

The Caspian Region
Volume II
The Caucasus

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Abbreviations

Agitprop	Agitatsiia/propaganda
AMPC	Assembly of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus
ANF	Abkhaz National Forum
ASSR	Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic
CC	Central Committee
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CMPC	Confederation of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus
CP	Communist Party
CPC	Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus
CPID	Congress (<i>Majlis</i>) of the Peoples of Ichkeria and Daghestan
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
EC	European Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EIA	Energy Information Administration of the US Department of Energy
EU	European Union
FSK	Federal'naia Sluzhba Kontr-Razvedki (Federal Counter-intelligence Service)
FSU	former Soviet Union
ICA	International Circassian Association
IPD	Islamic Party of Daghestan
IRP	Islamic Renaissance Party
KGB	Komitet Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti (Committee for State Security)
KNB	Komitet Natsional'noi Bezopasnosti (Committee for National Security)

ABBREVIATIONS

KOMSOMOL	Kommunisticheskii Soiuz Molodezhi (Young Communist League)
KPC	Kabardin People's Congress
m	million
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NEP	Novaia Ekonomicheskaiia Politika (New Economic Policy)
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NKVD	Norodnyi Kommissariat Vnutrennikh Del (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs)
OMON	Interior Ministry Special Forces
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
RF	Russian Federation
SIC	Scientific Information Center
SDMD	Spiritual Directorate of the Muslims of Daghestan
SSR	Soviet Socialist Republic
TACIS	(European Union) Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States
UMR	Union of Russian Muslims
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

PART II

UNATTAINABLE IDEAL?
ATTEMPTS AT UNITY IN THE
NORTHERN CAUCASUS

From the Idea of Caucasian Unity to Regional Fragmentation: The North Caucasus, 1990–1999

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In October 1999, Shamil Basayev, the famous Chechen commander whose occupation of Daghestani territory in the summer of the same year is alleged to have led to the second Russian intervention in Chechnya, argued that he saw the future of the Caucasus as a confederate state, which included the Cossacks as well.¹ In fact, the idea of Caucasian unity is not a new one. Johar Dudayev, the retired Air Force general who became the president of Chechnya following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, stated on several occasions that unless all the republics separated from Russia, the independence of the Caucasus could not be achieved. The way to realise this was to unite the Caucasian peoples in a confederation.² One of the first decisions of the National Chechen Congress, a broad-based popular front uniting all the republican political movements, was to set up a political party in the Chechen-Ingush Republic called the Caucasian Independence Party.³ The main objective of the party was to sponsor regional integrative attempts; henceforth, Dudayev went on with the consolidation of Caucasian unity.

In the meantime, there were certain regional developments that were strengthening the expectations of the Chechens. According to a policy paper of the Russian Federation (RF), in the early 1990s integration in the North Caucasus was developing at full speed.⁴ Amongst the integrative attempts that were working towards regional unity, the most important was the Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus (CPC), which, following its active involvement in the Abkhaz–Georgian war, had enjoyed a remarkable level of support across the Caucasus.

The Russian military invasion of Chechnya at the end of 1994 was

followed by a widespread belief – both in the West and in Russia – that the war would spread to neighbouring republics. The CPC's active involvement in the Abkhaz–Georgian war was quoted as a precedent to that. However, to a keen observer it was apparent as early as 1992, that a large-scale Caucasian War – like the 30-year resistance (1829–59) led by the Naqshbandi-Khalidi Sufi order against Russian conquest of the Caucasus – was somewhat unlikely. The incompatible policy preferences of the CPC's members and the lack of mutual understanding between the leaderships of the Confederation and of the Chechens, prevented a clear definition of the Confederation's purpose. This fact was the most crucial handicap for its future. While the Chechens saw in it an important means towards independence, the leadership of the Confederation regarded it as a forum of regional cooperation, on the model of the European Union.⁵ As a result, the Confederation was inactive during the Chechen war and, after it, simply disappeared. Nevertheless, the reason the members of the Confederation avoided involving themselves in the Chechen war was not merely the disagreements between the Chechen and the Confederation's leadership, but rather certain other factors that added to the sensitivity of the region. By questioning the activities of the Confederation, this chapter will thus analyse the changing dynamics of the region and their implications for the future.

THE ORIGINS OF THE CONFEDERATION OF THE PEOPLES OF THE CAUCASUS

After the Tsarist regime was toppled in March 1917, the national leaders of the inhabitants of the mountains formed in Vladikavkaz a Union of Mountain Peoples (*Soiuz Gorskikh Narodov*). On 20 October 1917, this Union and the Terek Military Government formed by the Terek Cossacks united in a Terek–Daghestan government (*Tersko–Dagestanskoe Pravitel'stvo*). Following the clashes between the Cossacks and the Chechen and Ingush, the Terek–Daghestan Government dissolved itself in January 1918. In May 1918, some deputies of the dissolved Terek–Daghestan administration proclaimed, under Ottoman protection, the independence of the Northern Caucasus and established the North Caucasian Republic (the Mountain Republic) on 11 May 1918. However, the independent Mountain Republic was soon crushed by Denikin's 'white' forces.

Towards the late 1980s, coinciding with radical changes in Soviet politics, a group of intellectuals forwarded the idea of revitalising this North Caucasian Republic. Upon the initiative of the Abkhaz



Map 3: The Northern Caucasus: Administrative Division

National Forum (ANF; a popular movement uniting nationalist and democratic forces in Abkhazia),⁶ Abaza, Abkhaz, Adyghe, Kabarda, Cherkess, Chechen and Ingush delegates convened in Sukhumi on 25–26 August 1989 the First Congress of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus. The Congress established the Assembly of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus (AMPC), to be headed by Musa (Iurii) Shanibov, the vice-president of the Kabardin People's Congress (KPC).⁷ The fundamental aim of the movement was to set up a Caucasian federal republic. The Assembly was supposed to serve as a kind of 'parallel parliament' to coordinate the activities of its members.⁸

Over the following two years, meetings were held in Nalchik (Kabardino-Balkaria), Vladikavkaz (North Ossetia), Grozny (Chechnya) and Makhachkala (Daghestan). On 1–2 November 1991, at its Third Congress in Sukhumi (Abkhazia),⁹ the AMPC evolved into the Confederation of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus (CMPC), declaring itself to be the legitimate heir of the aforementioned North Caucasian Republic of 1918,¹⁰ with its capital in Sukhumi. Abaza, Abkhaz, Avar, Adyghe, Aki Chechen, Dargwa, Kabarda, Lak, Osset (from both South and North Ossetia), Cherkess, Chechen and Shapsug delegates, who were elected at national congresses (conferences), attended the Congress. The Turkic nations, namely the Balkars, the Karachai, the Kumyks and the Nogays, refused to participate in the congress.¹¹ Also, the Dargins and the Lezghins did not respond to the invitation.¹² The Treaty on the Confederative Union of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus was subject to ratification in the national congresses and parliaments of those people who built the CMPC (Article 20). Shanibov, after becoming the head of the Presidential Council,¹³ pointed out that the CMPC was composed of the *peoples* of the Caucasus, rather than of the official governments of the autonomous republics.¹⁴ The agenda of the Confederation included the improvement of socio-cultural and political cooperation among its members, peaceful solutions to disagreements among the peoples of the North Caucasus and the creation of a united defence system against foreign aggression.¹⁵

THE ABKHAZ–GEORGIAN WAR: THE ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF THE CMPC

In the North Caucasus historical experiences play a significant role in regional politics. In August 1989, with the adoption of the Law on the State Programme for the Georgian Language, which made the teaching of Georgian in all schools obligatory and required Georgian

language and literature tests as prerequisites for entry into higher education, the fears of the Abkhazians, who repeatedly suffered cultural persecution in the past, reached new heights. It was considered by the Abkhazians a renewed attempt at Georgianisation and raised fears reviving the images of 1918–21, when the Menshevik government of Georgia invaded Abkhazia and ruled the region with an iron fist and of 1935–53 when under Stalin and Beria the Abkhazians suffered political oppression.¹⁶

The repercussions of this Georgian initiative in the North Caucasus, however, were more serious. It led to a spontaneous association with the Ubykh, a north-west Caucasian people of Circassian origin, who were forcibly deported by Russia to the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth century. Over time, the Ubykh were assimilated by the Turks and with the last Ubykh speaker, Tevfik Esenn, dying in 1992, the Ubykh became extinct as an ethnic group. Thus the extinction of the Ubykh ‘loomed large in the minds of all North Caucasians as a symbol of oblivion’.¹⁷ This time, however, the North Caucasians were determined not to sit back and watch this fate befall the Abkhaz.¹⁸

The peoples of the North Caucasus strongly supported the Abkhaz initiative to defend themselves through the unity of Caucasian nations against foreign aggression. The aforementioned Third Congress of November 1991, which was convened with financial support from the ANF,¹⁹ announced that it was ready to provide the Abkhazian authorities with material support.²⁰ The Treaty on the Confederative Union of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus stated that the Confederation was prepared to face any aggression with united forces. According to Shaniboy, the people of the Caucasus and other small peoples of the former Soviet Union (FSU) saw their own destiny reflected in the fate of Abkhazia.²¹ For small nations, unification was the only way to defend themselves and to withstand attempts to suppress their national-democratic movements.²²

Georgian troops invaded Abkhazia on 14 August 1992. The Abkhazian National Guard failed to oppose the advancing Georgian forces because the Abkhazians had not been ready and the Georgian attack came as a surprise.²³ The resolution adopted at the extraordinary session of the parliament of the CMPC demanded the withdrawal of the Georgian troops from the territory of Abkhazia before 21 August and compensation for the damage inflicted during the occupation.²⁴ This ultimatum was regarded in Tbilisi as a bluff.²⁵ On 21 August, after Georgia had not complied, the Confederation ‘ordered’ the arrest of ethnic Georgians within the territories of the CMPC as prisoners of war. Furthermore, despite a would-be opposition of republican or federal authorities, it called on volunteers to go

to fight in Abkhazia.²⁶ This decree of the CMPC had a profound effect on the populace and thousands of volunteers, belonging to various national groups, arrived in Abkhazia. Already on 27 August the headquarters of the Georgian forces in Abkhazia announced that 4 'irregulars' of the CMPC were detained in Sukhumi and 32 in the Gulripshskii raion.²⁷

The importance of the Confederation's support of the Abkhazians was evident: first, its armed formations played a notable role in the war, both before and during the September 1993 offensive, in which the Georgian forces were driven out of Abkhazia with heavy casualties. Second, it applied pressure on the various Caucasian autonomous republics to support Abkhazia. Thus, for example, Adyghe members of the Confederation's armed forces warned the Adyghe government at the beginning of the crisis that it would be held responsible if they continued to follow a neutral line regarding the war in Abkhazia.²⁸

Third, the leadership of the Confederation threatened that Georgia's insistence on a military solution to the Abkhaz problem would result in a hundred-year war involving the entire Caucasus, which the Abkhazian leadership used very effectively. For example, Vladislav Ardzinba, the Abkhaz leader, said in an interview that the war in Abkhazia had to be stopped because it threatened to expand into an all-Caucasian conflict.²⁹

Fourth, and most important, the Confederation put strong pressure on Moscow to interfere. Thus the deputy chairman of the Adyghe government, Ruslan Hajibekov, warned that Moscow stood to alienate the North Caucasian people because it was reacting very slowly,³⁰ and the president of Adyghea appealed to Yeltsin to take the necessary measures immediately, since only Russia could stop Georgia.³¹ This verbal pressure added to the CMPC's involvement in the war, its threats to expand it and threats by the Cossacks that they would take decisive steps to protect the Slav population in Abkhazia.³² Consequently, the Russian Supreme Soviet announced that the war in Abkhazia was leading to the spread of violence into the territory of the RF,³³ and President Yeltsin added that Russia could not stand aside 'when human rights [were] violated and the interests of citizens of Russian descent [were] trampled upon'.³⁴

At the beginning of the crisis Moscow chose to remain passive for several reasons. Russian forces were on the verge of battle with secessionist Chechnya; the collapse of Georgia's territorial integrity could have some implications for Russia's own; and the Confederation's armed formations backed particularly by the Chechens, as an alternative power structure, posed a threat to the central government.³⁵ Also, while Russia, under the pressure of the Georgian authorities,

was trying to stop the Confederation's involvement in the Abkhaz–Georgian war, certain announcements of the Confederation, such as its rejection of Moscow's jurisdiction within the territory of its members or its threats to expel officials representing the federal government from particularly Kabardino-Balkaria,³⁶ if Moscow continued to follow a pro-Georgian policy bothered the Russian authorities. The Confederation had never been registered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the RF. Its legality was questionable. Thus, the Russian Ministry of Justice decided that the actions of the CMPC were a gross violation of the Federal Constitution. Shanibov was called for a talk at the Kabardino-Balkarian Ministry of the Interior in Nalchik and arrested there on 23 September 1992.

The leadership of the Confederation backed by various national movements such as the Kabardin People's Congress strongly supported its leader, and called for the release of Shanibov, the resignation of the federal prosecutor and the withdrawal of OMON troops – the Interior Ministry Special Forces – from the republic.³⁷ Thousands of people held demonstrations in Nalchik and clashed with OMON troops. As a result Valerii Kokov, president of Kabardino-Balkaria, introduced a state of emergency in the capital. Nevertheless, the unrest and clashes continued – Shanibov's escape from prison notwithstanding. In Shanibov's words, they were the inevitable result of the struggle between the Kabardino-Balkarian authorities who, through the Federation Treaty, were bound to the RF and the 'freedom-lovers' who were supporting the unity of North Caucasia.³⁸

A few days after his arrest, Shanibov 'escaped' from prison in unexplained and even suspicious circumstances and went to Abkhazia. Some rumours claim that he was released by the Kabardino-Balkarian authorities due to the mounting pressure from the KPC and the Adyghe Khase, the political organisation of the Adyghe people, and their fear of a possible coup by the opposition. Other rumours maintain that the Russians let him out to prevent the unrest from spreading into other areas of the Caucasus. This uncertainty about Shanibov's escape, the fact that upon his return to Nalchik a few years later he was not prosecuted,³⁹ as well as his close relations with some nationalistic circles in Moscow, including Sergei Baburin,⁴⁰ the chief expert on the Caucasus of the communist-controlled Duma and the head of the radical parliamentary factions, reinforce suspicions that Moscow manipulated the Confederation's activities for its own aims. Shamil Basayev, for one, believes that 'it was in Russia's interests to have the Abkhaz–Georgian conflict grow into war so that both sides would be brought to their knees'.⁴¹

The aforementioned Russian policy paper⁴² pointed out a crucial fact concerning the region: history demonstrated that attempts

toward Caucasian integration had always been anti-Russian in nature. The primary task of Moscow in the current developments was, therefore, to thwart the re-emergence of such an 'unpleasant' situation.⁴³ Furthermore, ignoring these integrative attempts would mean losing the initiative to the Chechen leadership. Moscow thus took some concrete steps to control the developments that were working towards regional unity and to neutralise the CMPC.⁴⁴ One such attempt was the Piatigorsk round table on the North Caucasus of October 1992, which aimed to create an inter-parliamentary forum of the North Caucasian republics. While opening the first meeting of the round table, the chairman of the Soviet of the Nationalities, Ramazan Abdulatipov, and Vice-Premier Sergei Shakhrai underlined their hope that this movement would become the main instrument for resolving the political and national problems of the region.⁴⁵

However, these efforts did not yield positive results because they were implanted from above and lacked a social base in the region. Furthermore, after its success in the Abkhaz-Georgian war, the CMPC enjoyed widespread support among the peoples of North Caucasus. Its international reputation was also on the rise. With the incorporation of the Akki Chechens, the Darghins, the Lezgins and the Rutuls, the Confederation included representatives of 16 minorities and nationalities. Also the Karachay, the Nogay, the Kumyks and the Cossacks joined the Confederation as observers. The strength of the CMPC lay in the fact that it had support from popular movements and organisations and its leaders enjoyed considerable authority among their peoples – Shanibov in Kabarda, Konstantin Ozgan (the mayor of the Abkhazian town of Gudauta and a member of the ANF) in Abkhazia and Denga Khalidov (the leader of the Social Democratic Party of Dagestan) in Dagestan. Under these circumstances, the unclarity behind the question 'Who used whom?' during the Abkhaz-Georgian war, was not significant. The crucial problem was whether the Confederation would hold together. The Chechen war would provide the answer. Before that, however, the CMCP faced another Challenge.

THE INGUSH-OSSET CONFLICT: THE CMPC AS A REGIONAL FORUM

The Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics (ASSRs) and the autonomous *oblasts* of the North Caucasus played the role of laboratory for the USSR's nationality policy.⁴⁶ Stalin's policy was specifically designed to cut off all connections among the mountain peoples.⁴⁷ Thus, contact on the official level between two local autonomies could only be made through Moscow.⁴⁸ The deportations of four of the North Caucasian nationalities during 1943-44 – the Chechens, the

Ingush, the Karachay and the Balkars – deepened this intricacy of the Soviet legacy. First, they caused territorial disputes among the deported and those who were settled in their lands. Second, they created a rift between ‘repressed’ and ‘non-repressed’ peoples that was a source of friction.⁴⁹

The dispute between the Ingush and the Ossetians over the control of the Prigorodniy *raion* and the part of the city of Vladikavkaz east of the river since the Second World War is one of the most accurate reflections of these premises. The history of this strife is too long to be dwelt on in this chapter. However, as early as 1991, it was apparent that an armed conflict would erupt because both sides started an arms race.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the settlement of refugees from South Ossetia in the disputed districts,⁵¹ who, following the destructive clashes with the Georgian forces in the course of 1990 and 1991, had to flee to North Ossetia, and the ambiguity of the Law on the Rehabilitation of Peoples Subjected to Repression added fuel to the smouldering fire. Articles 3 and 6 of the law passed by the Russian parliament on 26 August 1991, stated that the peoples involved would have their territories restored to them; however, the measures to implement the decision were not specified. The restoration of the Ingush Autonomous Republic in June 1992 deepened the crisis because the formation of a republic was proclaimed but there was no definition of its boundaries, its location, or its capital.

Being aware of the high number of potential internal conflicts among its members, one of the goals of the CMCP was to act as a regional forum that would prevent the occurrence of such disputes among its members. Article 12 of the aforementioned Treaty on the CMPC stated that ‘questions within and between the subjects of the Confederation would, with agreement of the parties, be examined in the Confederation’s Court of Arbitration’. The members of the Court were elected during the November 1991 Congress in Sukhumi. Its decisions were of ‘a recommendatory character’ and were influenced by ‘the general opinion of the united peoples’.

Indeed, in 1990 the Confederation managed to reach a compromise between the Laks and the Aki Chechens in Daghestan.⁵² In February 1944, the entire population of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR was deported to Kazakhstan and Siberia under the pretext that they had collaborated with the Germans during the Second World War. Chechens and Ingush in other cities and regions of the Soviet Union, including Aki Chechens from Daghestan, shared their fate. On 7 March 1944 the Chechen-Ingush Republic was liquidated and territories of the Vedensk district, including the Khasavyurt region, of the former Chechen-Ingush Republic was annexed to Daghestan. By order of the authorities, 61,000 people from the highlands were

forcibly resettled into these newly formed Daghestani territories.⁵³ Following the Chechen-Ingush Republic's restoration in 1957, the Chechen and Ingush peoples were permitted to return to their native lands, but the Khasavyurt region remained under Daghestan's control. Consequently, the Aki Chechens who succeeded to return to Daghestan found their ancestral lands occupied by the Laks and Avars. Once Soviet control vanished, the Aki Chechens were among the first who raised the question of their ancestral lands. In 1991, with the help of the Confederation, a peaceful solution to the dispute was found. The Khasavyurt district was to be returned to the Aki Chechens and the Laks were to be resettled on land to the north of Makhachkala. Nevertheless, the dispute remained unresolved since funds for resettlement were not forthcoming.

The Ingush–Osset disagreement signified a very sensitive situation in the region, since the dispute could have become the source of further regional divisions. The leaders of the Confederation, most of whom were historians, knew that religion has been one of the factual reasons for regional divergence. Therefore, they repeatedly announced their determination to act for the Caucasian people of differing origins and religions. According to Shanibov, religion could lead to unexpected developments because it has been used throughout history as a means of a divide-and-rule policy.⁵⁴ A conflict between the Muslim Ingush and the mainly Christian Ossetians thus could cause further divisions that, at the final analysis, would result in the emergence of two opposing blocks in the region. In this regard, the Cossacks were of vital importance. At the Emergency Congress in Groznyi on 3 October 1992 the name of the Confederation was changed to the Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus (CPC), in a move that aimed to open access for the Cossacks.⁵⁵ Shanibov stated that the leadership of the Confederation envisaged an area of cooperation stretching from the Black Sea to Makhachkala, on the Caspian coast.⁵⁶

On 15 December 1991, during a meeting in Nalchik⁵⁷ and again on 28 February 1992 in Groznyi⁵⁸ the Confederation called for a moratorium on the use of force, so that, with the support of the Ingush and Ossetians, peaceful solutions to their disputes could be found. However, it was extremely difficult to reach an agreement because, after the Chechen-Ingush ASSR was abolished in 1944, its territory was broken in such a way as to ensure the impossibility of its reinstatement in its original form.⁵⁹ In addition, problems were usually anchored in the local customs. In Ingushetia, for instance, a son who failed to maintain his father's house was seen as bringing dishonour upon the family name.⁶⁰

In October 1992, clashes erupted. Having failed stop the Ingush

side and to prevent the entrance of Russian troops (invited by North Ossetia) into the area, the Confederation put the blame on the Ingush. This was but the peak of a deterioration of relations between the two sides. Although members of the Confederation since August 1989, the Ingush refused to participate in the November 1991 congress in Sukhumi.⁶¹ The Confederation's leadership's specific attention to the Ossetians was most probably what bothered them: during the 17–18 October 1992 meeting in Grozny, for instance, North Ossetia was described as the 'spine' of Russia in the North Caucasus. It was a republic that could easily change the political and national balances in the region.⁶² Consequently, the Confederation even threatened Ingushetia with expulsion because it had concealed its preparations for an armed attack on North Ossetia.⁶³ There are even claims that North Ossetia was supported by armed formations of the North Caucasus.⁶⁴ (North Ossets and Russian troops were also backed by the Cossacks, who were furious about the Ingush claim to land in the Prigorodnyi raion.⁶⁵)

According to Shanibov, the Ingush–Ossetian clashes were the greatest misfortune that could have happened to the North Caucasus.⁶⁶ He accused the Ingush of being responsible for the clashes⁶⁷ and Georgia and Russia of fomenting unrest by pitting one side against the other for their own purposes.⁶⁸ For the Confederation the clashes signified a division within it. In the words of Yusup Soslambekov (a member of the National Chechen Congress and a close associate of the Chechen President Dudayev who was unanimously elected to the chairmanship of the Confederation's parliament during the Congress on 1–2 November 1991), the work of the Confederation in this conflict suffered a terrible moral defeat because North Ossetia and Ingushetia were both members. The Confederation was also unsuccessful in acting as a peacekeeping force in the conflict,⁶⁹ the approval of both the Ingush and the Osset leadership notwithstanding,⁷⁰ because Russian forces – using this golden opportunity to isolate secessionist Chechnya – had already been deployed in the area. Nevertheless, the prestige of the Confederation did not suffer too much mainly because its success in the Abkhaz–Georgian war was still fresh in the minds.

FROM ACTIVITY TO INACTIVITY: THE CHECHEN WAR AND THE CMPC

Moscow's response to Chechnya's declaration of independence in 1991 was very harsh. Fearing that the secession could trigger a domino effect all over the country, President Yeltsin sent troops to Vladikavkaz and threatened to invade Chechnya unless the

declaration of independence was rescinded. The CMPC called on the Caucasian peoples to defend the Chechen people against Russian aggression,⁷¹ but even it was surprised by the results: in response, volunteer battalions from other areas of the North Caucasus arrived in Grozny.⁷² A Turkish journalist wrote that there was general support for Dudayev as the symbol of pan-Caucasian unity.⁷³ When the Russian parliament declined to approve Yeltsin's orders and Russian troops were recalled, a fragile truce was in force between the two sides.

Between 1991 and 1994, threats that a Russian military intervention in Chechnya would lead to a new Caucasian War became one of the main tactics employed by the Chechen leadership. The Chechens also indicated that Russian intervention could have implications on other parts of Russia, because, in Dudayev's words, 'the RF was not homogeneous and other ethnic communities would support the Chechens'.⁷⁴ Shamil Basayev was convinced that the other Muslim republics in the North Caucasus would at least carry out sabotage and mass demonstrations if the Russians invaded Chechnya.⁷⁵ There are signs that the Russian government also believed that a war in Chechnya would spread to neighbouring republics. The FSK, Russia's Federal Counter-intelligence Service, for instance, warned that a military operation would irritate other Muslim autonomous republics like Tatarstan, would stir up the other Caucasian nations and increase the power of the CMPC.⁷⁶ However, once the war had broken out both the Confederation and the peoples of the North Caucasus abstained from becoming involved in it.

Within this setting, the extraordinary congress of the Confederation in Grozny on 2–4 October 1992 requires special attention because it reflected, for the first time, the deep divergence in approach between the Chechens and the other members of the Confederation. As mentioned above, during the November 1991 congress in Sukhumi, the Confederation was shouldered with a very massive goal: to become the successor of the Mountain Republic of 1918. However, the Confederation made no serious attempt to realise this target. Just before the Congress, Dudayev may have thought that the situation was ripe to seize the initiative. In the beginning of September 1992, he convened a 'Caucasian Round Table' in Grozny, which called on the various entities of the Caucasus to create a 'Caucasian home' within which each nation would enjoy security and an opportunity to develop freely. It also reaffirmed the need to set up a confederation of Caucasian states, a single system of collective security in the region and a supreme regional council of the Caucasus.⁷⁷ Towards the end of the month, rumours, corroborated by the president of the International Circassian Association, Iurii Kalmykov,⁷⁸ claimed that

Dudayev was planning to proclaim a Caucasus mountain state. These were, however, denied by Movladi Udugov, chairman of the State Committee of the Chechen Republic for Press and Information, as ‘misinformation’.⁷⁹

The extraordinary congress of the Confederation in Grozny proposed that the official leaders of the republics rejected the (Russian) Federation Treaty of March 1992, which only 2 of the 21 republics, Tatarstan and Chechnya, refused to sign, as being at variance with the national interests of the peoples of the North Caucasus. All socio-political organisations and movements were advised to demand that the leaders of their republics should seek ‘real independence’. It also demanded the withdrawal of Russian troops from the area, the creation of a joint regional force to ensure national security, and the North Caucasian official leaders’ recognition of the independence of Chechnya, South Ossetia and Abkhazia.⁸⁰ However, while both sides shared a consensus on issues of principle, they were discordant on practical measures, first and foremost in their approach to Russo-Caucasian relations.⁸¹ The Chechens were demanding independence, hence they categorically refused to stay within the RF. Shanibov called Chechnya ‘the flagship of freedom in the region’. Nevertheless, he insisted that the other members of the Confederation should, for the time being, link their future with Russia.⁸² The first deputy chairman of the Confederation, Denga Khalidov, stated that at least ten years would be required to form a true Caucasian confederation. Within that period, he added, a confederate treaty should be signed with Russia.⁸³ Dudayev, on his part, accused the leaders of the Confederation of behaving just like the Moscow-appointed officials of the republics.⁸⁴

Under these circumstances, the response of the Confederation to the Russian invasion of Chechnya differed markedly from that to the Georgian invasion of Abkhazia. The extraordinary congress of the CPC in Nalchik (11 December 1994) described the Russian invasion as ‘the beginning of the second Caucasian War’,⁸⁵ and called on the Caucasian peoples to ‘help the Chechens defend themselves against Russian aggression’.⁸⁶ It warned President Yeltsin that some circles within the presidential administration had provoked the political and military situation in Chechnya.⁸⁷ In addition, it invited the upper house of the Russian parliament, the Federation Council, to help resolve the dispute by negotiations with the legally elected Chechen government.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, these calls remained words and the Confederation meticulously refrained from any involvement in the conflict throughout the war of 1994–96. Even when Yusup Soslambekov, a Chechen who over time became one of the main opponents to Dudayev in Chechnya, was elected chairman of the CPC in 1996,⁸⁹ no affinity could be arrived at between the Confederation and the Chechen leadership.

However, a closer look would reveal that this deep chasm was not between the Chechens and the CPC leadership, but rather between them and the Adyghe members of the Confederation supported by the Ossetians. The differences between the two sides centred not only on their approach to the role of Moscow, but also on the place of religion and nationalism in the region. Until the twentieth century, Islam was the only bond of unity in the North Caucasus. Its people had no national consciousness in the modern sense of the term.⁹⁰ The Soviet period, particularly the Stalin era, changed this situation drastically. To destroy regional consciousness and unionist tendencies that were perceived as threatening the integrity of the Soviet state, nationalities were devised on territorial and/or linguistic principles and divided along artificially created ethnic lines. Such is the case of the Adyghe. Today there are three Adyghe 'peoples', namely the Kabarda, the Cherkes and the Adyghe, and several small isolated groups of Adyghe such as the Shapsugs and the Abaza. The Ossetians, though admittedly one people, are divided between Russia (North Ossetia) and Georgia (South Ossetia).

The circumstances of the post-Soviet period inevitably caused an ethnic awakening that was far from being exclusively nationalistic. Rather, the restoration of the old order is the basic political national aspiration of most (though not all) of the North Caucasian nations today. The first policy preference of such nations is unification with their co-ethnics. This tendency is particularly active among the Ossets and the Adyghe. Dominant Adyghe organisations such as the Adyghe Khase, the KPC and the Adyghe National Congress, each of which talked about a revision of borders, favour the unification of all the Adyghe in their ancestral lands with the possible inclusion of those territories occupied by the Shapsugs.⁹¹ This tendency determines the stance of the Adyghe and the Ossetians toward Moscow, because efforts to unify mean an unavoidable war with Georgia. To alienate Russia, a potentially powerful ally against Georgia, cannot be risked.

On the other hand, the basic present problem of the Adyghe republics is closely related to demographic considerations. None of them enjoys a clear majority within their territories; there is even no single city where they constitute the majority. This creates a sensitive situation *vis-à-vis* the Russian population and especially the Cossacks living in these areas. The Adyghe have, therefore, been trying to carefully avoid any provocation of both groups, and classify their movement as 'patriotic' rather than 'nationalistic'.⁹² This fear of provoking the local Russians and thus Moscow was one of the main reasons for their reproach to Dudayev that he was too ambitious and behaved like a general not like a statesman.⁹³ Another reason for maintaining a close relationship with Moscow is the Adyghe leadership's belief

that the federal structure of Russia has beneficial aspects for them in the cultural, economic and technical fields.⁹⁴

During the 1994–96 war with Russia, Dudayev attempted to win the support of the Muslim communities of the FSU, and the North Caucasus in particular, by his call for *jihad*. However, a Western journalist observed that there were very few volunteers from the other North Caucasian republics.⁹⁵ Islam still retains a crucial place in the Caucasus, but faces important restrictions. The legacy of Soviet atheism has in the post-Soviet period toned down the religious passions that once led to *ghazavat*. Besides, there are religious divisions within ethnic groups that are restricting the scope of action, as in the case of Ossetians, where both Christian and Muslim Ossets were fighting the Muslim Ingush.⁹⁶ Muslim Adyghe, on the other hand, were fighting Christian Georgia on the side of their (mainly) Christian brothers the Abkhaz. Thus, the concerns of both the Adyghe and the Ossets determined the stance of the Confederation to the role of Islam. Finally, the Muslim nations of the Northern Caucasus, particularly the Adyghe, are cautious about their religious revival because of its potential to lead to a confrontation with the Slavic population, especially the Cossacks. The Adyghean president, for example, admitted in 1992 that his people had begun to feel the import of religion. However, he claimed, such religious import was due to the current ‘fashion’.⁹⁷

Also Dudayev tried to reassure the non-Islamic population of the region. He stated that he divided neither region into north and south, nor according to religious belief.⁹⁸ As early as 1991, Dudayev confirmed his intention to create a united armed force, a Caucasian army which would lead, essentially, to the union of the Caucasian states. The Stavropol and Kuban *krais* as well as the Volgograd and Rostov *oblasts*, with their Cossack population, were to be part of this union.⁹⁹ He also insisted on including the Transcaucasian states in the Caucasian union and tried to mediate between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh war.¹⁰⁰ Over time, however, the role of Islam in Chechen politics increased.¹⁰¹

The leaders of the Confederation, Shanibov in particular, rejected Dudayev’s approach, because to them the notion of brotherhood, which had been the main motivation behind the Confederation, was based on common culture and history. In that regard, the Transcaucasian nations were different from the North Caucasian peoples.¹⁰² Furthermore, even if they agreed to the premises of his policy *vis-à-vis* the Cossacks the response of the latter has been mixed. In May 1993, for instance, the Stavropol Agreement on Principles of Cooperation and Mutual Aid between the Confederation and the Cossacks of southern Russia that was signed

by Shevtsov, was considered to be illegal by Starodubtsev, the *ataman* of the Terek Cossacks.¹⁰³ Even if there was some closeness between the two sides in those days, this stemmed from the fact that both were fighting against Georgia in the Abkhaz war. In 1994, relations further deteriorated due to the problem of territorial exchange between Adyghea and Krasnodar *Krai*. The Adyghe parliament formally proposed to the Krasnodar authorities an exchange of territory with the Krasnodar *Krai* so that Adyghea could be contiguous to both Karachay-Cherkess and Abkhazia. The Cossacks perceived this as a dangerous idea of creating a Muslim belt from the Black Sea to the Caspian.¹⁰⁴

At the time this difference of opinions was concealed by other members of the Confederation by what they called the 'Dudayev factor'. Dudayev was believed to wish to establish Chechnya's ascendancy over other North Caucasian people. Indeed, from the beginning, Dudayev did not conceal his opinion that the Chechen nation, with its economy, history, geographic location and the impact of current developments, should play the leading role in the efforts towards independence and unity in the North Caucasus.¹⁰⁵ Whether Dudayev really wanted to become the new 'Shamil' of the Caucasus is open to discussion, but this label was used to justify the inactivity of the Confederation, as well as its various members, in the Chechen war. Even the Abkhaz, who had been massively supported by the Chechens in their war with Georgia, used this 'Dudayev factor' as an excuse for their non-involvement in the Chechen war.¹⁰⁶

CONCLUSION

Besides the aforementioned differences in policy preferences of member nations, there were two other obstacles of vital importance to the successful attainment of the CPC's three goals to unite all the Caucasian peoples in one single state; to create a common defence system against foreign aggression; and to resolve peacefully the disagreements amongst the peoples of the North Caucasus.

First, the radical decisions of the Confederation between 1989 and 1991 were allowed by the fact that, following the disintegration of the USSR, the RF was in a process of transformation and the central government's authority over its federal subjects was weak. Even in North Caucasian republics where the old *nomenklatura* with its repressive methods was still in power, like Kabardino-Balkaria or Dagestan, the popular movements enjoyed a considerable degree of freedom of action. The September 1992 events in Nalchik are, perhaps, the most notable example to this. Except for the Chechens,

however, none of the national movements that were at the same time members of the Confederation succeeded in taking advantage of this situation to seize power.

After 1992 this interregnum ended and Moscow seemed to realise that the Confederation could be used against an insubordinate Georgia. Henceforth, Moscow determined the scale of the Confederation's activities and this had an important impact on its second aim of creating a common defence system against foreign aggression. In a period when the Confederation was facing the dilemma of whether to become registered with the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia and to obtain legal recognition, the armed formations of the Confederation used in the Abkhaz war could not be transformed into a permanent body. In Shanibov's words, this decision conflicted with the federal constitution, as well as with those of the various republics involved, and had to be cancelled.¹⁰⁷ Thus, the idea of a system of collective defence broke down.

Second, from the beginning the Confederation failed to include all the Caucasian peoples. Whereas the Adyghe members of the Confederation were cautious about becoming a tool of Dudayev's plans, there were other peoples who believed that the interests of the Adyghe occupied the foremost position within the Confederation. The Karachay *Cema'at*, and the National Council of the Balkar People, the popular movements of the Balkars and Karachay aiming to restore their autonomy within the pre-1943 borders, refused to join the Confederation, since they are facing an array of problems with the Cherkess and Kabarda respectively. Furthermore, together with the Kumyks and Nogay of Dagestan they formed the 'Assembly of Turkic Peoples' which was supported by Chechnya¹⁰⁸ and Azerbaijan. Shanibov accused these Turkic nations of having divided the region and claimed that they 'aimed to revive the ancient Kipchak state'.¹⁰⁹ The division within the Confederation apart, this division on the regional level overshadowed the aim of the Confederation to act as a regional forum for the peaceful solution of disputes.

In 1997, just after the presidential elections in Chechnya, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, the acting president after the death of Dudayev who lost the elections, reportedly initiated a new movement in Grozny for the unity of the Caucasus and for 'liberation from Russian colonialism' (*Kavkazskii Dom*).¹¹⁰ In fact, such attempts have been growing in recent years, particularly since the Chechen victory of 1996. However, after the CPC experience it seems to be unrealistic to assume that such attempts will succeed to comprise all the Caucasian peoples or become more effective. The factor that united the members of the Confederation in the first half of the 1990s was neither religion nor culture, nor common history. Rather it was

the war against Georgia. The factor that has curbed the CPC and is of crucial importance for any future attempt at integration of the Caucasus is whether the Caucasian peoples are willing to follow the Chechens and defy Russia. So far most of them have not. Each of these peoples has its own set of reasons to court Moscow, or at least not to antagonise the only arbiter in the area. Even the Ingush, ethnically related to and indirectly supporting the cause of the Chechens, have distanced themselves from their cousins' aspirations because the Kremlin promised them that Ingushetia would be returned to its borders of 1944.¹¹¹ Being aware of this, Moscow pursues a 'stick and carrot' policy. However, the stability in the region is temporary and Moscow's policy is an issue of serious concern and a potential source of future conflicts, since the level of disappointment of these people is going to be another decisive factor for the future of the region.

NOTES

- 1 Tomas Valasek, 'Interview. Shamil Basayev,' *Jane's Defence Weekly*, Vol. 32, No.14 (6 October 1999), p. 32.
- 2 See Cevher [Johar] Dudayev, *Özgürlük Kolay Değil [Freedom is not so Easy]* (İstanbul: Turan Kültür Vakfı, 1996), p. 107.
- 3 Marie Bennigsen-Broxup, 'After the Putsch, 1991', in Abdurahman Avtorkhanov and Marie Bennigsen-Broxup (eds), *The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian Advance towards the Muslim World* (London: Christopher Hurst, 1992), p. 236.
- 4 Sovet Bezopasnosti RF, Rabochaia Grupa Spetsial'noi Mezhregional'noi Kommissii, *Obosnovanie Sovremennoi Natsional'noi Politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii na Severnom Kavkaze [The Basis of the Present-day National Policy of the Russian Federation in the North Caucasus]* (Moscow, 1992), p. 46.
- 5 'Kafkasya Halkları Konfederasyonu, Hedef Avrupa Modeli Birlik [The Confederation of the Caucasian Peoples, The Objective is Unity on the European Model]', *Kafkasya Gerçeği* (Samsun), No. 9 (July 1992), p. 11.
- 6 Musa Y[uriy] Şenibe [Shanibov], *Kafkasya'da Birliğin Zaferi [The Victory of Unity in the Caucasus]*, trans. Nartan Elbruz (Istanbul: Nart, Yayıncılık, 1997), p. 33.
- 7 A Kabarda social scientist and senior lecturer at the Kabardino-Balkar University. In the past, a *Komsomol* member and a Party official.
- 8 Minority Rights Group, *The North Caucasus: Minorities at a Crossroads* (London, 1994), p. 30.
- 9 This congress was regarded as the continuation of the first of 1917 and the second of 1918. The three congresses that followed the 1918 congress (the third, fourth and fifth) were not taken into account because they were convened by the Bolsheviks.
- 10 Article 1 of the Treaty on the Confederative Union of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus, 2 November 1991. B. G. Hewitt, 'Abkhazia: A Problem of Identity and Ownership', *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (1993), pp. 267-323.
- 11 'Kafkasya Dağlı Halkları Konfederasyonu, Başkan Şenibe Açıkladı: Dağlıların

- Yüzyıllar Boyu Arzu Ettikleri Birliđi Gerçekleřtiriyoruz [The Confederation of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus, President řenibe Reveals: We are Realizing the Unity of which the Mountaineers Have Dreamed for Centuries]’, *Kafkasya Gerçeđi*, No. 7 (January 1992), p. 2.
- 12 Ibid, p. 2.
- 13 The structure of the Confederation was set up in a very democratic way. At the top of the Confederation there was a president and the Presidential Council, with one representative of each nation on the Council. The Parliament of the Confederation had three representatives from each people and was responsible for developing the programme of the Confederation’s work on a yearly basis.
- 14 ‘Kafkasya Dađlı Halkları Konfederasyonu’, p. 1.
- 15 ‘Kuzey Kafkas Halkları Konfederasyonu [The Confederation of the Peoples of the Northern Caucasus]’ *Yedi Yıldız* (İstanbul, the unofficial publication of the Confederation in Turkey), No.1 (January 1994), p. 20.
- 16 ‘Report of a UNPO Mission to Abkhazia, Georgia and the Northern Caucasus’, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (1993), p. 331.
- 17 John Colarusso, ‘Abkhazia’, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (1995), p. 83.
- 18 Ibid, p. 83.
- 19 ‘Kafkasya Dađlı Halkları Konfederasyonu’, p. 3.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Stanislav Lakoba, ‘Abkhazia is Abkhazia’, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (1995), p. 104.
- 22 Musa řenibe [Shanibov], ‘Yeniden Dođuřa Hizmet Etmek [To Serve to the Revival]’ *Kafkasya Gerçeđi*, No. 3 (January 1991), p. 14; Musa řenibe, *Kafkasya’da Birliđin*, p. 35.
- 23 ‘Report of a UNPO Mission’, p. 334.
- 24 Russia TV Channel, 19 August 1992 as quoted by BBC, Summary of World Broadcasts (SWB), Part 1: the Soviet Union, SU/1465 C2/2, 21 August 1992.
- 25 Aleksei Zverev, ‘Etnicheskie Konflikty na Kavkaze, 1988–1994 [Ethnic Conflicts in the Caucasus, 1988–1994]’, in B. Koppiters (ed.), *Spornye Granitsy na Kavkaze [Disputed Borders in the Caucasus]* (Moscow: Ves’ Mir, 1996), p. 57.
- 26 ‘Ukaz Prezidenta i Predsedatel’ia Parlamenta Konfederatsii Gorskih Narodov Kavkaza [Decree of the President and the Chairman of the Parliament of the Confederation of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus]’, Nalchik, 21 August 1992, *Kafkasya Gerçeđi*, No. 10, October 1992, p. 76.
- 27 ITAR-TASS, 27 August 1992 in SWB, SU/1472 C1/2, 29 August 1992.
- 28 ‘Adige Halkına ve Adige Cumhurbaşkanına Çađrı [Appeal to the Adyghe People and to the Adyghean President]’, *Kafkasya Gerçeđi*, No. 10 (October 1992), p. 70.
- 29 *Trud*, 7 May 1993 as quoted in US, Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), 17 May 1993, p. 107.
- 30 *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 21 August 1992 – SWB, SU/1469 C3/1, 26 August 1992.
- 31 A. A. Carımov [Dzharymov], *Özerklikten Cumhuriyete Adige [Adyghe, from Autonomy to Republic]* (Ankara: Türk Kalkınma ve İşbirliđi Ajansı, 1996), pp. 196–7.
- 32 ITAR-TASS, 25 August 1992 – SWB, SU/1470 C1/2, 27 August 1992.
- 33 ITAR-TASS, 25 September 1992 – SWB, SU/1497 C2/1, 28 September 1992.
- 34 Russia TV Channel, 6 October 1992 – SWB, SU/1505 C3/6, 7 October 1992.
- 35 *Obosnovanie Sovremennoi Natsional’noi Politiki*, pp. 40–1.
- 36 Moscow Radio, 29 August 1992 – SWB, SU/1474 C1/1, 1 September 1992.
- 37 ITAR-TASS, 24 September, 1992 – SWB, SU/1495 I, 25 September 1992.

- 38 '27 Eylül Olaylarının Perde Arkası [The Background of the Events of 27 September]' *Marje* (Ankara), February 1993, p. 7.
- 39 The criminal case against him had not been dropped, but it was not progressing in any way.
- 40 Zverev, 'Etnicheskie Konflikty na Kavkaze, 1988–1994', p. 58.
- 41 *Segodnia*, 1 February 1994 – FBIS, 16 February 1994, p. 22.
- 42 *Obosnovanie Sovremennoi Natsional'noi Politiki*.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 45.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 46.
- 45 *Rossiiskaia Gazeta*, 20 January 1993 – FBIS-USR-93-013, 5 February 1993.
- 46 Barasbi Baytugan, 'The North Caucasus', *Studies on the Soviet Union*, Vol. XI, No. 1 (1971), p. 27.
- 47 Moshe Gammer, 'Unity, Diversity and Conflict in the Northern Caucasus', in Y. Ro'i (ed.), *Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting Legacies* (London: Frank Cass, 1995), p. 165.
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- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 167.
- 50 A. G. Zdravomyslov, *Mezhnatsional'nye konflikty v postsovetskom prostranstve [Inter-National Conflicts in the post-Soviet Space]* (Moscow: Aspekt Press, 1997), p. 89.
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- 53 *Tak eto bylo. Natsional'nye represii v SSSR, 1919–1952 gody [That is How it Was. National Repressions in the USSR, 1919–1952]* (Moscow: Insan, 1993), Vol. II, p. 219.
- 54 Şenibe, 'Yeniden Doğuşa', p. 15.
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- 56 'Zamanımız Kafkas Halklarının Ulusal Bilince ve Bağımsızlığa Sarılması Zamanıdır [Now is the Time for the North Caucasian Peoples to Lead the Way towards National Consciousness and Independence]', *Kaf-Der Bülten* (Ankara), No. 5 (January 1994), p. 2.
- 57 'Kuzey Kafkas Halklarına Çağrı [Appeal to the North Caucasian Peoples]', *Kafkasya Gerçeği*, No. 8 (April 1992), p. 1.
- 58 'Kafkasya Dağlı Halkları Konfederasyonu Parlamentosunun 4. Toplantısı [The Fourth Session of the Parliament of the Confederation of the Mountain Peoples of the Caucasus]', *Marje*, July 1992, p. 25.
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- 60 Goldenberg, *The Pride of Small Nations*, p. 210.
- 61 'Kafkasya Dağlı Halkları Konfederasyonu, Başkan Şenibe', p. 2.
- 62 'Kendimizden Başka Kimse Bize Yardımcı Olmayacaktır [Nobody Will Help Us but Ourselves]', *Kafkasya Gerçeği*, No. 11 (January 1993), pp. 8–9.
- 63 RIA News Agency, 13 November 1992 – SWB, SU/1540 B/3, 17 November 1992.
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- 69 'Interviews. President of Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus on the Future of this Organization and on the Situation in Chechnya', *Caucasus Review*, Vol. I, No. 2, 1994, p. 15.
- 70 'Kafkasya Milli Hareketlerinin Oset-inguş Anlaşmazlığına Bakışı [The Caucasian National Movements' Stance Towards the Ingush–Ossetian Disagreement]', *Kafkasya Gerçeği*, No. 11 (January 1993), pp. 18–19.
- 71 Şenibe, *Kafkasya'da Birliğin*, pp. 42–3.
- 72 Goldenberg, *The Pride of Small Nations*, pp. 185–6.
- 73 Ethem Baykal, 'Çeçen Bağımsızlığı ve Dudayev [Chechen Independence and Dudayev]', in S. Mansur (ed.), *Çeçenler [The Chechens]* (Ankara: Sam Yayınları, 1993), pp. 185–91.
- 74 'Ins Irrenhaus, Interview mit Praesident Dschochar Dudayev über seine Wiedersacher,' *Der Spiegel*, No. 41 (October–December 1994), pp. 176–7.
- 75 Anatol Lieven, *Chechnya. Tombstone of Russian Power* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 96. The interview took place in August 1994.
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- 82 *Ibid.*
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- 84 Şerif Asuyev, 'Çeçen Başkanlığına Seçilişinin Yıldönümünde Cohar Dudayev'le Bir Söyleşi [An Interview with Johar Dudayev on the Anniversary of His Election to Presidency in Chechnya]', *Kafkasya Gerçeği*, No. 11 (January 1993), pp. 12–14; Dudayev, *Özgürlük*, p. 85.
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- 87 'Obrashchenie k Prezidentu Rossiiskoi Federatsii B. N. Eltsinu [Appeal to the President of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin]', Nal'chik, 11 December 1994.
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- 89 Indeed, during the congress in Nalchik on 21 December 1994, Shanibov was replaced by Ali Aliev, who, until the election of Yusup Soslambekov, served as acting chairman of the Confederation.
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- 91 The Abkhaz desire to be attached to the RF lies partly in the fact that, in the words of the Abkhazian Foreign Minister, Smyr Zurab, 'within the RF there are living Adyghe groups who are ethnically, culturally and linguistically related to Abkhaz': 'Röportaj: Adigey Abhazya Kardeşliği [Report: The Adyghe–Abkhazian Brotherhood]', *Kaf-Der Bülten*, No. 12 (August 1994), p. 4.
- 92 'Çerkes Bilim Heyeti Türkiye'de [The Circassian Delegation is in Turkey]', *Kaf-Der Bülten*, No. 12 (August 1994), p. 5.

- 93 For example, see Carımov, *Özerklikten*, pp. 193–4.
- 94 ‘Çerkes Bilim, p. 5.
- 95 Lieven, *Chechnya*, pp. 84, 101.
- 96 In North Ossetia there is a considerable number of Muslim Ossets.
- 97 ‘Dönüş için Bir Hazırlık Dönemi Gerekiyor [Time is Essential for Organizing the Return]’, *Marje*, August 1992, p. 32.
- 98 *Segodnia*, 31 May 1994 – FBIS, 20 June 1994, pp. 44–7
- 99 Ostantino Channel 1 TV, 23 February 1992 – SWB, SU/1313 B/10, 25 February 1992.
- 100 ‘Dudayev Azeri ve Ermeniler Arasında Arabulucu [Dudayev is the Mediator between the Azeris and the Armenians]’, *Kafkasya Gerçeği*, No. 11 (January 1993), p. 18.
- 101 As early as 1992, Dudayev stated that the place of Islam in Chechen politics would depend on the political situation in the Republic and the outside pressure to which it was subjected. If negative external factors intensified, Islam would become stronger. For Dudayev’s thoughts concerning the role of religion, see Dudayev, *Özgürlük*, p. 82.
- 102 ‘Kafkasya Halkları Konfederasyonu, Hedef’, p. 12.
- 103 *Segodnia*, 13 August 1993 – FBIS, 1 September 1993, pp. 22–3.
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- 106 Paula Garb, ‘Abhazya Raporu [Report on Abkhazia]’, *Kaf-Der Bülten*, No. 30 (February 1996), p. 10.
- 107 *Kaf-Der Bülten*, No. 5 (January 1994), p. 9.
- 108 Over time, the proximity between these Turkic nations and the Chechens grew. When the Russian invasion of Chechnya began, Dudayev and a Balkar general, Sufiyan Beppayev, who formerly commanded Russian troops in Transcaucasia (Azerbaijan and Georgia), reportedly discussed over the telephone the possibility of opening a second front – ‘Russia’s Own Vietnam Syndrome’, *Newsweek*, 30 January 1995, p. 36. Also, Russian media reported that the Chechens, particularly Salman Raduyev, the famous Chechen commander and a nephew by marriage of Dudayev, trained the armed formations of the Balkars – Il’ya Maksakov, ‘Pravitel’stvo poka ne sformirovano [The Government is not Formed yet]’, *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 12 March 1997, p. 3.
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- 110 Marie Bennigsen, ‘Chechnia: Political Developments and Strategic Implications for the North Caucasus’, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (1999), p. 547.
- 111 Mahomed Mamilov, the deputy chairman of the Ingush People’s Council, quoted by Lieven, *Chechnya*, pp. 70–1.