the link of its destiny with one of the main markers of the geographical, ethno-cultural and political division of the world).

Georgia and the Trans-Caucasus generally lie not only at the cross-roads of all four sides of the world, but at the cross-roads also, from the temporal standpoint, between the old and new worlds: the old world of totalitarianism and the new world of democratic society. Both these cross-roads are intertwined with each other. The areas North and East of the Caucasus are still embodiments of totalitarian societies. The areas West and South, embody societies with a democratic way of life or on the path of democratic transformation.

Numerous states were created in all parts of the world after the First and the Second World Wars and also after the collapse of the Communist system. In our days, this process takes place mainly in new independent states (NIS) of the post-soviet space and Georgia is among them. The analogous situation was created already in Georgia, due to the annihilation of the Russian Empire, when a new Democratic Republic of Georgia was created. In three years, in February-March of 1921, Georgia was annexed by Soviet Russia, though the tradition of statehood in Georgia counts thousands of years.

It seems that the factors of geopolitical character caused not only the emergence of statehood in Central Trans-Caucasus in the Classical period, but also determined its historical development in Medieval, New and Newest times.

The main purposes of the future studies are: at first,- to outline the possible trends in political orientation of Georgia, against the background of existing tendencies (in the political life of Georgia itself, of Trans-Caucasus generally, and of a much wider area adjacent to the basins of the Black and Caspian seas) and the second, to study

the character of interrelations among these trends.

Georgian politicians and public carry out discussions on how to resolve the triple choice, which faces the country:

1. Join the security system of the CIS (i.e. Russia);
2. Declare neutrality;
3. Integrate within the Euro-Atlantic democratic societies.

Pro-Russian trend actually means turning back from the process of state formation to final dissolution (though gradual) in the Russian *maw* – the age-long dream of Russian political circles. In spite of the decisions made on various summits, Russia tries to retain by all means its military presence in Georgia and at the same time to widen its economic and political presence in the country.

Neutral status is irrelevant for a country lying on the highway of political processes and surrounded by aggressive neighbours, primarily by Russia, Turkey and Iran. To some extent, during the reinterpretation of their Caucasian policy, after the breakdown of the Soviet Empire, these countries are trying to ensure peace and security in the region, different from their old historical traditions.

The pro-Western trend seems the only option, which can secure the independent development of Georgia. But can we be sure that this choice answers to the national interests of the country? Why does the pro-Western orientation become a *motto* of Georgian society? How trustworthy are the fears spreading among a part of the Georgian public that, because of their pro-Western orientation, the country and its population are under the unforeseeable and imminent threat of punishment, coming from rivals of the Western democratic societies and. Therefore, in the opinion of this public, the political orientation of the country should be changed.

These questions show how tense and uncertain the political situation in Georgia is lately. I don't think that there exists an easy answer to all questions, that Georgian's face today, but historians could try to make the situation more understandable from the standpoint of the historical development of this country.

Therefore, we need to throw a glance from the historical perspective, to gain an insight into the character of developments underlying modern processes. The pointer of the political compass of Georgia was directed to various sides of the world in different times, but what kind of mechanism caused such a shift of orientation? Which point, having strong *magnetic power*, was most determinative for the Georgian pointer throughout history? These are the questions that should be answered.

Unfortunately, nobody paid attention, in the special literature, to the interconnection between the existence of the state power in Central Trans-Caucasus and the necessity to control the passes through the Caucasus, indicated by the historical development of the area. This is mainly due to the fact that, during the last two hundred years, Trans-Caucasus was incorporated in the Russian and Soviet empires and no governmental employee, in charge of these totalitarian states, would allow, or encourage even in a post-Soviet time, to carry out such a study. Both these countries (the Russian

Empire and the Soviet Union) succeeded in total subjection of the Trans-Caucasian territory, which was of vital importance for their expansionistic plans against the entire East Mediterranean-Middle Eastern area. On the other hand, the fact, that no Caucasian nation was represented on the political map of the world over the last two centuries, with the above-mentioned short exception, is the main reason why Caucasian history was actually neglected by Western specialists, even when studying the areas adjacent to it.

The breakdown of the Communist system gave specialists of countries belonging to this system the possibility to use such methodological principles, far removed from the dogmas of Marxism-Leninism and sometimes already obsolete in other parts of the world. In connection with the early Caucasian political history, the use of Arnold Toynbee's *Challenge-and-Response* model seems preferable, as the emergence and development of the idea of statehood in the Caucasus finds its stimulus (*Challenge*) in the reaction (*Response*) of the local natural and social environment.

The political history of Georgia, like other Trans-Caucasian countries, was mainly dominated by the geographical location of the Trans-Caucasus in the South of the Great Caucasian mountainous chain, one of the most important watershed systems of the world. These mountains form a fracture (something like a geological *fault-line*), not only from the geographical and ethno-cultural points of view, but also from the geopolitical division of the world. The key importance of the location of the Caucasus was picturesquely stated by Pliny the Elder (Plinius Magnus), already two thousand years ago, namely that the *Caucasian Gate* (i.e. the Darial Pass, crossing the central part of the Great Caucasian Range), divides the world in two parts (*n.h.* 6, 30).

There was always a need for a barrier to be erected by the world of reasonable men against the world of barbarians, such as the Great Wall of China or Hadrian's Wall (*Roman Limes*). The *Caucasian Gate* had the same function for the Middle East. Since immemorial times, it barred the descent of Eurasian nomads into the civilised world of common interest: the Mediterranean-Middle Eastern *oikoumene*.

The *Caucasian Gate* is frequently called the *Pillars, Stronghold* or *Iron Gate* of Alexander the Great by the classical (Greco-Roman) authors. The linkage of Alexander's name with the emergence of the Iberian statehood, known from old Armenian and Georgian chronicles, indicates the *raison d'etre* of this state, namely to be the outpost of the civilised world in its struggle with the realm of *Gog* and *Magog* lying beyond the *Caucasian Gate*.

The above-mentioned emblem of Georgia bears the sun, the moon and the five stars, supposedly bestowed on the Georgians by the legendary image of Alexander of old Georgian chronicles, as an ideological basis of their state religion. Thus, the concept of Alexander's *Iron Gate* was the reflection of the concrete political function of the Georgian State: control over one of the most important strategic passes of the world.

This function seems to have been one of the main decisive factors that challenged the emergence of the Georgian State in the central part of the Trans-Caucasus in the Early Hellenistic period. The location of Georgia, South of the Great Caucasian range,

in the contact zone of Eurasian nomads and Middle Eastern civilised societies, had predetermined the continual external pressure from the North. A *Challenge*, which for its part caused a *Response*: the creation of a state (i.e. the Iberian Kingdom) in Central Trans-Caucasus. It is interesting that the period of replacement of the *Pax Achaemenia* by the *Pax Macedonica* marks out the emergence of Iberian (East Georgian) Kingdom.

The *raison d'être* not only of Iberia, but also of other new states of the Classical period, Albania and Lazica (the successive state of Colchis), were to become strongholds of the civilised world (Greek *oikoumene* or Roman *orbis terrarum*) in its struggle with the barbarian *Realm of Darkness* beyond the Caucasian Gate. However, there was undoubtedly a difference between the western political orientation (the Greek states, Roman and Byzantine empires) of Iberia and also, to a certain degree, of Lazica on the one hand, and the Eastern orientation (Persia, Parthia) of Albania (together with Armenia), on the other.

The control of the Caucasian passes could create the most favourable opportunity for the preservation of *Pax Romana* in the Middle East. The Iberians were the most important allies of the Romans in the region, having supremacy over the *Caucasian Gate*. The close collaboration between the Romans and the Iberians, based on their joint strategic interests as parts of one and the same *orbis terrarum*, was the *leitmotif* of their interrelations.

At the same time, the rulers of the Iberian Kingdom successfully used the favourable strategic location of their country to balance the pressure of the powers, coming from all sides of the world, often changing the direction of their orientation. Already Tacitus noted that the Iberians were „masters of various positions“ and could suddenly „pour“ mercenaries from across the Caucasus against their Southern enemies (*Ann.* 6, 33).

The long-term aspiration of the medieval Georgian monarchy, going back presumably to the times of the Roman Empire, to bring under its sovereignty not only the *Caucasian Gate*, but all existing Caucasian passes from the Black to the Caspian Sea, is expressed by the formula of its territorial integrity in the Georgian chronicle of the 11. century the „*Life of Georgia*“: „from *Nikopsia* to *Daruband*“, i.e. from the North-Eastern Black Sea littoral to the Derbent gateway (the second important pass of the Caucasus), on the Western shore of the Caspian Sea. This formula, emphasising especially the Northern borderline along the Caucasus, enables us to interpret the main function of that kingdom in a more general context.

Faced with the necessity of effective control of the Caucasian passes, which barred the way of the northern invaders, the rulers of the states of the Eastern Mediterranean-Middle Eastern area were always eager to have in Central Trans-Caucasus - in Iberia - a political organisation with sufficient strength to fulfil such a defensive function.

The concept of the *Caucasian Gate* predetermined the fate of the Georgian State from the Early Hellenistic time till the beginning of the 19. century when Georgia's annexation by Russia meant the loss of this important function. I think this function is the reason why Georgia, as pointed out by Cyril Toumanoff, is the only country of Christendom where socio-political and cultural development ran an uninterrupted

course from the Classical period to the beginning of the 19. century.

This overwhelming interest of the Near Eastern-Mediterranean societies towards Georgia was caused not only by the abstract defensive function of this country, but mainly by its concrete location at the edge of the civilised and barbarian worlds. Though Georgia and Trans-Caucasus were open to the influences of these two opposite models of historical development, the factor of the Great Caucasian Range determined its destination to be the strongholds of the highly developed and prosperous Middle Eastern-Mediterranean *oikoumene*, against the vast area of Eurasian steppes: an embodiment of the powerful and aggressive forces with their slow rate of social, political, economic and cultural development. Or in other words, to be the stronghold of the civilised South and West against the barbarian North and East. On the other hand, the northern nomads required a bridgehead for their raids towards the Middle East. The territories of Georgia and Trans-Caucasus represented the best opportunities for this task.

The constant opposition between the barbarian and civilised peoples, aggressors and producers, brigands and creators, were two firestones with the help of which the fire of statehood, south of the central part of the Great Caucasian Range, in Central Trans-Caucasus, was kindled.



GEORGIA IN THE END OF THE XV CENTURY



CONTEMPORARY ABKHAZIA TERRITORY IN XVI CENTURY



TERRITORY OF MODERN ABKHAZIA IN XVII CENTURY



THE COUNTRY OF ABKHAZIA IN XVIII CENTURY



PRINCIPALITY ABKHAZIA 1810 - 1840



ABKHAZIAN S.S.R. 1921 - 1930



ABKHAZIAN S.S.R. ADMINISTRATIVE-TERRITORIAL DIVISION IN 1978-1991



ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES ON THE MODERN TERRITORY OF ABKHAZIA



LAPIDARY INSCRIPTIONS FROM THE MIDDLE AGES ABOUT MODERN ABKHAZIA'S TERRITORY



GEORGIAN ARCHITECTURAL MONUMENTS ON THE TERRITORY OF MODERN ABKHAZIA





Pic. 1. Church inscription of Mtskheta-Mtianet



Pic. 1a. Inscription of Giorgi II on Samtsberbeli church art



Pic. 2. Mokvi Church built by Leon III, the King of Abkhaz



Pic. 3. Mokvi, inscription of Grigol Mokveli



Pic. 4. Bedia Church built by Bagrat III



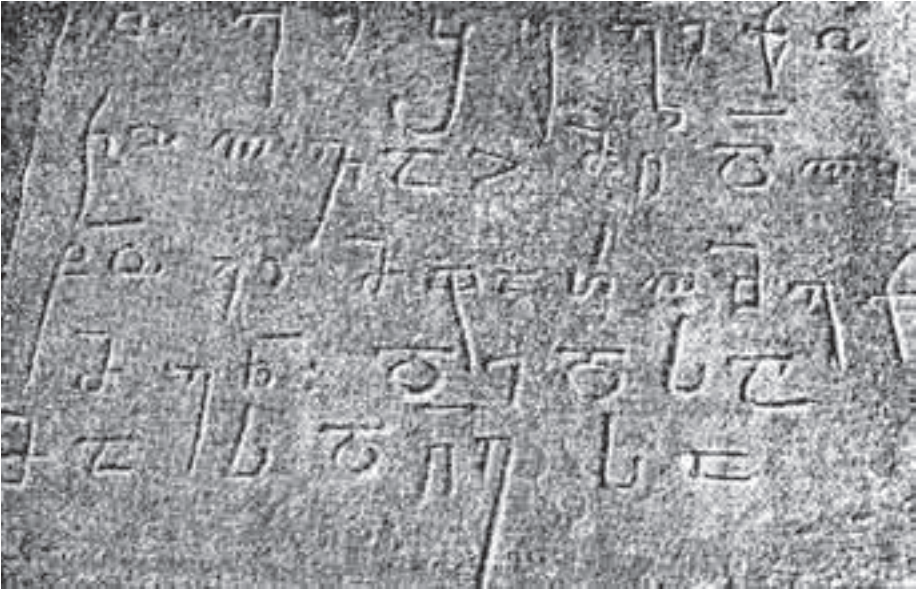
Pic. 5. Bedia Chalice with inscription of the King Bagrat



Pic. 6. Bedia Ancestral fresco of Dadiani Family, Ochamchire



Pic. 7. Ilori Church



Pic. 8. Ilori, inscription of Giorgi Kocholava



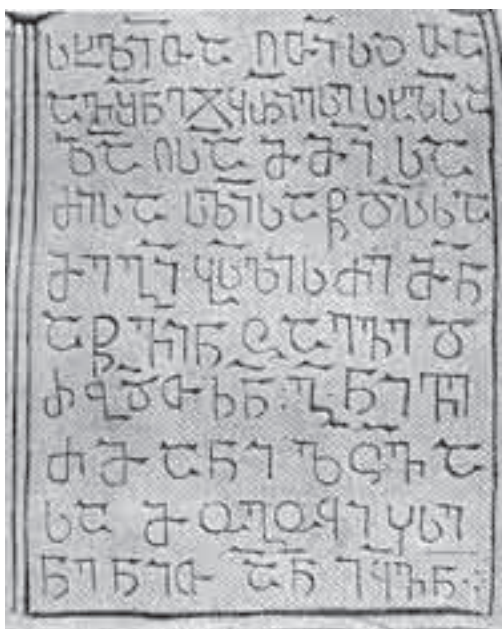
Pic. 9. The fresco of Tskelikari Church with inscription



Pic. 10. Fragment of the Tskelikari church



Pic. 11. Tskelikari, inscription of a donor Chichua



Pic. 12. Anukhva, inscription of Giorgi Basilisdze



Pic. 13. Anukhva, inscription on the stele



Pic. 14. Tsebelda, inscription of Luka Martineva



Pic. 15. Tsebelda, inscription of the Church of St. George



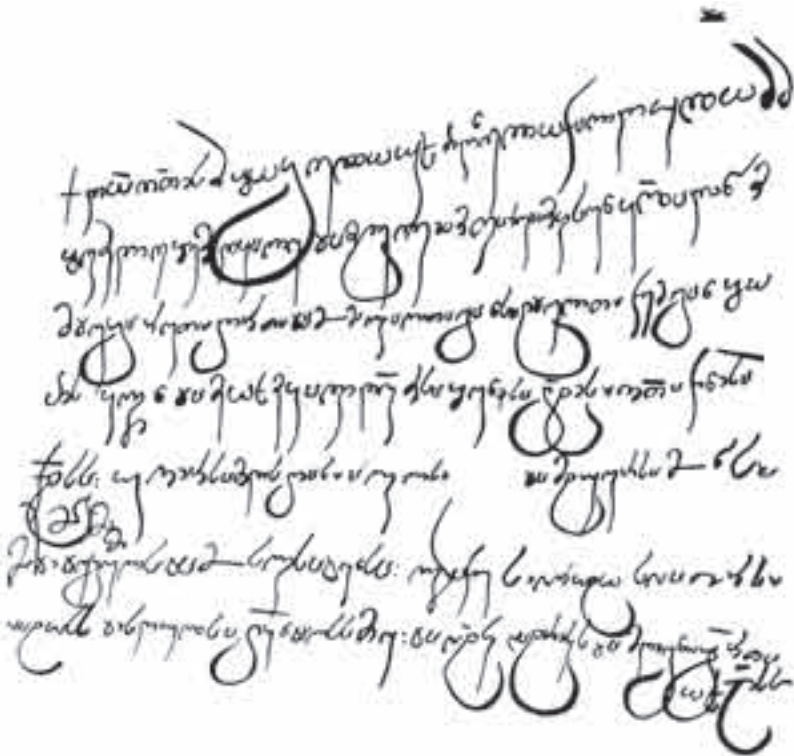
Pic. 16. Tsebelda, chancel-barrier



Pic. 17. Gudava, inscription of Rabai and Nugamtsira



Pic. 18. Likhni Church



Pic. 18a. Fresco inscription of Likhni



Pic. 19. Likhni inscription about apparition of the comet



Pic. 20. Chala, inscription of Ozmeg Dadiani. Ochamchire



Pic. 20a. Dikhazurga, inscription of Mikael Galatoztukhutses



Pic. 21. Samtsevisi Church built by Konstantine III



Pic. 22. Samtservrisi, inscription of Konstantine III



Pic. 23. Icon of Leon III, King of Abkhazs