

**The Russo-Chechen Conflict:
Analysis, Impact, Transformation**

by

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Abstract

This thesis explores the ongoing Russo-Chechen conflict, which is one of the most intractable inter-group conflicts in the world. It analyzes the root causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict and discusses a number of key themes that are correlated to the consequences of the war and violence in Chechnya. This thesis also investigates the opportunity to improve the conflict situation and offers a systematic method of its resolution. The research is conducted through a number of qualitative data collection strategies such as interviewing, participant observation, and narrative analysis. Chechen refugees were interviewed in three countries- Azerbaijan, Canada, and the US.

The research has resulted in a number of key findings. Those include but are not limited to the following: a) Thinking of conflict analysis and resolution as two separate fields would be misleading and unproductive. Instead, the former should inform the latter. It is true for any conflict case, including the Russo-Chechen conflict; b) A multimodal and multilevel approach to conflict analysis as well as an organic and multilevel approach to conflict resolution is needed in order to reach the objective of constructive conflict handling; c) Conflict resolution practices in Russia took place primarily within civil society organizations. The complexities of the Russo-Chechen conflict entail employing a number of different effective conflict transformation practices, which requires different conflict areas be addressed simultaneously; d) The Russo-Chechen war is not a religious- or culture-based war. However, both religion and culture have a strong motivational role in this conflict; e) Despite the severity of the conflict and the loss of human lives in Chechnya, most Chechens do not harbor hatred towards the Russian people; f) It is necessary that Chechens abandon their claims for full

political independence, and Russians cease labeling the Chechens as terrorists to successfully transform the conflict; g) Even the most radical subjects interviewed for this study displayed some regrets that Chechnya did not follow the path of Tatarstan in the early 1990s, and h) Violence is not a solution to the problem.

Furthermore, this thesis offers a comprehensive conflict resolution framework that includes forgiveness, peace education, storytelling, negotiating for mutual gains, interactive problem-solving workshops, and interfaith dialogue. The model offers an effective way to utilize informal conflict resolution methods that would involve all segments of population participating in the process of conflict transformation.

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To my children,
Tekin and Fatima

Chapter 1

Introduction

Introduction

This chapter introduces the thesis that seeks to explore how Chechens and Russians think and feel about the Russo-Chechen conflict, its impact on their lives, and the possibilities of its transformation. It studies the perceptions of fifty-eight Chechen paramilitaries, professionals, and laypersons, as well as Russian professionals and ordinary people about the Russo-Chechen conflict, emphasizing its causes, structures, and dynamics as well as the third-party efforts to transform it. The study takes place in Azerbaijan where numerous Chechen refugees live, as well as in Canada and the United States.

The research is conducted through a number of qualitative data collection strategies such as interviewing and participant observation. My goal is to study the case of conflict that is between Russia and its state agencies and different groups of Chechens. However, as Walton argues, case studies are always hypotheses because they deal with not only a particular circumstance but also they suggest something about the potential generality of the results (Walton, 2000). The assumption directing this research is that despite the deep-rooted causes of the conflict, and its violent and intractable nature, the Russo-Chechen conflict can be settled through peaceful processes. The primary research question of the study is: What are the participants' images of the Russo-Chechen conflict and peace building? The subordinated research questions are formulated as (1) what are the underlying causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict, and can it be transformed by peaceful political processes?; and (2) what are the impacts of the Russo-Chechen conflict on the lives of individuals?

Statement of the Problem

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the long-standing aspirations of the Chechen people for independence from Russia were revived. The Russian reaction to this assertion of independence was brutal and the relationship between Grozny (the capital city of the Chechen Republic) with Moscow deteriorated rapidly, eventually culminating in war in 1994 (German, 2003). The war lasted for two years, until Russia and Chechnya signed the Khasavyurt Agreement in 1996. This was followed by the Moscow accord of 1997 (See Appendices 6 and 7) (Hughes, 2007). The war was an overt bloody expression of the Chechen problem that had been latent for decades. The cease-fire did not bring about the expected fruits for a permanent peace and was broken in 1999 (Gilligan, 2010). The Russo-Chechen war has not been a war between two organized armies; rather it has been a war between a well-organized Russian military institution and Chechen guerrilla units. Consequently, making distinctions between combatants and noncombatants among the Chechens has proved to be very difficult, and therefore, the conflict has resulted in massive human rights abuses (Gall & Waal, 1998).

The first Chechen war (1994–96) ended with the military victory of the autonomous republic of Chechnya over the Russian Federation's enormous military force (Cornell, 1999). However, as later events demonstrated, in reality there was no permanent winner in this bloody war because the peace appeared to be very fragile. The loss of civilian lives, including children, women, and the elderly on both sides raised questions about the nature of the war. A number of vital questions still remain about whether this war is intercultural and identity-based, or political and interest-based. The Chechen claims for self-determination versus Russian arguments for national unity and territorial

integrity do not provide sufficient arguments to explain the root causes of this conflict. In addition to the existing literature, an in-depth analysis of the problem requires field research to answer many questions related to this conflict (Sakwa, 2005).

Hence, in this thesis, I also explore the actual or possible use of a number of informal track two conflict resolution methods between the Chechens and Russians. Specifically, the research identifies: (1) the underlying causes of the conflict; (2) the efforts to transform the ongoing conflict between the Chechens and the Russians; (3) conflict resolution approaches that are used in the conflict involving the Chechens and Russians and in Russo-Chechen relations in general; and (4) specific characteristics and features of constructive conflict resolution that are relevant and appropriate for use in the Russo-Chechen conflict.

In order to analyze both the root causes of the conflict and conflict resolution practices, I utilize a qualitative research design consisting primarily of individual and focus group interviews with 58 respondents who personally experience the issues specified here. In two cases, information from the subjects was obtained via e-mail, and in one case, additional information was obtained by telephone from a participant who was also interviewed face-to-face. Except for two research participants, all the Russian and Chechen respondents were interviewed in Azerbaijan, Canada, and the United States. Two professionals, who live in Moscow and Grozny, were interviewed via the Internet.

The research participants raised a number of issues, both of a structural nature and of an identity- and psychocultural nature, which contribute to the ongoing conflict between Russians and Chechens. There is a need for conflict resolution practitioners to acknowledge the interplay and interconnectedness between these two issues, and the need

to approach them within a comprehensive, multimodal, and multilevel intervention framework (Byrne & Keashly, 2002; Diamond & McDonald, 1996; Wilmot & Hocker, 2007). Assessing the workings of the overall system, together with the recurring patterns inside the system, contribute to the assessment of the case, thus providing the data for constructing helpful interventions (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007).

I use a number of theories to explain the root causes and origins of the Russo-Chechen conflict. These include three-pillar (Sandole, 1998, 2008), social cubism (Byrne & Irvin, 2000), social identity and culture (Avruch, 1998; Black, 2003; Esman, 1994; Jeong & Vayrynen, 1999; Jussim, Ashmore, & Wilder, 2001; Kimmel, 2006; Ross, 1997, 2001b), basic human needs (Burton, 1979, 1987, 1990b; Rehnson, 1977; Vayrynen, 2001), psychoanalysis (Staub, 1984; Volkan, 1990, 1997) and structural theories (Galtung, 1964, 1969, 1990b; Rubenstein, 2008). Also, some theories of practice are employed in order to discuss the peace building processes of this conflict and possible ways to transform it. These include mediation (Bercovitch, 2008; Moore, 1996), negotiation (Fisher & Ury, 1991; Wilmot & Hocker, 2007), storytelling (Senehi, 1996, 2000, 2009), forgiveness and reconciliation (Boulding, 1989; Shriver, 1995), peace education (Bekerman & McGlynn, 2007; Danesh, 2007; Johnson, 2007), interfaith dialogue (Gopin, 2004; Ury, 1999), interactive problem solving (Fisher, 1997, 2005; Mitchell, 2008), empowerment (Schwerin, 1995; Zartman, 2000), as well as nonviolence (Allen, 2007; Johansen, 2007). The interpretation of the theoretical literature of peace and conflict studies (PACS) is of vital importance to the rest of the thesis, since it has explanatory as well as informative outcomes.

This study primarily used semistructured and open-ended interviewing (Berg, 1998; Bernard, 2006; Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Briggs, 1986; Robson, 2002) as a method for data collection, although a combination of different approaches such as participant observation and storytelling (Bar-On, 2002; Senehi, 2000) were also used during the data-collecting process. The interviewees were asked open-ended elicitive questions with strict adherence to ethical standards of practice. The identities of the interviewees are protected through the use of pseudonyms and all the data remained under lock and key throughout the data-collecting process, and then was destroyed immediately after being transcribed. No deception was used in the field research.

This study poses a number of interview questions to gain personal information about the research participants. Moreover, questions are asked to learn when and why the participants left their home country, how they have been affected by this conflict, and how the war has impacted their lives. I asked other questions about a metaphor of this conflict that best resonates with the participants and their hopes and fears they hold for the future for themselves and for their country (For details see: Appendix 4). Each of these questions had a number of complementary sub-questions to probe participants' images of the conflict.

The study is of vital importance in understanding and explaining the causes and dynamics of the Russo-Chechen conflict as well as its adverse effects on human life in the region. Studying it in-depth will contribute to formulating some relevant conflict intervention approaches and policies, as well as the analysis of ethno-political conflicts in general. Moreover, the study is important because the Russo-Chechen conflict

exemplifies an ongoing conflict with certain characteristics of terror and state-terror issues of importance to the study of PACS in general.

Context

Research sites

In order to create a clear picture of the impact of the war I interviewed Chechens in three locations—Azerbaijan, the United States, and Canada. I contacted almost all the interviewees available in the three countries I wished to interview prior to my visit to the three locations. Moreover, I conducted two Internet-based interviews with two professionals who live in Moscow and Grozny, respectively. It was difficult to obtain a special permit to travel to Chechnya; therefore my research activities did not take place in this country. A considerable number of Chechen people emigrated to the United States or Canada after the first and second Russo-Chechen wars, with a good number settling in the metropolitan areas of Washington, D.C. and Toronto, which are appropriate sites for this study. Those Chechens have fresh memories and historical information about the conflict.

Description of the problem

The conflict between the Chechens and Russia is steeped in history (Fowkes, 1998; Gammer, 2006; Knezys & Sedlickas, 1999; Lieven, 1998; Nikolaev, 1996; Politkovskaya, 2001; Schandermani, 2002; Seely, 2001; Tishkov, 2004) and the structure of the Russian Federation as well as Chechen understanding of self-determination. The history of the conflict, the culture of the people, religious understanding of the other, the

media's role in the conflict, the war's impact on education, and war and gender, among other themes, are discussed to describe the historical course of the development of the conflict. Both official and unofficial Russian sources are also used in order to present a balanced view.

To understand the underlying causes of this conflict and explain its salient points, important situations, as well as its dynamics, necessitates studying its history and describing this conflict in a grounded manner. Therefore, the historical context chapter in the thesis is devoted to the contextual description of the conflict.

Views of people about salient events

One of the challenges of the thesis is to ascertain peoples' views of the salient historical events that took place in the region in order to understand their role in shaping peoples' worldviews and approaches to each other. Interviews with people help to "verify" the views and arguments presented in the numerous articles and books written on the subject matter. For example, the public memory about such historical events as Imam Shamil's surrender to the Russians in 1859 and the deportation of Chechens to Siberia and Kazakhstan during the 1940s, as well as atrocities of the tsarist general Yermolov in Chechnya are evaluated through the stories of the people of Chechnya.

How did the conflict last for over two hundred years? Listening to the people will reveal their trauma stories. Volkan (1998) put forth the idea of *transgenerational externalization*—that is, when an older person unconsciously externalizes his traumatized self onto a developing child's personality. The elders' influence makes the children absorb their wishes and expectations on which they are driven to act. However, it is not

simply the result of handing down stories about group tragedies, and past humiliating events from one generation to the next. “Patterns of behavior and nonverbal messages are intuited and acted upon accordingly” (Volkan, 1998:44). It happens as if psychological DNA is planted in the psychology of a younger generation as it contacts the older one, thus affecting individual identity and behavior. However, Volkan also argues that what is transmitted may change as well in the course of transmission from one generation to the next (Volkan, 1990, 1997).

Theoretical Framework

The peace and conflict studies (PACS) field does not have a single theoretical panacea to apply to all conflict situations. As this study is not meant to test all the existing theories, I have chosen to focus on a few that are more salient and relevant to my multimodal approach to the multiple aspects of the Russo-Chechen conflict as follows:

(1) *Basic human needs theory* (Burton, 1979, 1987, 1990; Burton & Sandole, 1986) is one of the first and most important PACS theories, the core idea of which is that all human beings have certain basic needs that if not satisfied, can be a source of conflict. This theory may explain a component of the Russo-Chechen conflict, especially related to times of deportation and exile such as in the 1940s.

(2) *The theories of direct, structural and cultural violence* (Galtung, 1964, 1969, 1975, 1990b, 1996) are relevant to this study. Structural violence is not actual physical violence; it arises from social, political, and economic structures that give rise to the unequal distribution of resources and power. The sources of structural violence, as its name suggests, are political systems, social, and organizational structures. Galtung

defines cultural violence as any aspect of the culture that can be used to legitimize direct or structural violence. The aspects of a culture are exemplified by Galtung as religion, ideology, language, art, and symbols such as stars, crosses, crescents, flags, and anthems, etc. There are linkages between structural, direct, and cultural violence, and this is relevant to many existing protracted ethnic conflicts in the world.

These theories also may explain some aspects of the Russo-Chechen conflict. For example, the Chechen fighters' popular songs inspire the Chechen youth to direct violence. Similarly, the Russian mentality of hegemony transfers itself into direct and structural violence. The Russians made a sustained effort to make the Chechens see themselves as inferior, especially over the last fifteen years, keeping them outside Russian society by being intolerant to them in Russian cities.¹

Structural theories are also important for explaining the institutional and discursive continuities that enable conflict as a form of human conduct, and are reproduced by actors in strategic interactions (Giddens, 1984; Jabri, 1996). Agency and social structure are two important elements whose central relevance is the reproduction of institutional practices that pour light into the continuation of the Russo-Chechen conflict (Jabri, 1996). Moreover, structural theories are also useful for explaining an aspect of the Russo-Chechen conflict related to certain political goals of both local and federal political elites. By using structural theories it is possible to explain how the war structures formed in Chechnya, and which parties are gaining from them (Politkovskaya, 2001, 2003).

(3) *The theory of social identity* (Black, 2003; Jeong & Vayrynen, 1999; Jussim, Ashmore, & Wilder, 2001) and *culture* (Avruch & Black, 1993; Avruch, 1998, 2003; Byrne, 2001; Geertz, 1973; Lederach, 1997, 1995; Ross, 1993, 1997, 2001, 2007) explain

important aspects of this conflict. Social identities are a driving force behind many intractable social conflicts in the world. The Chechens, for example, are still trying to formulate their national identity.

Avruch (2003) among others argues that understanding culture has a crucial importance for successful conflict analysis and resolution. In this sense, a number of salient aspects of the culture of the Chechen people are discussed in the thesis.

(4) *Psychoanalytical theories* (Staub, 1984; Volkan, 1990, 1997) argue that a member of another group is perceived as a “container” of unacceptable psychic content previously built into an unconscious mechanism. Based on this argument, it is possible to claim, for example, that Russians became an enemy of Chechens through an unconscious psychological process. “In group dynamics, the most hated aspects of ourselves and our own group are transferred to other groups who are depicted as an enemy” (Jeong, 2000:68).

This research project also tries to explain Russian behavior towards Chechens, because Russians may have “chosen traumas” (Volkan, 1998). Otherwise, Russians probably would not so readily think of Chechens as potential and actual terrorists. The Russians—the predominant group is in this conflict—also have a need for physical and emotional security that is threatened by the historic presence of Chechen guerrillas. Russian memories are fresh with the Chechen capture of a hospital in Budyonnovsk, a theater building in Moscow, and a Russian boat in Istanbul, where the guerrillas took tens of hundreds of people as hostages (Associated Press, 1995).

(5) The theories of practice such as *interethnic conflict transformation* (Botes, 2008; Byrne, 2002, 2006; Byrne & Irvin, 2000; Byrne & Keashly, 2002; Kriesberg, 2003;

Lederach, 1995; Mitchell, 2003, 2008), *interactive problemsolving* (Burton, 1997; Fisher, 2008, 2005; Kelman, 1992, 2000; Mitchell, 2003, 2008), *storytelling* (Senehi, 1996, 2000, 2006, 2009; Bar-On, 2002), *nonviolence* (Burrowes, 1996; Allen, 2007; Johansen, 2007), peace education (Danesh, 2006, 2007; Johnson, 2007, Nolan, 2007) and many others are used for the purposes of analysis and discussions of third party efforts to transform the conflict. Even though no substantial results have ever been reached partly because of in-group Chechen rivalry and lack of a single leadership, third party intervention in this conflict is quite active.

Research Design and Methodology

The social cubism model

Implicit in this study is a social cubism research framework that includes such factors as history, religion, psychocultural, politics, economics, and demographics (Byrne, 2009; Byrne & Keashly, 2002; Carter & Byrne, 2000) that in turn closely relates to Sandole's (1998) comprehensive three-pillar approach. These six facets of ethnopolitical conflicts cover the complex interaction of material and psychological factors of the Russo-Chechen conflict. Studying all these factors will help to explain how the context of current ethnic interactions between the Russians and the Chechens has formed, and why this conflict is so deeply rooted and protracted. This will also help to design conflict resolution strategies to address different aspects of the conflict. Moreover, since the facets of the social cubism are interrelated not only in the context, but also they are complimentary in the sense that they assist with explaining each other, applying it to the case of Chechnya will present a holistic picture of the conflict.

Qualitative research methodology

A qualitative research methodology was employed for this study. Although the primary research method/strategy for data collection was interviewing, internet-based archives or web sites, participant observation, content analysis, and narrative analysis were also used for data collection purposes. For example, in many instances of the interviewing process Chechen refugees started to tell a long story about their war traumas, and I did not interrupt them. Rather, I listened to the story as it was told, and then interpreted it according to the techniques of a relevant method.

Interview subjects

The 58 subjects who were interviewed included: (1) lay people from Chechnya, who did not actively participate in the conflict process, but felt its impact in their personal lives; (2) people from Chechnya who actively participated in the conflict process for a while at any point of the war, but then stopped and fled abroad; (3) people who are still actively participating in the conflict process either in Chechnya's territory, or abroad; (4) a Chechen media worker; (5) an activist from a Russian civil society organization; and (6) lay people or professionals from Russia. Overall, fifty of the participants were of Chechen nationality, whereas eight were ethnic Russians.

Interviewing these six categories of people has provided information from different layers of Chechen and Russian societies about their different needs, goals, perceptions, and interests. During the research process, as noted above, other methods for studying the subject matter were also used.

Interviewing, participant observation, and other research strategies

Depending on the situation, I employed a number of research strategies such as interviewing, participant observation, narrative analysis/storytelling, content analysis, and ethnography. I did not bind myself to any one single research strategy, even though interviewing was expected to be the primary tool of data collection. Yet, it must be noted that a significant part of the data were collected through interviewing.

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) argue that in addition to being a dominant data collection strategy, interviewing may also be used in conjunction with participant observation and other methods. According to Robson (2002), there are mainly three types of interviewing: structured, semistructured, and unstructured. Berg (1998), however, refers to this research process as the standardized interview, the unstandardized interview, and the semistandardized interview. The survey interview, for example, is a structured one. It is a questionnaire with fixed questions in a pre-decided order in which responses to most of the questions have to be selected from a small list of alternatives. Less structured interviews allow the interviewed persons more flexibility of response, while unstructured interviews are completely informal (Druckman, 2005). The interviewer has a general area of interest and concern, but lets the conversation develop within this area. Semistructured and unstructured interviews are widely used in flexible, qualitative designs.

Types of interviewing

The primary types of interviewing I used were unstructured as well as semistructured informal interviewing. Among other factors, cultural particulars of the Chechen people were the primary determinant in this regards.

Interviewing covers a wide ground, from unstructured interactions to semistructured situations, as well as highly formal interactions with respondents (Bernard, 2006). Unstructured interviewing takes place almost anywhere, whereas semistructured interviewing is a scheduled activity, and is open-ended, following a general script and covering a list of topics. Unstructured interviewing is deception-free, which means that a researcher sits down with another person and holds an interview in which both the interviewer and the respondent are aware of what they are doing. This type of interview is characterized by a minimum of control over peoples' responses. The main task here is to get people to open up and to express themselves in their own terms (Bernard, 2006).

Semistructured interviewing is mostly used when a researcher doesn't have more than one chance to interview someone. Unlike unstructured interviewing, semistructured interviewing is based on the use of an interview guide, which is a written list of questions that need to be covered in a certain order (Bernard, 2006). Semistructured interviewing implies that a researcher is fully in control of what he/she wants from an interview, while leaving the doors open for new leads.

Under the conditions in which interviewers do not examine the compatibility of interviews as a means of acquiring information with the ways in which their subjects typically convey information to one another, they misinterpret the events, and the

interview as a means of obtaining data falls short (Briggs, 1986). Briggs argues that to avoid these kinds of errors new techniques for designing, implementing, and analyzing interview-based research should be developed. All these techniques should rest on identifying the subjects' resources for conveying information. Briggs stresses that researchers commonly draw on interviewing as the best means of acquiring large bodies of information in the least amount of time (Briggs, 1986). The assumption is that the researcher can control the type and quantity of information being conveyed. This enables the researcher to circumvent the usual constraints on the transmission of knowledge related to kinship, age, degree of intimacy, and gender, etc.

Moreover, Briggs (1986) argues that researcher's attempt to control the information diminishes the success and smoothness of the process. The researcher feels free to banish the native communicative norms that operate in other environments, but this ability is not complete. As a result, the natives' own discourse rules have an odd way of infiltrating the interview. This brings about what Briggs calls a communicative impasse in which the researcher believes he/she is engaged in an interview, whereas the respondents believe they are involved in a very different type of speech event (Briggs, 1986). As a result of this the communicative process is impeded, interviews are disrupted, and the analysis of the data is affected adversely.

Both unstructured informal interviewing and semistructured interviewing were suitable for this research, since they took place at different locations dealing with different people with no hidden underlying intention. It primarily helped with making people speak as freely as possible and in taking field notes for further use.

Participant observation

In this project, I also used participant observation that involves getting close to people to observe and record information about their lives. It is identified as the foundation of cultural anthropology (Bernard, 2006). Participant observation takes the researcher where the action is in order to collect data. It has been used by both positivists and interpretivists (Bernard, 2006). This method of inquiry involves learning a new language, going out and staying out, and experiencing the lives of people studied as much as possible. It requires skills from the observers to act naturally so that people go about their business as usual when they show up for the interview. As Robson (2002) notes, the actions and behaviors of people are central aspects in almost any research; therefore the participant observation method is a natural and obvious technique to watch what people do in order to collect data for further analysis and interpretation.

It appeared that participant observation is a useful strategy for this project, since it helped with collecting basic data relevant to the research. Every interviewing event may contain some observation that might represent important information. This strategy was helpful in collecting data with regard to the living conditions of the Chechen refugees, and conditions under which the children study. I collected rich data related to the place where the Chechen refugees gathered as well as the homes where they lived.

Narrative analysis/storytelling

Narrative analysis was also used to collect data for this research project especially when the study subjects were providing extremely long answers to simple questions. Narrative analysis is also an important method for PACS, as people with violent conflict in their

past are particularly likely to pass important data through narratives and stories. The goal of narrative analysis is to describe meaning in the stories of individuals (Cheldelin, Druckman, Fast, & Clements, 2003). Riessman (1993) argues that the study of narrative does not fit neatly within the boundaries of any single scholarly field. It has an interdisciplinary character that makes scholars from various disciplines turn to it as the organizing principle for human action (Bruner, 1990). The object of investigation of narrative analysis is a story. The purpose is to figure out how people who are interviewed impose order on the flow of experience to make sense of events and actions in their lives. The approach examines the story told by a storyteller, and analyzes the way it is put together as well as how it persuades a listener of the authenticity of the story (Riessman, 1993).

Telling stories about past events is a universal human activity (Nelson, 1989). The impulse to narrate is so natural that the form is almost inevitable for any report of how things happened, and this is related to translating knowing into telling (Hernadi, 1989). According to Riessman (1993), if not interrupted, respondents are likely to hold the floor for lengthy turns and even organize replies into long stories. Roth argues that some experiences—for example those related to political conditions—are difficult to speak about (Roth, 1993). It is extremely difficult for people surviving war, refugee life, sexual assaults, and political torture to talk about what they experienced (Herman, 1992; Imber-Black, 1993). The refugees of the Russo-Chechen war now living in neighboring countries narrated stories about their victimhood that constituted valuable data for this project.

Ethical commitments

Ethical commitments are necessary for any study. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) emphasize the necessity of informing the subject of the interviewing purpose, and making assurances about confidentiality. This is related to the ethical issues per se, where it is generally accepted that social scientists have ethical obligations to their colleagues, study subjects, and the larger society (Berg, 1998). The main reason for ethical commitments is that social scientists delve into the social lives of other people. Since social researchers penetrate into the private social lives of other human beings some ethical, moral, and even legal concerns may arise. Therefore, researchers must ensure the rights and privacy of the people they are studying, as well as the confidentiality of data (Punch, 1994). Babbie pointed out that some enthusiastic researchers do unethical research by justifying their actions under the excuse that it isn't illegal (Babbie, 1983).

In this study, ethical concerns are dealt with as follows: the real names of the subjects of this study aren't used, to ensure the security and safety of the subjects as well as protecting their dignity. Given the delicate nature of the research, it is not hard to anticipate reluctance on the part of Chechen refugees to participate in an interview. Consequently, well-proposed and well-written request letters were prepared in advance to assure the interviewees about their safety. However, additional face-to-face meetings were sometimes a requirement to assure people about confidentiality and anonymity.

I did not use any deception in this study, and its goals and purposes were clearly stated in the request letter. The collected data was stored in a secure, locked place, and destroyed after being used.

Interpretation of data

The data started to be interpreted soon after being collected. This facilitated the interpretation process per se (*inductive reasoning*), and certain important nuances were remembered with fresh memory. This strategy is recommended by Bogdan and Biklen (1982), among others.

The research strategies used for this project entail an interpretation task especially paying special attention to the accuracy of information. However, interpretation of data may reflect the researcher's subjective worldview. The literature review chapter of this thesis describes the affluence of different theories/approaches applicable to the same case.

Research Questions

The main research question of this study is related to the participants' images of the Russo-Chechen conflict and peacebuilding. The key question is subordinated by a sub-question underlying the study and refers to the underlying causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict, and its transformation by nonviolent political processes. Although a number of peaceful initiatives have been used since 1994 to transform the Russo-Chechen conflict, they have not resulted in significant positive changes. In this thesis, I also present a dispute-systems design that includes a number of policy recommendations that may be useful for future peaceful processes.

To answer this question the research project had several interviewing questions with a number of sub-questions that address the topic of the thesis (Appendix 4). The purpose of using a social constructionist approach, which acknowledges the presence of

multiple realities and emphasizes opinions of individuals, in this research was to come to certain findings at the end of the research.

The study, therefore, focused on a number of questions to elicit the views of the Chechen and Russian peoples with regard to the different causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict such as its origins, dynamics, and the third-party role to reconcile the parties. Certain questions were used during the course of the field research, depending on the situation and in accordance with the nature of the research. The case study was conducted through a number of qualitative approaches, particularly through interviewing. Unlike quantitative methods of research, the qualitative approach is not guided by a set of assumptions (Druckman, 2005).

I focused on three important points related to the conflict: (1) analysis, (2) impact, and (3) transformation. I explored the perceptions of a number of Chechens and Russians about the Russo-Chechen conflict. The primary purpose of the research was to investigate how people understand and think about the Russo-Chechen conflict and how it has had an impact their own lives. Assessing this information is also important for designing a dispute system. This research was an exploratory case study of the Russo-Chechen conflict. The study is descriptive to some extent, especially with regards to portraying settings and research participants, as well as the historical context. It also explores the actual and possible role of track-two diplomacy in the transformation of the conflict, as well as official track-one diplomacy.

Since this study uses a multimodal and multilevel approach to conflict analysis, the background of a number of relevant theories are discussed widely, and a considerable body of relevant literature is reviewed. The significance of using a combination of

different theories—a holistic approach—is also discussed. Moreover, as noted above, a multiple number of research strategies such as interviewing, observation, and narrative analysis were used to collect data.

To address the major research question of the research, the respondents in this study were asked relevant questions in order to elicit information to clarify the following aspects of the Russo-Chechen conflict: (1) the historical context of this conflict in terms of the ongoing relationship between the parties; (2) the attitudes the parties hold toward conflict; (3) the metaphorical images of the conflict that the parties use; (4) the psychocultural context in which the conflict takes place; (5) the ways in which the parties clarify their goals and their priorities at different stages of the conflict; (6) the destructive effect of the use of power on the parties; (7) the options for change and management of the conflict; (8) the roles third parties played in attempting to transform the conflict; and (9) the solutions that can also be formulated.

Focusing on the aforementioned points means employing general *systems theory*, which entails looking at the entire conflict system as a framework for assessment and intervention (Wilmot & Hocker, 2006). For example, Carter and Byrne (1996) discuss how the model of social cubism may frame studies of ethno-political conflict by incorporating material and psychological mechanisms in six facets of ethnoterritorial conflicts. They argue that this analytical model helps to better examine the dynamics of ethno-political conflicts. It is important to note that they combine this model with social identity theory and apply it to ethno-political conflicts. The social cube includes the following factors: (1) demographics, (2) history, (3) psychological factors, (4) religion, (5) economic factors, and (6) political factors. The interrelated connections among these

components explain the complexity of the relationship between structural and psychological factors (Carter & Byrne, 2000).

Significance of the Study

The Russo-Chechen conflict is one of the oldest ethnopolitical conflicts in the world. Researching the conflict, particularly its complexity, is important for a number of reasons. First, in spite of the difficult stage of this protracted conflict, all efforts must be made to search for its transformation and resolution. Second, this case study contributes to the general study of ethnopolitical conflicts, which is a subfield of peace and conflict studies. Third, recommendations for the resolution of this conflict may provide a model for other ethnopolitical conflicts in the former Soviet Union, now coming out of violence. A multimodal, multilevel study of this conflict will exemplify the use of social cubism and other research models in analyzing and working toward the transformation of deep-rooted conflicts, adding a unique resource to the PACS field.

Chapter Overview

The thesis consists of eleven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the thesis by setting forth its goal, research questions and strategies as well as chapter overviews. It is followed by Chapter 2, Historical Context, which is devoted to an overview of the origins and history of the Russo-Chechen conflict. In this chapter, I explain why the conflict is so protracted, and what makes it difficult to resolve. It also discusses the importance of historical agreements formulated by Russia and Chechnya. Since the Russo-Chechen war is still ongoing, later events are discussed in subsequent chapters.

In Chapter 3, I analyze the root causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict providing a summary of contemporary Russian state structure and society and its prevalent attitudes toward the Chechen minority. The chapter explores the causes of this conflict, primarily based on the existing literature. Moreover, this chapter presents the Chechen and Russian positions, based on the generally accepted international norms of self-determination, and territorial integrity, respectively.

Chapter 4, Literature Review, reviews and discusses the literature of relevant PACS theories that best assist in conceptually framing the study as well as designing a dispute system intervention. Chapter 4 focuses on the concepts of identity, culture, frustration-aggression, basic needs, psychoanalysis, as well as stereotypes and prejudice as sources of interethnic conflicts. It also introduces transformative conflict resolution and its elements. Finally, it offers several areas that have been helpful in transforming interethnic conflict, such as mediation, peace education, problem-solving workshops, forgiveness and reconciliation, empowerment, storytelling, interfaith dialogue, nonviolence, and negotiating for mutual gain.

Chapter 5 describes the research methods used in this work. It explains the nature of the research, describes the research settings and data-collecting processes as well as the types of data used, and provides information about the participants. This chapter also describes certain data collection-related events in order to portray the setting and processes in some detail. Furthermore, the methodological chapter highlights several theoretical issues and defines the personal limitations and biases of the researcher.

The next three chapters represent the core of the research findings. Chapters 6 and 7 focus on the two key factors that are contributing to this conflict. Chapter 6 discusses

basic human needs and socioeconomic and political issues, including employment, education, and government, as well as the roles they play in the status of the Chechen community in the Russian Federation.

Chapter 7, however, delves into a number of psychocultural issues and their contributions to the quality of Russo-Chechen relations. These issues include diversity, identity and culture, cultural differences between Chechens and Russians, the Chechen language, Russian culture and mentality, prejudice and stereotypes, and discrimination/structural violence. Psychocultural issues are discussed from the perspectives of relevant social theories and of the research participants' experience. The socioeconomic/political and psychocultural issues evolved inductively from the data analysis; the research participants noted that both issues are essential in defining the Russo-Chechen conflict because they have contributed to the deterioration of relations between both groups. At the same time, they also provide a source for conflict transformation. Their potential for increasing positive attitudes in Russian and Chechen societies is also explored.

Chapter 8 concerns the role of stories, memory, metaphors, and emotions. All these issues are important in order to understand the reasons for a generally slow and difficult progress in terms of conflict resolution. This chapter also explores the respondents' images of the impact of the war and violence on people, which is studied through their emotions such as hopes and fears.

Chapter 9 deals with the practice of conflict resolution in Chechnya. The activities and policies of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and Russian civil society organizations such as Soldiers' Mothers and Memorial are discussed

and evaluated in this chapter. Moreover, this chapter discusses the weaknesses of the OSCE's mediation efforts such as inability to deal with the difficulties artificially created by Moscow to restrict its peacebuilding activities.

Chapter 10 is a conflict transformation and dispute-system design chapter that focuses directly on conflict resolution and conflict transformation approaches related to the Russo-Chechen conflict. These approaches include nonviolence, storytelling, empowerment, forgiveness and reconciliation, peace education, interfaith dialogue, interactive problem solving, and negotiating for mutual gains whose importance in addressing the Russo-Chechen conflict are discussed. In addition, several important aspects of conflict transformation are outlined and explored.

Chapter 11 concludes the thesis by summarizing the main findings of the research, addressing the significance as well as the limitations of the study, and by outlining future research possibilities to build on this work. In addition, it proposes policy recommendations for both groups in order to draw a road map to transform the Russo-Chechen conflict and critically evaluates the outcome of the external third-party role as well as in this conflict indicating structure-based and individual-based weaknesses of the mediators. Finally, it stresses the vital importance of civil society organizations in Russia for bringing positive social and political change from within.

Conclusion

In introductory chapter, I have outlined the goal of this exploratory study, as well as the means it employs to conduct research. I also have described the role of the subsequent individual chapters, highlighting their main points and themes of discussion.

To analyze the root causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict, a multimodal and multilevel approach is adopted for this study. Similarly, a holistic and organic approach is employed by this research to address the root causes of this conflict as well as to design a dispute-systems design. The data for this study was collected in three countries: Canada, the United States, and Azerbaijan. However, fifty-one of the subjects in this study were found in Azerbaijan. The other seven subjects also provided valuable information about their perceptions of the Russo-Chechen conflict as well.

A number of data collection methods of qualitative study such as face-to-face and focus-group interviews, participant observation, and narrative analysis/storytelling were used in order to gather data. In addition, two semi-structured on-line interviews were conducted to collect additional data for this research. Some secondary sources such as online archive databases were also used.

The significance of this study was also discussed in this chapter in addition to the research questions, and the theoretical framework, which is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. I believe that this thesis will contribute in some small way to the resolution of the Russo-Chechen conflict through its detailed analysis as well as detailed suggestions for its resolution. Moreover, this study will add to further research on transformation avenues of this conflict.

Chapter 2

Historical Context

Introduction

In this chapter, I deal with the history of the Russo-Chechen conflict. Although it concentrates primarily on the events that happened before 1991, the first and second Chechen wars are also briefly described. It provides a general overview of many of the important developments in the history of the Russo-Chechen conflict. Finally, it tries to explain why this conflict is so irreconcilable.

The history of the North Caucasus and its peoples' struggle with the Russian troops trying to advance into the North Caucasus in the last three hundred years are written by many scholars, and among them Baddeley and Gammer are especially important (See for example, Baddeley 1908; Gammer, 1994, 1996, 1996a, 1996b, 2006). Even some scholars, including Lieven (1998) have suggested that the works of Baddeley and Gammer are so profound that it is not necessary to describe historical events in the North Caucasus once again. The purpose of this chapter is not, however, to present the details of the history of the Russo-Chechen conflict, but to provide the most salient points of the history of the struggle of the mountaineers with the foreign occupiers.

It is important to look at the Russo-Chechen conflict in a historical context, as otherwise, it may be difficult to explain and understand its causes, dynamics, and complexities. At first glance, it may seem illogical to compare and contrast modern events to those that happened two hundred or fifty years ago. One may change his/her mind by listening to the voices of the Chechen people, embodied in the conflict as one whole. One of the leaders of the Chechen movement who was also a subject of this study

said that if their ancestors had fought better, they would now live in freedom, and their children would not think in the same way. Now they fight the Russian state as hard as they can. Thus, although the main theme of this study is related to the events that began in the early 1990s and continue to the present day, it is important to look at the historical evolution of the Russo-Chechen conflict.

Considering the course of the historical development of this conflict brings additional insights to understanding and explaining contemporary events. The complex ethnic composition of the people living in the mountainous Caucasus region did not prevent them from unifying to fight tsarist Russia. Today, even though people of the Caucasus demonstrate solidarity with the Chechens, they do not oppose the Russians militarily.

Before Russian control of the Caucasus, the Chechens had a common culture with all the other ethnic groups of the Northern Caucasus despite their linguistic differences (Gammer, 2006). They identified themselves as mountaineers (*gortsy* in Russian), and were engaged in farming. The Chechens received their name from a Chechen *aul* (village) where the Russians first encountered them in 1732 (German, 2003). The Chechens themselves call *Chechnya* as *Nokhchi*, which means “our people.” The central concept of the Chechen culture and psyche is freedom (*marsho*), which also means equality (Gammer, 2006). Historically, in the Chechen community, all people are free and equal. Land was owned communally, eliminating any land-based hierarchy. The notions of freedom, equality, and non-acceptance of outside authority have been embedded in the Chechen psyche (Gammer, 2006). This point is especially important for understanding the long Chechen resistance to Russian domination. To Russia, the

Caucasus was a frontier territory encompassing its southern border with the Turkish Ottoman and Iranian Turkic Safavid empires that were opponents of Russian influence in the region. Hence, control of Chechnya was of vital importance for the Russian empire in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Russia managed to conquer the Northern Caucasus and the Transcaucasia after a long and bloody struggle with the people of the region, despite the efforts of Ottoman Turkey and Iran to aid the struggle of the local peoples against the Russians (Baddeley, 1908). In 1813, the Treaty of Gulistan was concluded between Iran and Imperial Russia that confirmed the inclusion of Northern Azerbaijan, Dagestan and Eastern Georgia into the Russian Empire as a result of which Chechnya became a single hinterland (Fowkes, 1998).

The Beginning of the Caucasian War

The beginning of the invasion of Caucasus is associated with the name of Yermolov, a Russian general who was extremely xenophobic towards the mountaineers. Although Russian military operations started long before him, Yermolov said:

I desire that the terror of my name should guard our frontiers more potentially than chains or fortresses, that my word should be for the natives a law more inevitable than death. Condescension in the eyes of Asiatics is a sign of weakness, and out of pure humanity I am inexorably severe. One execution saves hundreds of Russians from destruction, and thousands of Mussulmans from treason (Baddeley, 1908:97).

General Yermolov suggested the invasion of the Caucasus. He presented plans to the Russian tsar in 1818 suggesting first to deal with the Chechens whom he identified as the strongest and most dangerous ethnic group. It was presumed that the conquest of

Chechnya would bring the mountain peoples of the eastern strips of the Caucasus into submission, because Chechnya with its fertile lands and rich water sources was the breadbasket of rocky Dagestan (Gammer, 2006).

The Russian massacre of Nogays in 1783 played a role in shaping Chechen resistance to the tsarist troops. When Russia's advance into the Caucasus resumed under Catherine II in the early 1760s, Prince Potemkin, Catherine's main aide, established the "Caucasian Line" that he described as a solid foundation to penetrate into the Caucasian mountains to subdue the tribes inhabiting the territory between the Terek River and the Black Sea (Gammer, 2006). The concluding act in the establishment of the Caucasian Line was the massacre of the Nogays who were subjects of the Crimean khans for centuries. Suvorov, a famous Russian general, summoned the Nogays to Yeisk, where he read to them the proclamation of the last Crimean khan, which declared his abdication in favor of the Russian empire (Baddeley, 1908). The Nogays then took an oath of loyalty to the Russian tsar. However, when they learned that the Russian authorities planned to move them to the area between the Volga and the Ural mountains, the Nogays tried to resist (Baddeley, 1908). Realizing that all escape routes were blocked by the Russian forces, the Nogays chose to kill their wives and children and to die fighting rather than surrender to the Russian troops. The survivors were either transferred to the Crimea or settled among the Circassians (Baddeley, 1908).

Yermolov's toughness, however, generated the unification of the numerous small peoples of the North Caucasus against their common enemy, Russia. The local peasants who rose up in a rebellion found Islam as a unifying ideology (Hughes, 2007). The movement started under the leadership of Sheik Mansur and reached its peak with Sheik

Shamil also known as Imam Shamil. This also served the purposes of Imam Shamil, one of the leaders of the movement possessing sophisticated political ideas, who sought to build a centralized state (*imamate*) that the mountain people lacked. Shamil's *imamate* lasted about twenty-five years until he surrendered in 1859 to Russians (Gammer, 1996a). However, even after his surrender the struggle in the region against the Russians continued (Politkovskaya, 2007).

The massacre of the Nogays was aimed by Suvorov to teach the mountain people of the Caucasus a lesson not to resist the Russian troops. As the brutality of the Russians in the Caucasus increased, the Chechens consolidated their will, to resist the armies of the tsar. Sheikh Mansur, the first Imam of the Chechens, began his active resistance in 1785, two years after the Nogay massacre (Smith, 1998).

Initiating the Resistance

In 1784, having been trained in Dagestan under strict Islamic law, Sheikh Mansur returned to the land of the Nokchi (Gammer, 1996). He ordered the people to stop practicing many of their old pagan traditions such as the cult of the dead, to stop smoking tobacco, to replace the customary laws (*adats*) with Islamic law (*shariat*) and to attempt Islamic unity (Hughes, 2007). This was not easy in a land where people had lived honoring age-old ancient traditions and religions. Islamic tradition in the land of the Nokchi, especially in the mountains, was not as strong as it was in Dagestan (Gall & Waal, 1998).

The popularity and authority of Sheikh Mansur so alarmed the Russian authorities that they issued manifestos calling on the people not to believe in his calls to Islamic

teachings. Russian propaganda painted a highly negative portrait of Sheikh Mansur, since the Russian authorities considered him to be very dangerous. In mid-1785, Russian Colonel Pieri, commanding a large Russian force, was sent to Chechnya by the Russian tsar to capture Sheikh Mansur. Pieri's unsuccessful attempt marked the starting point of the declaration of the holy war against the Russian empire by Sheikh Mansur (Baddeley, 1908).

In 1785, Sheikh Mansur destroyed Russian forces at the Battle of the Sunja River. Historical documents show that Russian Colonel Pieri and more than six hundred Russians were killed in this battle (Smith, 1998). Sheikh Mansur rallied resistance fighters from Dagestan through Kabarda. Most of the forces were Dagestani and Chechen, and numbered more than 12,000 by December 1785. However, Mansur suffered a defeat when he tried to enter Russian territory and failed to capture the Kizlyar fort (Baddeley, 1908; Fowkes, 1998). He subsequently lost the battle of Kabarda. After this attack, the Russians refortified their settlements, but Catherine the Great withdrew her forces from Georgia, with a new base at the Terek River line. In 1786, she abandoned the new fort of Vladikavkaz, which would not be occupied again by Russians until 1803. From 1787–91, during the Russian-Turkish War, Sheikh Mansur moved to the northwestern Caucasus region of Adygei, strengthening the Islamic traditions there. He led the Adygei and Nogay peoples in assaults against the Russians, but they were defeated many times (Gammer, 2006). In June 1791, he was captured at the Turkish fortress of Anapa on the Black Sea (Lieven, 1998). He was brought to St. Petersburg and sentenced to life imprisonment. Sheikh Mansur died in prison in 1794, and became a legend and hero of the Chechen people. He is considered the father of the Chechen

liberation movement and his struggle legacy inspire the political unification of the people of the North Caucasus (Ahmadov, 1991).

The Great *Gazavat*, (1829–59)

General Yermolov, Russia's most merciless commander in the Caucasus, achieved significant successes in the North Caucasus (Gammer, 1996b). His military success meant physical and spiritual failure for the mountain people. The new tsar, Nicolas I, ordered his commander-in-chief in the Caucasus to tame forever the mountain peoples or to exterminate them decisively. Faced with imminent danger from Russia, the religious leadership of the mountaineers declared Ghazi Muhammad to be the new imam. He in turn declared a holy war on the Russian empire. This was the beginning of the second *Gazavat* (Gammer, 2006).

Russia consolidated its rule over the Caucasus under the leadership of Prince Bariatinskii who respected and tolerated the Caucasus nationalities. Prince Bariatinskii's belief in Russia's role as a Christian power was also associated with the belief of its religious civilizing mission (Mostashari, 2006). He thought that founding a religious society in the region to spread Christianity would be an effective vehicle to counter Muridism in the Caucasus (Mostashari, 2006). His proposal to found the "Brotherhood for Resurrecting the Holy Cross" to construct churches in the Caucasus to operate under the guidelines of the Gregorian church was not approved by the tsar because he did not find it culturally appropriate. Moreover, the tsar thought that such an action might alienate the Orthodox Church (Mostashari, 2006).

The fame of Imam Ghazi Muhammad (also known as Ghazi Mulla) rapidly spread throughout the Caucasus. People such as Kumyks, Kara Nogays, Karabulaks, the Kabartay, and the Ingush joined his army from various parts of the Caucasus. He established new strategies, tactics, policies, and practices that were used by his successors. He was successful in uniting all the mountain people in a long, total struggle against the Russian empire (Baddeley, 1908). Ghazi Muhammad also attempted to accustom his people to long maneuvers beyond their home territories, and he introduced a number of new military tactics (Wood, 2007). For the first time these people began to deliberately misinform the Russians by spreading false rumors while keeping their intentions secret (Gammer, 2006). Ghazi Muhammad advised his people to abandon their large villages and scatter among many small villages in the midst of the forests. All these measures increased the people's ability to fight, resist, and organize for a popular war (Gammer, 2006).

The Russians started a total assault in the summer of 1832 with 20,000 troops commanded by General Rosen and General Veliaminov (Gammer, 2006). The Russian soldiers systematically looted and destroyed eight villages and their fields in Chechnya, from which point they crossed to Dagestan (Gammer, 2006). In 1832, the Russian forces stormed Ghazi Muhammad's fortified position near Gimry, his native village, trapping him in one of the houses. The Imam and fifty of his people resisted to the last (Wood, 2007). However, Russian hopes that the death of Ghazi Muhammad would put an end to his movement were dashed by subsequent events. Soon after Ghazi Muhammad's death Hamzat Bek was proclaimed as the new imam (Wood, 2007). He reigned until September 1834 when he was assassinated (Gammer, 1996b). After Hamzat Bek's death, Shamil the

Avar was proclaimed as the third imam in Ashilta, Dagestan (Gammer, 1996a; Smith, 1998). He led the resistance movement for the next twenty-five years, bringing it to the peak of its success (Gammer, 2006).

The Russians organized punitive raids of Chechen villages, burning houses, seizing goats, and capturing men and women as prisoners. Vachagayev describes one of those raids as follows:

About 1,200 regular troops were poised against the village of Kishkeroy composed of several dozen houses. During the day of December 27, 1835 Pullo [the commander of the Sunja Line since 1834] failed to conquer the small village. Many locked themselves in with their families... [Pullo reported]. In two adjacent houses four Chechens with two women and three little children held on during the entire day and night... and had to be smoked out by throwing burning hay and firewood through the chimneys. When the house was on fire two of them... jumped headlong through the doors ... and were bayoneted to death. Two... were found burnt. The women and children were saved by our soldiers. In this battle forty people were taken prisoner: two men (both wounded) and eighteen girls, aged one to fourteen. The rest of the population were slaughtered (Vachagayev, 1995:109).

Imam Shamil moved from Dagestan to Chechnya in 1839 after being targeted by two major Russian military campaigns. Meanwhile the Russians considered him totally incapacitated in terms of organizing new military campaigns against the tsar's troops. However, in Chechnya he gained new popularity and became the Chechens' leader (Gall & Waal, 1998). Shamil threatened the enemy in all directions, always keeping them on the move. He introduced a new mode of operations based on avoiding pitched battles with Russian forces. To crush the Chechen resistance with one blow became impossible for the Russians (Gall & Waal, 1998). They marched throughout Chechnya, facing heavy losses with no end results. Imam Shamil's military successes over the Russian forces

forced Nicolas I to change Russian strategy in the Caucasus (Mostashari, 2006). His new commander-in-chief in the Caucasus, Vorontsov, offered a revival of Yermolov's system of siege and attrition. Hence, two new defense lines—the Upper Sunja Line and the Advanced Chechen Line—were established in the mid-1840s (Gammer, 2006). The construction of these new lines resulted in the cutting down of forests to use the wood as raw materials to build fortresses that strengthened Russia's control over the heartland of Chechnya (Blanch, 2004). The Russians also became aware of Chechnya's centrality in Shamil's struggle because it was the main source of soldiers and revenue that the defense movement needed. The Chechen villages were subject to destruction by the Russians as part of the new policy (Blanch, 2004).

The intention of the Russians was to force the Chechens either to migrate into the mountains or to submit. Initially, the Chechen peoples had built the villages that the Russians razed to the ground, which became increasingly difficult for them to rebuild as time went on. As a result, by 1848 three thousand Chechen families submitted to the Russians and were resettled near new Russian forts while the majority of the people migrated into the mountains (Gammer, 1996b). By the end of 1850, the plain of Lesser Chechnya was totally under Russian control, and by early 1853, the Russians started to gain control over the plain of Greater Chechnya. This caused a food shortage for all the domains of Shamil, as well as bringing the Russians closer to Dagestan's backdoor (Blanch, 2004).

Shamil and his people had always hoped for assistance from the Ottoman empire, but it never came because of the military and economic weakness of the Turks. While

struggling with the Russian troops, Shamil appealed for help to Britain's Queen Victoria.

One of his letters outlined his request as follows:

For years, Oh honored Queen, we have been at war against Russia, our invader. Every year we must defend ourselves against the invader's fresh armies which pour into our valleys. Our resistance is stubborn, altogether we are obliged, in winter to send our wives and children far away, to seek safety in the forests, where they have nothing, no food, no refuge against the severe cold. Yet we are resigned. It is Allah's will. ... We beseech you, we urge you, Oh Queen, to bring us aid (Smith, 1998:50).

The answer Shamil wanted never came (Gall & Waal, 1998). However, the start of the Crimean War in 1853 between the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire was a great opportunity for the Chechens to restore their capacity and capabilities (Gammer, 2006). The Chechens renewed their hopes for Ottoman assistance. However, the news of the Paris Peace Treaty that officially ended the Crimean war made the mountaineers lose any hope for a better future (Henze, 1996). They were disappointed that the Sultan, even with French and the English assistance, could not defeat Russia. Tired by decades of constant fighting, suffering, and being on the run, the mountain peoples started to consider the option of surrendering to the Russians. Shamil had lost popularity among them (Henze, 1996). Delegations from almost all the mountain tribes gathered to see the Imam to demand he conclude the war with Russia. The people's demand was so strong that Shamil could do nothing but ask for a delay of two months to evaluate the overall situation. Nevertheless, this historical moment was wasted by the Russians as they decided to transfer the mountain people to Vologda province and some other parts of Russia that had been depopulated. The people stated that they would never part with their

homeland, whatever the cost, and the rebellious mood of the early 1840s returned (Gammer, 2006; Gall & Waal, 1998).

The Russian forces deployed in the Caucasus during the Crimean war numbered about 200,000. With the end of the Crimean War the tsar decided to launch a massive assault, putting all of his available troops in the Caucasus against the mountain people to defeat Shamil decisively and conquer both Chechnya and Dagestan (Henze, 1996). From 1857–59, the Russians earned some important military successes by controlling the plain of Greater Chechnya and Shamil's residence in New Dargo. After losing Chechnya's control, Shamil could not resist the Russians long and he was forced to submit to Prince Bariatskii on September 6, 1859 (Smith, 1998).

Shamil and his family's future were strange and full of controversies. He made friends with Tsar Alexander II, who allowed him to carry out a pilgrimage to Mecca after a few years of exile in Kaluga. One of his sons later became a Turkish general, and another son became a Russian general. One of his grandsons returned to the Caucasus and fought against the Russians during the 1920s (Smith, 1998).

Some of my study respondents accused Imam Shamil of surrendering to the Russians without resisting. They accentuated that the Chechen nature is not compatible with submission, and the submission of Shamil (who was an ethnic Avar) was a sign of weakness and treason. Other research participants, however, objected to these interpretations, stressing that Shamil did not surrender to the Russians himself but he was deceived and captured by the Russians, and it was the Russians who deliberately depicted his surrender publicly to humiliate him. Oruj Osman claimed that:

When Shamil approached the Russian officers for talks, the Russian

soldiers brought him down by throwing wet *shinels* and *bushlats* (heavy military coats) on him. The Russians did not obey the rules of talks.

When I asked him where he got this version of the story, he referred me to the oral stories passed down from generation to generation in the region.

According to another version of Shamil's surrender by Dr. Lasha Tchantouridze, he preferred to surrender to a Georgian prince, David Chavchavadze, rather than surrender to ethnic Russians. Later, he was turned over to the Russians as a captive but not as a warrior and hero. By carrying out this strategy, the Imam saved his honor and reputation.²

Yet, according to others, Shamil's surrender happened only after a dramatic change in Russia's Caucasus policy. The Russian authorities finally realized the futility of Yermolov's terrorist strategy and they offered very comfortable terms to Shamil and his cohort to end the hostilities. Shamil then agreed to end the resistance. In St. Petersburg, Shamil was treated in a good manner, and in the Caucasus, many of his local representatives received high positions in Russia's colonial administration (Derluguian, 2007).

It is also argued that the Chechens have been unable to unite under an (ethnic) Chechen leader bounded by family ties and clan connections and, in this sense Imam Shamil was a perfect fit (Smith, 1998). His ability to unite all Chechens and Dagestanis and enforce Islamic rules caused great changes to the people and the region (Smith, 1998).

In sum, there were a number of causes of Shamil's submission: (1) the Russians bribed some of the mountain peoples; (2) two successive years of drought caused hunger

in the region; (3) people got tired of fighting for about thirty years under Shamil's leadership; (4) the Russians increased resources for the Caucasian war significantly; (5) the Russians changed their strategies significantly to fit to the circumstances; and (6) the mountain people lost hope of getting help from the Ottoman Empire (Gammer, 1994:290-91).

The Lesser *Gazavat*

In 1860, the Russian authorities separated Chechnya from Dagestan and this separation endured during the tsarist and Soviet eras (Gall & Wall, 1998). Chechnya was included into the Terek oblast and it was divided into four subdistricts—the Chechen, the Argun, the Mountain, and the Ichkeri *okrugs*—(*okrug* is an administrative division in Russia). Some of the Chechen territories were included with the Kumyks in the Kasav Yurt *okrug* to be annexed by the Soviets to Dagestan. Two other Chechen *okrugs*—the Osset and Ingush—became territorial bases for the autonomous republics of North Ossetia and Kabardino-Balkaria (Gammer, 2006). Many Chechens were left without sufficient lands to take care of their people. The authorities confiscated land from the local people, allocating it to certain princely families and new Cossack *stanitsas*. The Chechens were also forced by the Russians to resettle in the lowlands and even in the Cossack *stanitsas*. Unhappiness among the Chechen peoples rose gradually, eventually culminating in uprisings against Russia.

Shamil's surrender put an end to the organized struggle of the mountain people against the Russians (Blanch, 2004). However, it did not mark their complete pacification. The Russian means of administration had driven the people of Chechnya

and Dagestan to the verge of uprisings. The most remarkable uprisings in Dagestan occurred from October 1860 to August 1861, as well as in 1863 and 1866. In Chechnya, however, the first insurrection led by Baysungur took place in May 1860 in Benoy, the Ichkeri *okrug*. The Chechens started guerrilla attacks on the Russians. It became very difficult for the Russians and Cossacks to defeat Baysungur and his people. Nevertheless, he was captured in March 1861 and executed that spring (Usmanov, 1997).

Another rebellion occurred in June 1860 in the community of Shatoy led by Atabay Atayev and Uma Duyevev whose forces besieged the Russian forts of Shatoevskoe, Bashin-Kala, and Evdokimovskoe. The Russian general Bazhenov, leading a force of five thousand Russian soldiers armed with mountain cannons relieved the forts but failed to destroy the rebels who disappeared into the forests (Aydamirov, 1991). General Bazhenov destroyed fourteen *auls* (villages) and moved their population to the lowlands. A few months later the rebels, supported by the communities of Chanti, Chamalal, and Chaberloy, once again besieged Shatoevskoe. Colonel Tumanov tried to mobilize the local militiamen to fight against the rebels, but they all deserted to join the rebels (Aydamirov, 1991).

The Russian authorities ordered three Russian forces to unite in the rebellious area. Bazhenov commanded 5000 troops, Kundukhov controlled 1000 Cossacks and militiamen, and Tumanov led about 3000 infantry (Gammer, 2006). They unified their forces to suppress the rebels. They were ordered to destroy the *auls*, fields, and food storages, and to resettle the captured population in the lowlands. The Russian forces carried out the order but did not put an end to the rebellion until November 1861 when,

having lost their power significantly, both Atabay and Uma surrendered to them (Gammer, 2006).

In 1860, Terek Province was created. It included Chechnya, Ingushetia, and the northern part of Ossetia (Gall & Waal, 1998). In that same year, the Russian authorities adopted a new policy of enlisting Chechens into *ad hoc* militias as well as permanent irregular units. In this way, the Chechens would be used against rebels. On October 15, 1860, the Terek Cavalry Regiment was formed (Gammer, 2006). Chechens seldom fight other Chechens. However, this act was of great political and practical importance. A significant part of the most warlike elements from the reservoir of Chechen rebels was removed. In 1863, it was suggested that this regiment be used against Polish rebels. A very similar situation took place when Russian troops started to invade Georgia in 2008 (Cornell & Starr, 2009).³

Although there were numerous uprisings among the mountain people against the Russians, the most remarkable event happened in 1877 (Green, 2000). The Russian authorities' propaganda explained away the revolt with the Russo-Ottoman war that officially started on April 24, 1877, thus ignoring the other objective reasons for the Chechens' rebellion. The rebels' leader, Albik (or Ali-Bek) Hajji, was elected as the new Imam and his *naibs* (deputies) were nominated to all of the provinces. Albik Hajji's forces grew rapidly, and the revolt engulfed forty-seven *auls* within a few months (Gammer, 2006; Usmanov, 1997). The Russians deployed new forces in the region to try to block the movement from spreading all across Chechnya. On May 3 1877, Russian and rebel forces clashed near Mayrtup. Using heavy artillery the Russians managed to dispel the forces of the Imam. Albik Hajji's forces attacked Shali on May 5. The Russian

commander made every effort to keep Shali in submission, threatening local Chechens that he would not leave a stone unturned in destroying them (Gammer, 2006).

Albik Hajji and his people were a nightmare for the Russians (Dunlop, 1998). However, the Russians were determined to suppress the rebellion by any means possible. The Russian forces, reinforced with new units, started sweeping the region (Avtorkhanov, 1996). In November 1877, central Dagestan was under the control of the Russians who surrounded Sogratl where Albik Hajji and the Chechens accompanying him were hiding. They were able to slip away before the Russian troops took control of the *aul* and went back to the Samsir forests. In December 1877, people who Albik Hajji trusted informed him that he would be pardoned if he surrendered to the Russian forces (Gammer, 2006). Believing the Russian promises, he came before the commander of Vedenov who immediately arrested him. Soon his *naibs* (deputies) also were arrested. They were prosecuted in March 1878, and most of them, including Albik Hajji, Uma Hajji, Dada Umayev, and Dada Zalmayev, were executed (Gammer, 2006; Gall & Waal, 1998). About 40 percent of the population of Chechnya, an estimated 200,000+ people, were killed by the tsarist troops (Margolis, 2010).

More importantly, Russian punishments were not limited to the leaders. They penalized the families accused of financially supporting the rebellion and sent individual suspects into exile in Siberia. In some cases entire villages were moved to inner Russia and their lands were confiscated and granted to the Cossacks and natives who collaborated with the Russians (Ivanov, 1941a, 1941b).

The mountain people in exile started to die. In Novgorod *guberniya*, for example, 429 out of 1,625 Chechens died within a few months of their exile (Leitzinger, 1997).

This event caused the government to reconsider its mass deportation policy. When Alexander III came to power in 1881, the exiles were pardoned and allowed to return to their homeland. Those who emigrated to the Ottoman Empire never returned to their lands (Leitzinger, 1997).

The Last *Gazavat*

The last *gazavat* started with the Russian “February Revolution” in 1917, after which the tsar resigned in the wake of the October Revolution. Immediately after his demise the viceroyalty of the Caucasus was replaced by a civilian administration through the establishment of a ‘Terek-Daghestan Government’ (Fowkes, 1998). A Civilian Executive Committee was established in the Terek *oblast*. Such bodies as the Cossack Host Provisional Government, the Civilian Executive Committee of Grozny, and the Council of Workers, Peasants and Soldiers challenged the Civilian Executive Committee’s authority. However, the main struggle was between the Chechens and Cossacks based on the land issue (Broxup, 1996).

On March 27, 1917, the Chechens held a Congress in Grozny where they elected the Chechen Council. Tapa Chermoyev, the Chechen oil magnate, was elected as chairman (Fowkes, 1998). The Ingush also established an Ingush National Council led by Vasan Girey Jabaghi. Another Chechen National Council was elected on May 12 with Ahmethan Mutushev as chairperson.⁴ The First All-Mountain Congress took place in Vladikavkaz from May 14 to 23, 1917 when attempts were made to unite all the mountain people. The Congress decided to establish the Alliance of the United Mountaineers of the Northern Caucasus as a self-governing body (Marshall, 2010). The

Congress also elected a Central Committee and approved the constitution of the alliance. Most of the alliance leaders were Russian-educated mountaineers—*intelligentsia* who envisioned a Western type of secular democracy (Broxup, 1996). However, without getting support from the Islamic religious leaders they were not able to succeed. The Islamic leaders, on the other hand, raised the question of enforcing the *shariat* over life in the region as well as establishing a Terek Muftiate (Broxup, 1996). The *intelligentsia* was against these things, but the Islamic leaders managed to get the matter onto the agenda of the First All-Mountain Congress where Najm al-Din was heralded as Mufti of the all North Caucasus. Then he proclaimed himself as Imam but the Second All-Mountain Congress did not approve his appointment (Broxup, 1996).

After the 1917 October Revolution, the new regime issued a “Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia,” which recognized the rights of peoples living in Russia to self-determination and secession (Sakwa, 1999). However, the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty signed by the Bolshevik government and the Central Powers provided the Soviets much-needed time and opportunity to consolidate their power in Russia (Marshall, 2010).

In the Terek oblast, the Bolsheviks held two Congresses of the Peoples of the Terek oblast in February and March of 1918. The Second Congress established the Terek Republic led by the Communist Party, which was renamed as the Terek People’s Republic on May 4, 1918 and declared an integral part of the Russian Federation (Marshall, 2009).

The Chechen National Council had a strong anti-Bolshevik stand. The new developments in the region necessitated that elections be held. On January 28, 1918, a council (*majlis*) was elected that chose Ahmethan Mutushev as its head (Gammer, 2006).

He resigned in a short time and was replaced by Ibrahim Chulikov. In response to his resignation, the Goyti National Soviet was established in Goyti with Tashtemir Eldarkhanov elected as its head (Avtorkhanov, 1996). Thus, Chechnya was split between two councils—one pro-Soviet and the other pro-South-Eastern Alliance (Dunlop, 1998).

From the 1890s to 1910, many Slavic peasants moved into the region. They were landless and rented land from the Cossack landlords (Dunlop, 1998). When in July 1918 the Terek government published a decree about redistributing the land, the unhappy land-rich Cossacks attacked and sacked Vladikavkaz where the landless Chechens and Ingush delivered shattering blows against the Cossacks (Gammer, 2006). In fact, it was the Chechens and Ingush who saved Soviet power in the region. Consequently, the Cossacks were punished by the Soviet authorities and *en masse* were sent into exile in April 1920.⁵ Their land was distributed among the Chechen and Ingush people. With the introduction of this policy the Bolsheviks gained enormous popularity among the mountain people (Avtorkhanov, 1996).

When the Ottoman army arrived in the Caucasus in March 1918, the mountain peoples' hopes for independence revived (Avtorkhanov, 1996). In April 1918, the Alliance of the United Mountaineers of the Northern Caucasus (AUMNC) declared the Independent Democratic Republic of Mountaineers of the Northern Caucasus. Its territory included the three oblasts of Dagestan, Terek, and Kuban, and the two *gubernii*s (Russian administrative territory) of the Black Sea and Stavropol that was divided into seven units—Abkhazia, Adygeia, Karachai-Balkaria, Kabarda, Ossetia, Chechnya, Ingushetia, and Dagestan (Dunlop, 1998). The new government controlled only a small portion of this territory. The military force of the Mountain Republic

consisted of two Dagestan mounted regiments established by tsarist authorities to conquer the region and some elements of the “Wild Division.” Ottoman military assistance was, therefore, essential for the Mountain Republic in case of a military clash with the Red Army (Avtorkhanov, 1996).

However, the Ottoman presence in the Caucasus was too short in length to bring any change in terms of the balance of power (Fowkes, 1998). In late October 1918, the Ottoman Empire surrendered to the Triple Entente and the United States in the Armistice of Mudros (Helmreich, 1974). Since the British demanded full Ottoman withdrawal from the Caucasus, the Ottoman units went back to Anatolia in November 1918 (Browup, 1996). However, the British presence in the Caucasus was too short-lived to bring about any real political change. The real change came with the arrival of Anton Denikin’s White Army (*Dobrarimiya* [Volunteer Army]) to the Northern Caucasus. In November and December 1918, Denikin’s army defeated the Red Army, and in February 1919 it occupied Vladikavkaz and Grozny, thus abolishing the Terek People’s Republic (Wood, 2007). Refusing to recognize any independent state in the Caucasus, Denikin’s forces occupied Dagestan in April 1919 and put an official end to the Mountain Republic (Lehovich, 1974).

The mountain people faced a dilemma. They had to cooperate with either the Bolsheviks or with the *Dobrarimiya* (Dunlop, 1998). Sheikh Najm al-Din, the Chechen leader, regarded the Bolsheviks as the greater danger, but the overwhelming Chechen majority saw the Bolsheviks as less dangerous. The Bolshevik leaders Sergo Ordzhonikidze and Sergei Kirov managed to forge an alliance with the Chechen leaders by agreeing that the Soviet authority would recognize the *shariat* as the basis of future

Chechen autonomy within the Soviet state. Those who rejected any outside rule agreed only on cooperation against the *Dobrarimiya* (Gammer, 2006).

In September 1919, the eighty-nine-year-old Chechen leader Uzun Haji proclaimed in Vedeno (Shamil's capital from 1845 to 1850) the establishment of the Emirate of the North Caucasus with himself as Imam and Emir, and called for *jihād* on the *Dobrarimiya* (Dunlop, 1998). The new power was based on an alliance of secular-nationalists and religious leaders who mistrusted the Bolsheviks. By the end of September, the White forces were expelled from the mountains. They remained only in Grozny. In February 1920, the 11th Red Army approached the North Caucasus from the north. The Chechen authorities accepted the Red Army's alliance against "the Whites" (Gall & Waal, 1998). The Bolsheviks, however, never left Chechnya again. Soon the Emirate was abolished by the Bolsheviks, and Uzun Haji, who played a decisive role in defeating the Whites, was offered the honorary title of Mufti of the Northern Caucasus (Dunlop, 1998). Uzun Haji died in May 1920 at the age of ninety, thus relieving both the Bolsheviks of having to honor his appointment, and himself to accept the Bolshevik offer (Gammer, 2006; Gall & Waal, 1998; Wood, 2007).

After about four months, the Chechens and mountain people of Dagestan rose up in arms again. The Red Army's arrogant and lawless behavior frustrated the local people who had perceived the army as a savior only a few months before. In August 1920, the situation was exacerbated. Sheikh Najm al-Din (or Najmuddin) al-Hutsi declared *jihād* (Dunlop, 1998). Sait, Imam Shamil's grandson, was invited to lead the struggle, and he accepted this call to arms. Soon the uprising engulfed the mountainous parts of Chechnya and Dagestan. The fighting was bloody and merciless. With the exception of two men,

the rebels, numbering about ten thousand, were all killed either during the fighting or after it (Broxup, 1992). The Red Army also lost ten thousand men (Broxup, 1992). The civilian casualties, however, are still unknown (Gammer, 2006).

On November 17, 1920, the Mountain Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic within the Russian Federation was established. Chechnya was part of the Mountain Republic, but on November 30, 1922, a separate Chechen autonomous oblast was created. A separate Dagestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic within the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic was established in 1921. The most important success of the Soviets in the region, however, was in mobilizing the support of Sufi Sheikhs (Dunlop, 1998).

In 1929, the Chechens, led by Shita Istamulovin, rebelled against the Soviet government (Dunlop, 1998). The peasants, who traditionally possessed weapons, resisted the state policies of collectivization (Poltkovskaya, 2007). Although an amnesty was granted in the early 1930s to those who were involved in bringing the conflict to an end, fourteen thousand Chechens and Ingush were arrested in 1937 during the repressive years. Most of them were executed (Gall & Waal, 1998). Moscow's deportation policies in 1944 represented a continuation of the initiatives of the 1930s (Burds, 2007). These repressive policies provoked another rebellion in 1939 led by Hasan Israilov, which was unsuccessful due to its limited scope. These rebellions constituted the initial pretext that was later associated with the alleged cooperation of Chechens with the Nazis that resulted in the Chechens' deportation in 1944 by Stalin to Siberia, Central Asia, and Kazakhstan (Siren, 1998).

Deportation of the Chechens in 1944

*It happened in Forty-Four
at four o'clock in the morning. At four
Chechnya was asleep,
unaware of its guilt.*

—Abdulla Saadulayev⁶

The tradition of deportation of the mountain people, especially Chechens, harks back to 1877 when the people of Dagestan and Chechnya were agitated on behalf of the Ottoman Empire that was warring with the Russian Empire (Dunlop, 1998). Mikhail Nikolaevich, the viceroy of the Caucasus from 1863 to 1881 and the fourth son of Nicholas I, deported an entire village of a thousand families to Siberia and inner Russian *gubernia* (Mostashari, 2006). Moreover, when the Kuba uprising took place in 1877, Mikhail Nikolaevich planned to exile entire villages to Siberia. But this became very problematic due to the possible spread of Muslim rebellion to the inner Russian *gubernia* where almost one-third of the population was Muslims (Mostashari, 2006). There were a number of other reasons that prevented deportations, such as scarcity of buildings, the inability of military commanders to control the exiled people, and the affluence of the Muslim population under surveillance. The ministry of internal affairs of Russia pleaded with the viceroy of the Caucasus to consider other methods of punishment for the rebels (Mostashari, 2006).

The *Chechevitsa*—the plan to deport the Chechens and other native populations of the Northern Caucasus to Central Asia—began without warning and was carried out from mid-February until mid-March 1944. Lavrentii Beria, the People's Commissar of

Internal Affairs, personally travelled to Grozny on February 20 to organize and supervise the operation (Burds, 2007).

In early 1944, about 460,000 Chechens were exiled to Siberia, Kazakhstan, and Central Asia (Gammer, 2006:166). In the operation, about one hundred thousand troops of *Narodniy Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del* (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs [NKVD]), and nineteen thousand special workers of the NKVD, the *Narodniy Komissariat Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* (People's Commissariat for State Security [NKGB]) and *Smert Shpionam* (Death to Spies [SMERSH]) were concentrated in the republic to carry out the deportation (Flemming, 1998:72).

People were brought to the railway stations in the cold February morning to be packed into cargo wagons. The number of carriages was reduced sharply because it was possible to pack the deportees in very tightly (Gall & Waal, 1998). The old and sick people who slowed down the operation were either killed or left to starve unattended (Gammer, 2006). In some cases, because of heavy snow and the lack of roads, the entire population of villages that could not be moved were shot (Gammer, 2006). In the early 1990s an association was formed in Chechnya to exhume and bury the remains of seven hundred people killed by the NKVD, NKGB, and SMERSH at Khaibakh aul in 1944 (Williams, 2000).

General Mikhail Gvishiani of the NKVD was especially merciless to the local people. He had ordered mass killings in the entire region. In some cases, the people were burnt alive in stables. The NKVD commissar Ivan Serov was one of those who had authorized the killings (Gall & Waal, 1998).

By February 29, 1944, 478,479 people were loaded and transported in railway carts. In total, one hundred eighty trains were used, 2,016 people were arrested, and 20,072 weapons were confiscated (Nezamisimaya Gazeta, 2000). A document from Stalin's archive reports the operation as follows:

State Defense Committee,

To comrade Stalin

March 1 1944

(I am) reporting about the results of the exile of the Chechens and Ingush. The process of the exile started on February 23 in the majority of districts except for the ones located in the high mountains. As of February 29, 478,479 people, including 91,250 Ingush, have been loaded in the wagons. Altogether 180 trains have been loaded, and 159 of them have already been sent to the places of new settlement. The trains with former Chechen-Ingush administrative workers and religious authorities who were used to carry out the operation left today.

In some places of the Galanchoj district 6,000 were Chechens left due to the heavy snow and lack of roads. They will be exiled in 2 days. The operation had been organized well and without serious events of resistance and other incidents.

... The forest districts are also being swept, where a *garnizon* of NKVD troops and *opergruppa* of *chekists* is temporarily kept. During the time of preparations for the operations and their performance 2,016 Chechens and Ingush anti-Soviet elements have been arrested, and 20,072 fire arms were confiscated, including 4,868 rifles and 479 sub-machine-guns.

-L. Beria

(Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 2000.02.29).

On March 7, 1944, the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) was abolished, and the administrative boundaries were redrawn. Instead, a Grozny *okrug* within Stavropol *Kray* was created. Some territories of the former Chechen-Ingush ASSR were attached to the neighboring republics and on March 22, 1944, Grozny oblast was formed (Gammer, 2006).

The train journey took about twenty days during which time many weak and old people were unable to survive the hard conditions. Men and women were overcrowded in

the carriages without any washrooms, which is regarded as a terrible humiliation in Chechen society (Gall & Waal, 1998). Epidemics and starvation, coupled with cold and anxiety, devastated the people. The fact that the deportees were given less than an hour to leave their homes and were allowed to take a maximum of 20 kg per household explains the situation well. The first years of resettlement were hard to survive as well. The living conditions were so poor that thousands died of hunger and cold in their makeshift homes (Gall & Waal, 1998). According to Chechen sources, about 60–65 percent of the deported people died in exile (Aytbayev, 1996).

The deported Chechens were mostly placed in special settlements. In some cases, however, they were added to the existing *kolkhozes* (collective farms). The new settlers had to stay within the limits of their farms and they had to report to the special authorities once a month, a condition that deprived them of visiting their family members who lived in other places (Gammer, 2006). Nevertheless, many violated this rule in order to stay in touch with other family members, which made the authorities issue a decree that any unauthorized exit of the specified area would be punished with 20 years' hard labor (Nezamisimaya Gazeta, 2000).

At the 20th Communist party congress in February 1956, Khrushchev criticized the policy of mass deportation, identifying it as a violation of the basic Leninist principles of the nationality policy of the Soviet Union (German, 2003). He added that those people should be re-granted their national autonomy. On January 9, 1957, a decree was issued by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR concerning the restoration of several autonomies including the Chechen-Ingush ASSR, which officially allowed the Chechens to return to their homeland (Wood, 2007). By the beginning of 1958, about three hundred forty

thousand exiles returned to their homes. By the end of 1958, almost all the exiles had come home to their republic. However, they were now to face new problems at home because the land they left had not remained empty (Gall & Waal, 1998).

After the deportation of the Chechen and Ingush people, new settlers were brought in from different parts of the USSR (Williams, 2000). When the Chechens were repatriated in the late 1950s, new conflicts developed over properties (Wood, 2007). In many cases, the new settlers refused the claims of the Chechens to their ancestral homes. The local authorities were also against the repatriation of the Chechens and Ingush, encouraging the colonists to remain in “their” homes (Nekrich, 1978). The conflict between the Chechens and colonists culminated in riots in Grozny between August 24 and 27, 1958 (Nekrich, 1978). On August 23, a fight between a Russian and a Chechen resulted in the murder of the Russian by the Chechen. Three days after the funeral, a crowd of thousands marched on the central square where they occupied the Communist Party headquarters, demanding the intervention of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Moscow. They also occupied the railway station, blocking the routes of the returning Chechens and Ingush to their homeland (Nekrich, 1978). Moreover, they demanded that the Communist Party of the USSR remove the autonomy of the Chechens and Ingush and rename the Chechen-Ingush ASSR, restricting the number of Chechen and Ingush people living in Grozny to 10 percent of the entire population of the city (Kozlov, 2002:106). To regain control of the city and to suppress the riots, army units had to be deployed. However, it was the Chechen and Ingush peoples who finally won. Within a few months the majority of the colonists left Chechnya, while others remained in the republic.

However, many of the returning mountain people did not have their homes and villages returned to them. Instead, most of them settled in the places where the authorities indicated they should reside. Although the Chechen-Ingush ASSR was restored in 1957, some parts of it were not returned to the republic. Prigorodniy district remained part of the North Ossetia ASSR and its doors were closed to its former Ingush inhabitants, which remained as a latent conflict until the early 1990s when it erupted into an armed struggle between the Ingush and the Ossets (Tishkov, 1997).

The policy of Russification of the Chechens started during the 1930s with the introduction of the Cyrillic alphabet into the schools (Dunlop, 1998). Both during and after the exile, Chechen children were taught in Russian. Chechen literature was taught through Russian translation, while Chechen was introduced into the curriculum as a foreign language. Even though there have been newspapers and books published in the Chechen language, as well as a national theater performing in the native language, national schools in Chechen have been absent from the education system (Gammer, 2006).

Chechnya in the 1990s

With the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Russian Federation faced the danger of disintegration, since some of its constituent republics had a desire for independence. In March 1992, representatives of all but two of the republics (Chechnya and Tatarstan) and most of the smaller ethnic jurisdictions signed the Federation Treaty, which was an attempt to forestall further separatism and define the respective jurisdictions of the central

and regional governments (Seely, 2001). However, the treaty failed to resolve differences in the key areas of taxation and control over natural resources.

Chechnya and Tatarstan refused to sign the 1992 Federation Treaty (Hughes, 2007). The political situation in Tatarstan presented even greater danger to the national unity of the Russian Federation than Chechnya (Seely, 2001). In the spring of 1994, President Yeltsin signed a special political accord with the president of Tatarstan, granting many of the Tatar demands for greater autonomy. At the same time he declined to carry out serious negotiations with Chechnya, allowing the situation to deteriorate into full-scale war at the end of 1994 (Mikhailov, 2005). In the first half of 1996, Chechnya continued to pose the biggest obstacle to the quelling of separatism among the ethnoterritorial components of the Russian Federation. Moreover, Chechnya's reputation in Russia as a center of organized crime and corrupt business practices was part of Russia's propaganda campaign to justify military action against this republic (Lieven, 1998).

In September 1991, the government of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic resigned under pressure from the pro-independence Congress of the Chechen People, whose leader was former Soviet general Johar Dudayev. On October 27, presidential and parliamentary elections were held in Chechnya, in which Dudayev won overwhelming popular support (about 90 percent) to oust the interim, central government-supported administration and make himself president (Gammer, 2006). Dudayev then issued a unilateral declaration of independence. On November 8, 1991, President Yeltsin declared a state of emergency in Chechnya and dispatched troops to Grozny, but they were withdrawn when Dudayev's forces prevented them from leaving the airport in Grozny

(Lieven, 1998). Three days later, on November 11, Mikhail Gorbachev, still president of the Soviet Union, annulled the state of emergency in Chechnya. By mid-1992, all former Soviet troops left Chechnya, leaving a significant part of their weapons and equipment behind to the Chechens (Lieven, 1998).

In February 1994, Tatarstan signed a treaty with the Russian Federation that granted it the highest degree of autonomy within the Federation (Hughes, 2007). This action marked a pivotal point in Russian-Chechen negotiations, since it could have potentially signaled the creation of a similar proposal for Chechnya (Hughes, 2007). However, the negotiations came to an impasse and ended without reaching a satisfactory conclusion. Although the conflict between Yeltsin and Dudayev's clashing personalities was one of the main reasons for the failure to reach a compromise (Gammer, 2006), the most important incompatibility was over the issue of the territorial integrity of Russia (German, 2003). The Russian demand was for Chechnya to recognize that it was a constituent part of the Russian Federation, and to take the treaty between Russia and Tatarstan as a basis for the negotiations. The Chechen leadership, however, announced that Chechnya's sovereignty was non-negotiable. Dudayev's uncompromising position has been the subject of severe criticism (See, for example, German, 2003; Gammer, 2006). According to some leaders of the Chechen struggle who were interviewed for this study, Dudayev's initial intention was to follow the Tatar path. However, he was publicly provoked by Akhmad Kadyrov, a would-be Chechen mufti, and later the pro-Russian President of Chechnya. Nevertheless, Russia's sincere intent to create a political resolution of the conflict is also doubtful (German, 2003; Hughes, 2007).

The Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic split in two in June 1992 (Kommersant, 2004). After Chechnya had announced its initial declaration of sovereignty in 1991, Ingushetia declared its continuing union with the Russian Federation. Chechnya declared full independence in 1993. In August 1994, when an opposition faction launched an armed campaign to topple Dudayev's government, Moscow supplied the rebel forces with military equipment, and Russian aircraft began to bomb Grozny (Seely, 2001). In December, five days after Dudayev and Pavel Grachev, Russia's Minister of Defense, had agreed to avoid further use of force, Russian troops invaded Chechnya (German, 2003).

However, the Russian government's expectations of a quick surgical strike, followed by Chechen capitulation, were misguided. As the war was reported to the Russian public on television and in newspaper accounts, the rising protests from Russia's independent news media and various political and civil society groups soon came to threaten Russia's democratic experiment. Chechnya was one of the most challenging impediments before Yeltsin during the 1996 presidential election campaign (Seely, 2001).

In January 1996, the destruction of the Dagestani border village of Pervomayskoye by Russian forces in reaction to Chechen hostage-taking brought strong criticism from the hitherto loyal Republic of Dagestan and escalated domestic dissatisfaction (Knezys & Sedlickas, 1999; Lieven, 1998). Chechnya's declaration that it was waging a *jihad* (holy war) against Russia, also raised the specter that Muslim "volunteers" from other regions and even outside Russia would enter the battlefield. However, Russia feared that a move to end the war short of victory would create a

cascade of secession attempts by other ethnic minorities and present a new target to extreme nationalist Russian factions (German, 2003; Gall & Waal, 1998).

Meanwhile, the war in Chechnya spawned a new form of separatist activity in the Russian Federation (Wood, 2007). Resistance to the conscription of men from minority ethnic groups to fight in Chechnya was widespread among other republics, many of whom passed laws and decrees on the subject. For example, the government of Chuvashia passed a decree providing legal protection to soldiers from the republic that refused to participate in the Chechnya war, imposing limits on the use of the Russian army in ethnic or regional conflicts within Russia.⁷ Some regional and local legislative bodies called for a prohibition on the use of draftees in quelling internal uprisings; others demanded a total ban on the use of the armed forces in domestic conflicts (Wood, 2007).

In late 1994, the conflict had developed into overt aggression. The Kremlin either did not possess any means to transform the conflict peacefully or did not believe in the force of political negotiations. At the very least, Moscow's intention was to use brutal force to save Russia's national unity and territorial integrity. This was clear when the head of the Russian presidential administration, Sergei Filatov, expressed the idea that peaceful means to settle the Chechen conflict could no longer be useful (German, 2003). Moscow did not use the regular army forces of the Ministry of Defense in Chechnya; rather it deployed troops of the Ministry of Interior Defense in the autonomous republic. The Russian authorities intended to demonstrate that the conflict was Russia's internal issue and that it had a legal right to keep order in its homeland (Gall & Waal, 1998).

Meanwhile, Moscow started to support anti-Dudayev opposition in Chechnya to weaken the power of Chechnya's president. The armed formations of opposition leaders

Labazanov and Gantemirov seized Grozny's airport in October 1994 (German, 2003). The federal leadership supplied the opposition in Chechnya with helicopter gunships and fighter jets (German, 2003). Encouraged by Moscow's support, the opposition forces stormed Grozny on October 15, 1994, taking control of a significant part of the city, but soon left it unexpectedly (Seely, 2001). This was a historic moment in which to start political negotiations with the Chechen leadership (Seely, 2001; Hughes, 2007). However, at that point Yeltsin's concern was more with Khasbulatov, the former speaker of the Federal Parliament and once Yeltsin's most dangerous Chechen rival in Moscow, than with Dudayev, the Chechen president (Seely, 2001). Khasbulatov's increasing popularity as a powerful opposition leader in Chechnya might bring him to power if Dudayev was ousted (Seely, 2001; German, 2003). Khasbulatov, in fact, was hostile to both Yeltsin and Dudayev (Hughes, 2007). He supported Chechnya's full integration with Russia. Hence, he was trying to unite the Chechen opposition against Dudayev to oust him from the office, and then lead Chechnya back into the Russian Federation. In this way, he would display his power by highlighting Yeltsin's weakness and reestablish his political might (Seely, 2001).

These developments created an environment for a new political accommodation with Dudayev. On March 8, Sergei Filatov, Yeltsin's chief of staff, announced that he was ready for new talks with Dudayev's representatives and stressed that the stability of Chechnya was central to the political and social situation in the Northern Caucasus region (Seely, 2001). This was a mark for the two contradictory policies of Russia toward Chechnya. Government policy designed by Shakhrai, the minister of nationalities, was

targeted to strengthen the Chechen opposition in order to weaken Dudayev, whereas Yeltsin's policy was to strengthen Dudayev and weaken his opponents (Seely, 2001).

In February 1994, Shakhrai was appointed by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin as a head of the team to negotiate with the Chechens (Hughes, 2007). In late March, he organized a meeting with the representatives of the Chechen opposition to work on a draft agreement between Chechnya and Russia (Seely, 2001). However, changes in the Kremlin's Chechen policy resulted in Shakhrai's dismissal from the post of minister of nationalities (Hughes, 2007). At the same time, Sergei Filatov, Yeltsin's chief of staff, invited Dudayev's representatives to Moscow for negotiations. The Chechen foreign secretary, Aslanbek Akbulatov, and Sergei Filatov met in Moscow to prepare a meeting between Yeltsin with Dudayev. However, a few days later Filatov claimed that the Chechens had refused to accept a higher autonomy within the Russian Federation, thus stalling the negotiation process (Seely, 2001). This is a paradoxical point, since it is argued that Sergei Filatov obstructed the possibilities of Dudayev's meeting with Yeltsin by blocking Dudayev's phone calls to the Kremlin on eight occasions (Hughes, 2007). Also, arguably, Dudayev sent many letters to Yeltsin appealing for face-to-face talks, but Viacheslav Kostikov, the president's press spokesman, destroyed all of them (Hughes, 2007).

Before he was fired, Shakhrai, on the other hand, declared that if free and fair elections were held in Chechnya, Russia would negotiate with Dudayev. The same day, the Russian Duma passed a resolution that only after new elections in Chechnya could a power-sharing agreement between Russia and Chechnya, outlining the latter's status, be

signed. This resolution reflected Shakhrai's strategy, and it cost him his political position (German, 2003).

After Shakhrai's dismissal, the presidential administration blamed his policies for failing to resolve the Chechen crisis. Shakhrai, however, criticized the Russian administration, pointing out the absence of interaction between the presidential administration and the government (Seely, 2001). Meanwhile, the presidential administration continued its policy of weakening Khasbulatov by strengthening Dudayev. Even the presidential administration announced Yeltsin's readiness to meet with Dudayev, Russia's only condition being preserving the territorial integrity of the federation. However, contrary to the aforementioned arguments, Dudayev refused to meet Yeltsin unless he was given the status of head of state, thus ruining any opportunity of a peaceful resolution of the Chechen conflict. After this point, the Russian administration started to consider alternative policies towards Chechnya (Wood, 2007).

Russia decided to support Avturkhanov, who spent two years lobbying the Russian parliament, and started to arm and train his men. The supply of weapons was so vast that Avturkhanov had more guns than men, so much so that he did not know what to do with them. Consequently, many innocent people as well as criminals possessed guns in a significant part of the Caucasus (Seely, 2001; Smith, 1998).

In late July 1994, Avturkhanov asked the Russian president to recognize the Council of the Chechen Republic as Chechnya's legitimate authority and help to restore constitutional order in the autonomous republic, enabling the Kremlin to have more direct action in Chechnya. All that Russia needed was to prepare its public for bloody events in Chechnya (Seely, 2001).

The Russian-backed Chechen opposition forces had made a number of fruitless attempts to crush Dudayev's forces. On October 19, 1994, Dudayev's forces killed more than one hundred fighters of Gantemirov, a former mayor of Grozny who had broken from Dudayev, in battles in and around Urus-Martan (Seely, 2001). Despite the massive amount of Russian military assistance, the Chechen opposition failed to overthrow Dudayev. In late November, Russian troops attempted to overthrow Dudayev forcefully. Nevertheless, the coup's failure resulted in direct military intervention (Smith, 1998).

The Russian Security Council gathered on November 29 when Yeltsin's decree of the use of force was confirmed. The only member of the Security Council who voted against the decree was Minister of Justice Yuri Kalmykov who resigned shortly afterward (Seely, 2001). Gall and Waal (1998) argue that Kalmykov voted yes, yet he spoke out sharply against using military capabilities in the Caucasus, warning about the worst possible consequences of military action. Perhaps Kalmykov's Cherkess (Circassian) ethnic identity played a decisive role in his opposition to Yeltsin's decree of the use of force in Chechnya.⁸ Yevgeny Primakov, then head of the Foreign Intelligence Service, also supported Kalmykov (Gall & Waal, 1998). However, his opposition to Yeltsin was fruitless. This was a turning point in Russian policy towards Chechnya that led to another human tragedy of the twentieth century.

The First Chechen War, 1994–96

On December 11, 1994, the Russian authorities sent troops into the Chechen Republic (Knezys & Sedlickas, 1999). On this day, Yeltsin addressed the Russian population: "Our aim is to find a political solution to the problem of one of the components of the Russian

Federation—the Chechen Republic—and to protect its citizens from armed extremism. But at present the impending danger of a full-scale war in the Chechen Republic stands in the way of peace talks and the free expression of the Chechen people’s will” (German, 2003:129). This proclamation was followed another two weeks later when Yeltsin tried to justify his decision and gain popular support for military operations in Chechnya: “Russian soldiers are protecting the unity of Russia. . . . The longer the situation in the Chechen Republic goes on, the more destructive an influence it has on stability in Russia. It has become one of the principal internal threats to the security of our state” (German, 2003:129). Yeltsin made this statement after the invasion actually began.

The Russian troops began the three-pronged operation in the early morning of December 11 (Lieven, 1998). The initial invasion force consisted of 23,800 army soldiers, 4,700 interior ministry troops, 80 tanks, 208 armored personnel carriers (APCs) and Infantry Fighting Vehicles (IFVs), and 182 artillery weapons. Later these forces grew to 38,000 men, 230 tanks, 454 APCs and IFVs, and 388 artillery weapons (Lieven, 1998:106; Seely, 2001:225).

The Russian troops started to lose men in Dagestan, Ingushetia, and North Ossetia before reaching Chechnya. Once inside the villages on their way to Chechnya the Russian soldiers were invited, tempted, or cajoled into people’s houses. Only then did they find that they had been taken hostage. On the first day of the operation, many Russian servicemen were taken hostage (Seely, 2001). Angry villagers in all three neighboring republics demanded that the Russian troops go back home. Obviously, the defense of Chechnya began outside of Chechnya (Gall & Waal, 1998).

It was hard for the Russian troops to advance toward Grozny because of the protesters (Seely, 2001). A sit-down protest by hundreds of inhabitants delayed the Russian forces with three hundred armored vehicles in the village of Davidenko on December 13 (German, 2003). In Nazran, Ingushetia about two thousand people blocked a Russian column. Within a week, the situation in Ingushetia had deteriorated to the extent that soldiers fought many gun battles with villagers (Seely, 2001; German, 2003).

The respondents in this study also claimed that the villagers' resistance was not organized by the Chechen regime, rather it was a product of their free will. The Chechen leadership, in fact, did not have enough time and the means to do so. The tactics the villagers used were not new to the region. The villagers regarded themselves as part of the active resistance to Russian intervention. This was exactly what the Russian authorities miscalculated.

The effect of the villagers' actions on the Russian troops was incredible, since they slowed down and demoralized the Russian troops. It took the Russian military two weeks, rather than three days, to reach the Chechen capital. This strategy had forced the military to deviate from the overall operation plans that make the Russian soldiers more vulnerable to Chechen attacks (Seely, 2001). The Russian forces were impeded by human blockades in all directions. "Senior commanders," however, "mindful of the outcomes of rebellions in Baku, Tbilisi, and Vilnius when the military was called upon to forcibly suppress political opposition during the Gorbachev era, refused to turn their weapons on the civilian population" (German, 2003:130). However, this did not prevent the death of civilians for which Russia has been criticized harshly by both internal and foreign NGOs, as well as by some Western countries.

Throughout December, fights took place in and around Grozny (Oliker, 2001). Russian columns reached the suburbs of Grozny by December 25. Next day they were able to capture some strategic positions, such as Karpinski Hill located about 10 km west of Grozny. The defense positions of the Chechen fighters were so strong that it took the Russians another month to force the Chechens to abandon their positions (Lieven, 1998).

On December 31, the Russian troops in Chechnya launched a full-scale assault on Grozny. The first-day of battle turned out to be disastrous for the Russians. The Chechen fighters not only stopped the Russians but also hit back sharply. Their tactics were simple and were described by a Chechen fighter as follows:

The Russian soldiers stayed in their armor, so we just stood on the balconies and dropped grenades on to their vehicles as they drove by underneath. The Russians are cowards. They just can't bear to come out of shelter and fight us man-to-man. They know they are no match for us. That is why we beat them and will always beat them (Lieven, 1998:109).

The Russian sources, however, described Chechen tactics and strategies in more detail (Oliker, 2001). Unlike the Russians, Chechens had prepared for the battle of Grozny for a long time (Thomas, 1999, 2000). The Chechens developed a sophisticated defense plan for Grozny with specified zones of responsibility, and effective use of communication as well as trenches between houses, ambush points, and sniper positions (Thomas, 2000). The Chechens had scattered throughout the city that was split into three circles of defense. The defense of Grozny proved that the Chechen forces were organized and well commanded (Thomas, 2000). Their high mobility due to the light weapons they had, as well as a network of underground passages, enhanced their ability to strike the Russians with force while Chechen snipers were very deadly (Oliker, 2001; Thomas, 1999).

The mood of the Russian soldiers, as well as the ability and preparedness of the Russian military command, can probably be best understood through the interview of a Russian soldier with Anatol Lieven on January 11, 1995:

The commanders gave us no map, no briefing, just told us to follow the BMP in front, but it got lost and ended up following us. By morning, we were completely lost and separated from the other units. I asked our officer where we were, he said he didn't know-somewhere near the railway station. No, he didn't have a map either. We were told to take up defensive positions, but it was hopeless- the Chechens were all around us and firing. There was nowhere to take cover, because they were everywhere.

I asked for orders from our company commander, Lt Chernychenko, and they told me he'd already run for it. Then we tried to escape. That was when I was wounded, by a sniper- I'd got out of the BMP to try to find a way out. My friends put me in another BMP, but it was soon damaged. I saw three BMPs destroyed in all, and I think only five or six of the crews survived. My friends had to leave me behind; they said they couldn't carry me. I don't blame them- two of them were wounded themselves, one in the arm, and one in the ear. One of them was captured with me. I don't know if the others made it. I lay there for three or four hours, and then the Chechens found me. They operated on me in a hospital in Grozny, then brought me here. They treated me well, though I was their enemy. I did not want to be their enemy, to come here to kill other farmers. I am a farmer myself. If Yeltsin and Grachev want this war, let them come and fight themselves, not send us to die (Lieven, 1998:110).

The Russians suffered major losses. Seely (2001) argues that it was the Russians who lost the battle because of the poor organization of the attack, rather than the Chechens who won it. Although the causality rates have been disputed, it is generally agreed that towards the end of February, the Russian army lost about 1,146 men, with 374 missing (Lieven, 1998:111; Seely, 2001:259). Civilian casualties were somewhere between 24,000 and 30,000. It has been hard to be accurate in this regard. However, it can be said with certainty that the overwhelming majority of the civilians killed in Grozny were

ethnic Russians, since most of the ethnic Chechens were evacuated from the city before the military operations started (Seely, 2001).

The Russian army's initial offensive on December 11 1994 escalated into a full-scale war in Chechnya. The decision to attack Chechnya was made by presidential decree, ignoring any need for the approval of the Russian parliament. This action was a clear indication of the lack of democratic institutions in Russia in late 1994 (Siren, 1998).

During the course of the war that continued for two years Russian troops were unable and unwilling to fight in Chechnya. In many cases, they were able to capture the positions of the Chechen fighters but they failed to gain a total victory. Unlike the Russian soldiers who were not ready for the realities of war, the Chechen fighters were psychologically well-prepared (Thomas, 2000). They knew that they were defending their motherland and their honor. Hence, when the Russians finally gained control of Grozny, the Chechen fighters did not surrender; rather they retired to the forests or the mountains south of the city to keep their struggle going (Gall & Waal, 1998).

The Russian tactics gradually assumed a traditional character. The Russian officers demanded the villagers surrender Chechen fighters or face the destruction of their villages (Seely, 2001). This policy put an entire population under pressure, splitting communities into those who wanted to protect their villages versus those who would defend the fighters at any cost. Nevertheless, in the cases in which the Russian troops bombarded and captured the villages they found out that the casualties were mainly women and children (Seely, 2001). Roza Gantemirova (a fictitious name), whom, I interviewed in Washington DC, told her story about one of the civilian massacres in the following way:

We, my husband, and I heard that Russians destroyed my husband's village, Samashki. My husband himself was an officer in the Russian Army serving in the North Caucasus. When I learnt about the news, he was at work. I called him immediately, and within minutes, he came home. We headed to Chechnya. We first flew to Nazran from where we rented a car. When we approached my husband's village, we saw that it was in blockade of the Russians who did not let anybody in or out. We tried to get in by requesting and begging. My husband showed them his military ID. Finally, they let only me in. When I came to the house where my parents-in-law lived, I found out that my mother-in-law was dead. Dead bodies were everywhere. There was no man in the village. They [the Russians] first let the men leave the village freely, but then arrested or killed them in the checkpoint. It is said that the Russian soldiers were all drunk. There were no men in the village to bury the dead. I dug a grave, and buried my mother-in-law with my own hands.

The days following the Samashki massacre by the Russian troops on April 7 and 8, 1995 demonstrated that Russian troops had immunity from criminal prosecution (Gilligan, 2010).

Russian tactics of hitting civilian settlements were followed by Chechen hostage-taking activities. On June 15, a group of Chechen fighters led by Shamil Basayev, who lost his mother, two children, brother, and a sister in the war, took 1,460 hostages in the city hospital of Budyonnovsk, ninety miles north of Chechnya (Hughes, 2007). Basayev demanded a cease-fire, the end of the war, and the withdrawal of Russian forces from Chechnya (Felgenhauer, 2002). Russian forces twice attempted to release the hostages but both efforts failed (Seely, 2001). Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin began televised telephone negotiations with the Chechen leader. Live on Russian television with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, Basayev managed to negotiate their release and his own safe passage to Chechnya. This made him a hero in the eyes of many Chechens (Fuller, 2006).

The Budyonnovsk crisis was a turning point in the Russo-Chechen conflict for at least two reasons (Wood, 2007). First, it was a significant psychological blow to Russian aspirations to soon win the war and increase the political pressure on the Russian President to negotiate a cease-fire. Second, the weakening Chechen movement regained its strength and popularity literally within a month (Gilligan, 2010).

This event also served as a cause of the decline of Yeltsin's popularity. Consequently, on June 30 he fired Interior Minister Viktor Yerin, Federal Security head Sergei Stepashin and Deputy Prime Minister Nicolai Yegorov. However, they were all eventually reappointed in different, higher positions (Seely, 2001). Russia's inability to reach its objectives through military means forced the presidential administration into negotiations.

Immediately after the Budyonnovsk crisis, the Russian officials and Chechen representatives began talks in Grozny under the mediation of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) (Wood, 2007). The Chechen negotiators were Usman Imayev, Khodz-Ahmet Yarikhanov, and Shirvani, Basayev's brother. The Russian negotiators were Vyacheslav Mikhailov and Arkadi Volski. The negotiators on both sides were under tremendous pressure. On the Russian side, Defense Minister Grachev and General Kulikov tried to wreck the peace talks since they supported military operations. On the Chechen side, however, Basayev declared that if the Chechen negotiators gave away too much he would kill them all (Seely, 2001).

Despite all the difficulties, on June 21 initial agreements over the withdrawals of Russian troops, and Chechen disarmament were signed. In a couple of days, a final cease-fire agreement was reached. A full accord was signed on July 30. It stipulated such issues

as the cease-fire, an exchange of prisoners, withdrawal of Russian troops, and Chechen disarmament. On August 2, Prime Minister Chernomyrdin officially declared the end of war. However, this agreement did not immediately bring peace to the region; rather, it became a framework for the continuing peace process (Wood, 2007).

On October 6, an assassination attempt on General Romanov took place in Grozny, where he was badly injured. This event was calculated to disrupt the peace process in the region, and raised the question of who wanted the general dead (Seely, 2001). General Romanov was one of the rare people who was respected by both Chechens and Russians and had good relationships with Aslan Maskhadov (York, 1995). Then Russia declared that it was suspending the agreement signed in July, and Russian bombardments of Chechen villages resumed, with both sides suffering many human losses (Seely, 2001).

Meanwhile, Russia's efforts to form a reliable puppet government in Chechnya had continued. The pro-Russian Chechen administrators Avturkhanov and Khadzhiyev, whom the Russian authorities did not find very effective, resigned their posts. On November 2, Chechnya's Supreme Soviet voted in support of Doku Zavgayev's leadership. He was the first ethnic Chechen leader of Chechnya during the Soviet era and Russia relied on him (Wood, 2007). Thus, to give his government legitimacy Chechen elections were held on the same day that Duma elections were held in Russia in December. Officially, Zavgayev won about 93 percent of the popular support, but it is generally believed by the Chechen people that the election circumstances were dubious (Gall & Waal, 1998). The election was rigged in favor of Zavgayev due to the suitable political circumstances ruling the country (Gall & Waal, 1998).

Chechen field commanders pledged to disrupt the elections. They organized a number of raids and struck at different towns in Chechnya. As a result, about six hundred people were killed. Civilian casualties were about three hundred. The Russian army lost at least thirty-six soldiers, and about one hundred and forty were wounded (Seely, 2001:282).

In 1996, Russia initiated a second round of fighting. Again, the main targets were civilian settlements housing Chechen fighters. In retaliation, Salman Raduyev, a Chechen warlord, led a large-scale Kizlyar hostage-taking raid into the neighboring Russian region of Dagestan, where his men took about two thousand civilian hostages (Hughes, 2007). The raid escalated into a battle and ended with the complete destruction of the border village of Pervomayskoye. Other Chechen leaders criticized Raduyev for his actions (Sadler, 1996). Later he claimed that his initial plan was to attack the Russian airbase nearby, but discovering that the Russians learnt about his plans, he decided to capture the hospital instead. The result of this event was bloody as well, with many people killed in the fighting (Seely, 2001).

The uncertainties in Chechnya kept alive unfavorable conditions for cease-fire talks. Nevertheless, Russia's inability to win the war made it conclude an agreement with the Chechen fighters. Finally, on August 30 1996, the Khasavyurt cease-fire agreement that marked the end of the first Chechen war was signed in Khasavyurt by Alexander Lebed and Aslan Maskhadov (Hughes, 2007). It included a number of important issues such as technical aspects of demilitarization, the withdrawal of both sides' forces from Grozny, the creation of joint headquarters to preclude looting in the city, the withdrawal of all federal forces from Chechnya by December 31, 1996, and a stipulation that any

agreement on the relations between the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria and the Russian federal government need not be signed until late 2001 (Kramer, 2005).

The Khasavyurt agreement (see Appendix 6) that symbolized the Chechen victory was followed by the Moscow peace accord (see Appendix 7) signed on May 12, 1997. Although both agreements strengthened the Chechen position for self-determination, its status was left open for future negotiations. The most important provision of both agreements was that resolving political differences by peaceful means, but this stipulation was ignored by Moscow when it launched the second war against the Chechens in 1999 (Kramer, 2005).

There is no unanimity about the total civilian and military casualties of the first Chechen war, and it is practically impossible to establish the accurate figures. One of the reasons is that the Russian government distorted the causality figures. Another factor is that there was no census in Chechnya prior to 1994, thus making any figures of the population of Chechnya before the war unreliable. Sergei Kovalev, the human rights activist who protested the Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956, estimated the casualties in Chechnya as exceeding 50,000 in the first war alone (CDI, 2003). The figures vary according to other sources to 20,000 or 40,000 respectively. According to General Lebed, the total toll of the first Chechen war was 90,000 (Siren, 1998:130). The Chechen nationalist leaders, however, claim that approximately 300,000 people have lost their lives in both wars (Politkovskaya, 2007:208).

The Second Chechen War: A Missed Opportunity for Peace, 1999–present

Both the Khasavyurt and Moscow agreements were historic events for Chechnya. They should have been used effectively and rapidly to finalize the question of Chechnya's

political status. However, that historical moment was a missed opportunity. In September 1999, Russian troops started a new invasion of Chechnya.

Shortly before the second Chechen war started, Vladimir Putin, then the new Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, announced: “The whole world knows that terrorists must be destroyed at their bases” (Gilligan, 2010:32). Putin and other Moscow officials always avoided such terms as “ethnic conflict,” “civil war,” or “self-determination.” Rather, on every occasion they stressed their constitutional duty to restore and preserve political order by wiping out the bandits and terrorists. On different occasions, the Russian president expressed Moscow’s policy of fighting the Chechens as being in line with the United States’ war on terror (Hill, 2002).

In early 2000, Russian troops managed to capture Grozny, and by mid-2000 had pushed the Chechen fighters out of the city (Kramer, 2004). The second Chechen war marked the beginning of a new collective trauma in Chechnya (Gilligan, 2010).

Lawlessness

Chechnya’s new president, Aslan Maskhadov (Maskhadan), who took 59 percent of the vote in January 1997 versus 24 percent for Basayev and 10 percent for Yandarbiyev (Yandarbin), failed to enforce law, and keep order in the Republic (Seely, 2001:304). Violence, kidnapping, and murder dominated life in Chechnya, making it infamous for its lawlessness (Kramer, 2005). The murder of six Red Cross workers and six British-based telecom engineers in Grozny in December 1996 confirmed the truth about disorder in Chechnya (Schandermani, 2002). More than one thousand Dagestanis, Ingushes, and Russians were kidnapped or murdered. Some of these crimes were connected to Russia,

others to efforts to undermine Maskhadov's credibility (Seely, 2001). Although Maskhadov's moderate personality was more suitable to peace efforts, Moscow failed to use this factor for the peaceful resolution of the conflict.

However, both before the first and second Chechen wars, disorder, and crime were ubiquitous in the Russian Federation (Shelley, 2001). The challenge posed by thousands of organized criminal groups was so strong that the Russian police were unable to combat them effectively. In fact, powerful Chechen criminal gangs existed not only on the territories of Chechnya, but also in other parts of Russia. It is impossible to claim that the Chechen gangs alone would constitute a major threat to Russia's law and order (Siren, 1998).

After Maskhadov's assassination, the situation in Chechnya became even worse. From 2003 to 2005, 1,265 people in Chechnya were abducted; the disappearances from 1999 to 2005 are calculated as between three thousand and five thousand (Gilligan, 2010:88). On a number of occasions, Chechnya's former pro-Russian President Akhmat Kadyrov blamed the Russian armed forces for the abductions; however, the Russian leadership laid the blame for the abductions and murders of people in Chechnya on Chechens themselves (Gilligan, 2010).

At one point in 2004, Vladimir Ustinov, Russia's prosecutor general advocated a "counter hostage-taking" law, which would enable Russian servicemen to detain rebel fighters' relatives (Gilligan, 2010). The Russian media criticized Ustinov's suggestions sharply; then Chechen President Alu Alkhanov and the current Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov, however, gave strong support to the plan. Ustinov's suggestion was an

attempt to legalize what anyway was taken place in Chechnya, however, it never became the agenda of the Russian parliament (Gilligan, 2010).

Islamic Brotherhood

During the First Chechen War, the presence of foreign elements in Chechnya was relatively limited; however, their flow into Chechnya after 1996 became one of the reasons for instability in the Republic. Starting from the mid-1990s some foreign Islamists gained access to the Chechen movement (Wilhelmsen, 2005). Many Islamic militants (generally known as “Wahhabis”) who once fought in Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Tajikistan, came to Chechnya. In Afghanistan, they were renowned for their warrior skills, thus attracting Islamic youth to fight in Afghanistan. Their presence in Chechnya played a similar role in attracting Chechen youth, who had been brought up in unfavorable conditions and who lived through the 1994–96 war, into Chechnya’s militant forces (Gammer, 2006). However, those foreign fighters operating in Chechnya were very divorced from the realities of the republic (Waal, 2004).

President Maskhadov failed to block the inflow of foreign fighters into Chechnya, most of whom, it is said, fled from the country when Russia invaded (Seely, 2001: 305). In fact, with the approval of the religious leadership in Chechnya, Maskhadov tried to suppress the Wahhabis who were united with his opponents, but his efforts failed (Gammer, 2006:216). Maskhadov’s inability to stand up to the Islamists also caused splits within the Chechen movement and led eventually to the breakaway of Akhmad Kadyrov, a mufti and fighter who switched sides to the Russians in 1999. Kadyrov then became a Russia-backed Chechen president in 2003, ruling by corruption and

intimidation, and fighting his former comrade-in-arms Maskhadov until he was assassinated in May 2004 (Waal, 2004).

Wahhabis came to Chechnya from Dagestan (German, 2003). Initially, Dagestan was a more fertile ground for foreign Islamists, but later Chechnya became more attractive because of its ongoing struggle. Although most Chechens were nationalists and their movement was a national one, the Wahhabis found many supporters in Chechnya because of the peoples' rising interest in Islam. Moreover, the Wahhabi movement in Chechnya attracted young boys by paying them large sums of money (Gilligan, 2010). However, Wahhabism faced considerable suspicions in Chechnya as well primarily due to its threat to the existing social order in the republic (Zürcher, 2007). There were also many other foreigners in the Republic who came to defend Chechnya and who were unaware of the conflicting interests of different Chechen groups (Hughes, 2007).

The most famous Wahhabi leader in Chechnya and Dagestan was Khattab who led an ambush in Shatoi in April 1996 in which a considerable number of Russian soldiers were killed. It is argued that Khattab had some ties with al-Qaeda (Bhattacharji, 2008). On August 8, 1999, he moved into Dagestan with a couple of thousand Chechen fighters and occupied a number of villages. He claimed that his force was invited in, but the local reaction was not favorable. His true intention was to extend the Chechen war into Dagestan to make it harder for the Russians to control the region (Halbach, 2001).

On August 9, Vladimir Putin was appointed Prime Minister of Russia by President Yeltsin, and on the same day, Russian forces began bombing Chechen positions. Putin was determined to force the rebels out of Dagestan within a few days, and he succeeded in doing so largely. However, shortly afterward, on September 5,

Basayev invaded part of Dagestan again. Dagestan was of vital importance for the Chechen rebels who hoped to attract its population's support in their struggle with the Russians (Zelkina, 2004).

On September 23, Russia began bombing northern Chechnya, and started to deploy troops on the Chechen border. The next day, Russia's ground assault on Chechnya began. This time Russia led a well-organized and well-coordinated operation against Chechen positions (Gilligan, 2010).

Terror in Russia and by Russia

On August 31 1999, the underground Manezh shopping center in Moscow was targeted by Chechen separatists. About forty people were injured in this incident. Only a few days later, sixty-two military officers and their family members were killed when a bomb destroyed an apartment block in Buinaksk, Dagestan. On September 9 and 13, two more apartment blocks were destroyed in Moscow, killing 212 people. The Russian authorities blamed the Chechen rebels (Gilligan, 2010).⁹

The drama of the Moscow theater siege of October 2002, when some seven hundred people were taken hostage as they watched a performance in the capital, stunned the world. More than 120 hostages and forty-one Chechen fighters were killed when Russian special forces (*spechnaz*) stormed the theater using an opium-derived gas to disable the hostage-takers (Bhattacharji, 2008).

The seizure of a school in Beslan, North Ossetia, containing 1,100 people by Chechen separatists organized by Basayev, occurred on September 1, 2004. On the third day of the standoff, Russian security forces stormed the school building using heavy

weapons such as tanks and rockets. As a result, 334 hostages were killed; 186 of them were children (Satter, 2006).

The Chechens have also made use of a deadly new tactic in their military campaign strategies. They plant bombs on women and send them to destroy targets. The acts of “Black Widows”— the women who have caused many suicide bombings in the region— are most disturbing. Some of these women have lost family members to Russian atrocities, others have been raped, and most probably, they have all been actively brainwashed by the militants (Waal, 2004).

In July 2003, an attack by two Chechen female suicide bombers at a rock concert in Moscow left fourteen people dead (CNN, 2003.07.05). In December 2003, six people lost their lives in an attack outside the Kremlin as a result of a suicide attack. The bombers blew up a train in the Stavropol region of southern Russia, killing at least forty people in December 2003 (Peuch, 2003.12.05). In February 2004, thirty-nine people were killed when a suicide bomb blast tore through a Moscow metro train (Rodriguez, 2004).

On March 29, 2010, a pair of powerful explosions on Moscow’s subway occurred about forty-five minutes apart at downtown stations during the morning rush hour. The explosions in Lubyanka and Park Kulturi stations followed triumphant reports that Russian security forces had killed several top leaders of the Chechen rebel movement in Chechnya (Pan, 2010). In April, Dokka Umarov, the rebel leader, warned that he would bring the war to inner Russia (Milliyet, 2010). Moreover, on March 27, Ramzan Kadyrov, the President of Chechnya, declared that Chechnya had been able to break the spine of the terrorism in Chechnya (Pan, 2010). The torn bodies of the terrorist women that committed the acts were seen at the site (Perekrest, Andryukhin, Yevstifeev,

Vorotnikov, Morozov, & Sadovskaya, 2010). Allegedly the perpetrators were members of the “Black Widow” group (Milliyet, 2010). However, Shmesettin Batukaev, the spokesperson of the Caucasus Emirate, declared in Istanbul on March 31, 2010 that they were not responsible for the Moscow events, or knew who had committed those events. Batukaev also stressed that the Chechens planned to attack Russia’s economic targets and not its civilians (Hurriyet, 2010b). However, a few hours later on the same day, Chechen leader Dokka Umarov accepted responsibility for the attacks (Hurriyet, 2010c).¹⁰

Russia has blamed the Chechens for all the aforementioned attacks. Moreover, Russia has attempted to merge the use of suicide bombing as a general tactic in Chechnya to the wider United States led war on terror to gain international legitimacy for its Chechen wars. However, the Chechens claim that those behind the attacks are simply the distraught wives, sisters, and mothers of men killed or brutalized by Russian soldiers (Gilligan, 2010).

In the past few years, many Chechen leaders have been killed abroad. Russian Special Forces or a special assassination team of the pro-Russian Chechen leader Kadyrov have carried out operations in other countries where some of the Chechen leaders found refuge. In Qatar in 2004, two Russian intelligence agents were convicted of a car bombing that killed Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev (Yandarbin), a Chechen rebel leader (Uslu, 2008). In November 2007, Imran Gaziyev, a Chechen refugee and former deputy General Prosecutor of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria and later an assistant of Ali Asayev, head of the mission of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria in Baku, Azerbaijan, was killed in Baku.¹¹ On December 10, 2008, a former Chechen military commander, Islam Canibekov, was assassinated in the Umraniye district of Istanbul. As the police

explained, the weapon used in the assassination was a “silent pistol,” which makes very minimal noise, and is specially made for and used by the Russian Intelligence Agency (Uslu, 2008). In March 2009, Sulim Yamadayev, a Chechen general, was shot in Dubai. Ironically, he was awarded the Hero of Russia medal by Vladimir Putin (Schwartz, 2009). Ali Osaev was also killed in İstanbul’s Zeytinburnu district by unknown assailants with three bullets to the head on April 28, 2009, and a former Chechen military officer, Gazhi Edilsutanov, was killed in the Başakşehir district of Istanbul in September 2008 (Today’s Zaman, 2009).

In addition, pro-Russian Chechen forces are involved in terrorist activities against the population of Chechnya. They have terrorized ordinary Chechen people using such methods as torture, intimidation, as well as kidnapping relatives of opponents. In many cases, the kidnapped people are never found alive (Russell, 2006).

Another important event took place on November 21, 2009 in Baku, Azerbaijan where one of the subjects in this study, Abdurrahmanov, was killed, allegedly by people belonging to the pro-Russian Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov (Yeni-Musavat, 2009). It is claimed that he was channeling a considerable amount of money to the Chechen fighters in Chechnya, contributing to their ability to carry on the struggle with the Russians (Yeni Musavat, 2009). However, Molayev, one of the leaders of the Chechen community in Azerbaijan, also an informant for this study, declared in a press conference in Baku that Abdurrahmanov was the poorest Chechen refugee living in Baku who worked as a guard at one of the modest villas on the Caspian Sea where he was killed (Memmedov, 2009). Actually, I witnessed how the members of the Chechen diaspora collected food for him at the Chechen cultural center.¹² Abdurrahmanov was a former

Chechen warlord who led the guerrilla team that seized the Russian ferryboat *Eurasia* in the Turkish Trabzon port in 1996, attracting the attention of world public opinion with regards to the Chechen problem. One of his team members, Roki Gitsba, was killed in Baku two years ago in 2007 (Yeni Musavat, 2009). All the people killed abroad had been involved in the national liberation movement in Chechnya in one way or another, and were well-respected by the Chechens back home as well as by the Chechen Diaspora communities. As one of the Chechen leaders, who also was one of the subjects of this study, argued a key problem is that the security organs of the Republic of Azerbaijan are not willing to defend its refugees from foreign killer teams. Consequently, all the refugees are vulnerable in Azerbaijan, which has made them reconsider their own presence in the Republic (Memmedov, 2009).

In many cases, the Russian methods of warfare are brutal, inhumane, and ethically unacceptable. Russian *kontratniki* (contracted soldiers) have especially acted in a very brutal fashion against civilians in Chechnya. Russian forces did not hesitate to bomb a market and maternity hospital in Grozny, as well as a Red Cross convoy, in addition to their attacks on such villages as Elistanzhi, Novyi Sharoi, Alkhan-Yurt, and Samashki (Gilligan, 2010).

A Chechen leader in Baku related to me that all Chechen refugees are subject to illegal arrest by Azerbaijan's security forces and this is a sign of Moscow's influence on Baku. He stressed that although they do not like Baku's policy vis-à-vis Chechens, they also do not want to be the cause of additional problems between Azerbaijan and Russia. Therefore, as a result of this behavior, the community decided to leave the country by the summer of 2010:

We are not happy here because our people are arrested illegally; they are detained, and penalized for nothing. Our people live here in fear and anxiety due to Russia's threat. We are not provided security; rather our security is threatened by the local authorities. We will leave this country, because we do not want to create additional problems for Azerbaijan.

There is a plethora of other cases of terrorist acts abroad, allegedly by either Chechen individuals in Russia or by the state of Russia, against Chechen individuals, especially those who had been actively involved in the separatist movement (Gilligan, 2010; Knezys & Sedlickas, 1999). Nonetheless, to equate the Chechen national liberation movement with terror would be an underestimation of the historical upheaval of these peoples of the Caucasus.

Oil and Pipeline

The Russo-Chechen conflict has also geopolitical and economic dimensions. When the political leadership declared Chechnya's independence from the Russian Federation in 1991, oil was the only profitable business in the Chechen Republic (Knezys & Sedlickas, 1999). Chechnya was also a significant center for oil refining. Hence, Russia's decision to cut off oil deliveries to Chechnya was an important part of its policy to blockade Chechnya. However, Russia was able to cease the oil inflow to Grozny for refining only in November 1994. The main reason was that the Grozny oil refinery was supplying oil to Russia's adjacent regions (German, 2003). However, control over Chechnya meant more to Russia than the Chechen oil and the Grozny refinery, because Chechnya was a vital part of Russia's oil pipeline network (Aydın, 2004).

Historically, energy from the Caspian Sea has gone north to Russia, and from Russia into world markets (Aydın, 2004). Today, there are four main lines carrying the oil from the region to outside markets: (1) a pipeline from the Tengiz oil field of Kazakhstan to the Russian port of Novorossiysk on the Black Sea; (2) a pipeline from Baku to the Georgian port of Supsa; (3) a pipeline from Baku to Novorossiysk; and (4) a pipeline from Baku to the port of Ceyhan of Turkey on the Mediterranean through Georgia (Sasley, 2004). In 1995, a consortium of international companies decided to build two pipelines from Azerbaijan, one to Georgia and the other to Turkey. The western line to Supsa, Georgia, opened in April 1999 (Rivlin, 2004). The pipeline to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiysk opened, and then closed because of the events in Chechnya. However, Chechnya had an interest in keeping the pipeline open, because otherwise its oil refineries, the only source of revenue, would dry up (Wood, 2007).

This economic reality was one of the major reasons why Russia was so motivated to attack Chechnya in the early 1990s (Knezys & Sedlickas, 1999). While officially Russia was waging war to preserve the country's territorial integrity and national unity, controlling the oil pipeline that runs through Chechnya was one of Russia's key priorities (Siren, 1998). Russia was about to start a new conflict over the Caspian oil fields with the Caspian Sea littoral states, especially Azerbaijan, and therefore it needed to control pipelines to transport the oil (Rivlin, 2004).

The legal status of the Caspian Sea became a major issue for a dispute among the coastal states of the Caspian Sea, where usually Russia and Iran defend a single position opposed to that of Azerbaijan. Nevertheless, Azerbaijan continues to explore its four

major offshore oil fields in the Caspian Sea—Güneşli, Çıraq, Azeri, and Kepez—that it owned during the Soviet era (Aydın, 2004).

On November 20, 1994, a consortium of oil companies led by British Petroleum (BP) signed a contract with Azerbaijan. The consortium is made up of the American, British, Turkish, Russian, Azerbaijani, and Norwegian oil companies. The consortium estimated that it could extract up to 4 billion barrels of oil from three wells in the Caspian Sea. However, a problem has developed dealing with the route that would take the oil to the world market. There are three alternatives to choose from: (1) a northern route which would transport the oil through Russia; (2) a western route through Georgia; and (3) a southern route through Armenia and Turkey (Goldman, 2008). Russia was interested in activating the pipeline through the Northern Caucasus to Novorossiysk in spite of the Chechen conflict (Kumar, 1996).

Russia's desire to retain an influential relationship with the former Soviet states has always been obvious since they became independent. Moscow would lose the opportunity of keeping Azerbaijan under its influence if a distribution route bypassed Russia. In addition, there was a great deal of money to be made from this agreement through sales, profits, and tariffs from oil crossing through Russian territory (Aydın, 2004). Moreover, Russia perceived the issue as a security matter, since the deal was between a former member of the Soviet Union and NATO countries. If the Azerbaijani consortium turned out to be successful, other former Soviet republics such as Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan would follow the same path. If the pipeline passed through Georgia, this would empower this former Soviet republic financially as well as diminishing

Russia's influence over it. Hence, Russia saw the issue as a source of economic revenue and political influence, as well as prestige (Goldman, 2008).

The countries and the energy companies operating in the region believe that they need to have a multiple pipeline system (Kalicki, 2001). After long negotiations, in November 1999, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, and the United States agreed on the development of a commercial pipeline to sell gas from Turkmenistan through Azerbaijan and Georgia to Turkey and onto Europe (Bremmer, 1998). The pipeline would bring the Caspian Sea's oil to the Mediterranean, crossing through Georgia and Turkey, avoiding Russia and Iran (Kuniholm, 2000). The Turkish export route for Azerbaijan's huge reserves of oil and natural gas was aimed at reducing the former Soviet Republic's dependency on Moscow. This deal represented a long-term strategic triumph over Russia's historic aspirations and interests in Central Asia and the Caucasus (Barylski, 1995). The Chechen war was the best argument in favor of the agreement on an oil pipeline from Baku to Turkey as an alternative to a Russian pipeline, confirming the Russian assumption that the United States benefits from the war in Chechnya because it wants to bring the Caucasus under its influence (German, 2003).

The Chechen refugees in Baku, Azerbaijan explain the initial Azeri hospitality with the aforementioned argument, among other things. Baba Vizir expressed his views about the oil and pipeline issue to me as follows:

I was badly injured, my leg would have been amputated, or I even could have died. I was brought to Baku overnight, and here I had undergone three major surgeries. The cost was over 250,000 US dollars, and I did not pay a penny. Late *aksakal* [Heydar Aliyev, former President of Azerbaijan] cared about us so much. He was so sensitive about our problems. In his times we numbered here more than 15,000 (now only 2,500 left), and we had many privileges. Why?-He needed us. No, of

course, not only that. However, he also needed us for the fate of the pipeline [Baku- Tbilisi- Jeyhan that bypasses Russia]. As long as the Chechen war was going on, he could oppose Russia's demands for oil export through Russia. Therefore, Chechnya was a powerful tool for Azerbaijan, and we felt this in how we were treated here.

Hence, Russia's ability to influence the direction of a new pipeline that planned to carry Caspian oil abroad depended on Russia's territorial integrity in the Northern Caucasus. This, in turn, pushed Russia to win the Chechen war at any cost.

Russia has tried hard to build a network of pipelines in the entire region of its influence as a means to gain economically as well as to keep those areas within its sphere of political influence (Sasley, 2004). In fact, Russia's military intervention into Georgia in 2008, especially into Georgia's Supsa port on the Black Sea, displayed both its aggressive intentions to control pipeline routes and its ability to gain that control, even though it was unable to keep it for a long time (Cornell & Starr, 2009). Today, Russia's effort to undermine the NABUCCO project, the natural gas pipeline that may lessen European dependence on Russian energy, also exemplifies its pipeline-based foreign policy.¹³

Conclusion

As described and discussed above, the Russo-Chechen conflict has a long history that is connected to the present, which is deep-rooted and multifaceted. Its complexity is embedded in its length and reappearance in different historical moments. It is, therefore, important to manage/address this conflict by considering its history with all the salient points that makes it intractable.

The conflict between the Russian Empire and the Chechen peoples that started

more than two centuries ago continued throughout the Soviet era. For a while, it stayed in a latent form, but erupted again with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In 1994, the Russian authorities launched military operations in Chechnya to regain its control, which resulted in the full failure of the Russians to bring about the Khasavyurt peace agreement of 1996 that gave de facto independence to Chechnya.

However, in 1999, Russia launched a new assault on Chechnya, thus violating the Khasavyurt and Moscow peace accords. From the Russian point of view, it is using its legitimate rights to restore the constitutional order of the country and Chechnya is an integral part of the Russian Federation. In this regards, Moscow also relies on the basic principles of international law. The Chechens claim a right to self-determination. They see the issue as more moral than legal. An overwhelming majority of Chechens want either total independence or more autonomy within the Russian Federation. However, it is clearly evident from the behavior in Chechnya that Russia is not sympathetic with Chechen aspirations. Moreover, it neither hesitates in using its military might nor in violating human rights in Chechnya.

Despite all of its efforts, Russia has not won the war totally and decisively. Although Moscow has a strong local government in Grozny that controls all of Chechnya, it has been impossible to eliminate all of the Chechen guerrilla formations. The second Chechen war that started in 1999 continues to this very day.

Chapter 3

Ethnopolitical and Ethnoterritorial Conflicts in Russia in the 1990s: A Multi-Dimensional Analysis

Introduction

This chapter deals with the secessionist movements in the Russian Federation during the 1990s when Moscow faced a number of deadly ethnopolitical and ethnoterritorial conflicts transforming all but one- Chechnya. Thus, the chapter analyzes the Russo-Chechen conflict, in which the uniqueness of the Chechen question among a plethora of ethnopolitical conflicts is discussed. This chapter also discusses the administrative structure of the Russian Federation emphasizing its asymmetric federalism that can foster relative deprivation feelings among its multiethnic population. Moreover, such concepts as self-determination and territorial integrity are also introduced in this chapter.

This chapter differs from the *Historical Context* chapter in three ways. First, chapter 2 describes and analyzes events in the historical context that took place primarily in Chechnya, whereas chapter 3 discusses all recent ethnopolitical and ethnoterritorial conflicts within the context of the Russian Federation thus presenting and explaining the significance of the Chechen conflict. Second, this chapter clarifies a number of concepts important for the Russo-Chechen conflict case such as asymmetrical federalism, self-determination, and the territorial integrity of states. Third, this chapter discusses a number of important aspects of the case study such as disunity among Chechens in the light of the existing PACS theories.

In addition, this chapter provides a critical analysis of the contemporary Russian state structure and society as well as its prevalent attitudes toward the Chechen minority.

The major Russian arguments of territorial integrity and national unity, as well as the major Chechen arguments of the rights to national self-determination are also discussed in this chapter. Overall, chapter 3 discusses: (1) the structure of the Russian Federation and separation trends in Russia; (2) the rule of territorial integrity; (3) the principle of self-determination; (4) the identity problems of Chechens; (5) violation of the Chechens' basic human needs; (6) the causes of Chechen aggressiveness; (7) the problem of Chechen disunity; and (8) the role of criminal elements in the conflict.

The Structure of the Russian Federation and Separation Trends in the 1990s:

Is the Chechen Conflict Unique?

This section deals with the structure of the Russian Federation and the separation trends in Russia other than political processes in Chechnya. First, it examines the administrative structure of the state with emphasis on its asymmetrical federalism. Second, it discusses separation tendencies in Russia in the 1990s, and questions the uniqueness of the Chechen case among all the other ethno-political and ethnoterritorial conflicts within Russia.

Federalism is a form of government that differs from unitary forms of political rule in a number of different ways. The key differences are the distribution of power between central and sub-national entities, the separation of powers within the government, and the division of the legislative powers between national and regional representatives (Cameron & Falletti, 2005). Federalism is also an effect, which is influenced by political events, economic progressions, and societal conditions (Bowman, 2002). Therefore, the existing federalist systems in the world differ from each other to

varying degrees (Field, 1992). It is one of the key difficult reasons in defining what kind of federation is real. In general, a federation has both the distribution of political power specified in the constitution and a direct relationship between political power and the individual citizen. Some view federalism as both form and regime (Elazar, 1985), while others see it as an abstract concept of political theory (Verney, 1995). Federalism is also a dynamic phenomenon continuously developing into new forms (Dikshit, 1971; Veasey, 1988).

Currently a new form of federalism—executive federalism—has emerged, in which major constitutional issues are decided by executives instead of by legislatures. Other emerging features include constitutionally specified representatives of local governments and three tiers of representation. Russia currently does not fit well into any existing federalism system, since the Russian form of federalism is still in a stage of development as a part of the Russian transition and evolution into a true democracy (Hughes, 2001). For example, Hughes (2001) argues that in the 1990s the Kremlin experienced significant difficulties with the process of federalization in Russia.

Patrimonial federalism developed from early 1994 onward, grounded in bilateral treaties with the autonomous republics of Russia. President Shaimiev of Tatarstan, President Rakhimov of Bashkortostan, and President Nikolaev of Sakha were to gain more from Russia's *patrimonial federalism*. However, it was Chechnya's President Dudayev who offered a significant challenge to the Russian Federation's integrity by refusing to sign a bilateral treaty with Moscow (Hughes, 2001). If federalism questions the number of local and state governments and their representation in the central government, and policy responsibilities between the central government and the lower

tiers (Inman & Rubinfeld, 1997), then Russia went through a difficult political processes in the 1990s and early 2000s due to emerging ethnopolitical and ethnoterritorial conflicts.

James Hughes (2001, 2002) argues that the process of bilateral treaty making between the federal government of Russia and some autonomous republics and regions in the period between 1994 and 1998 shaped Russia's federalism as asymmetrical. The regions—Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, and Sakha—in which the most significant power-sharing agreements were signed, were all ethnic republics (Hughes, 2002). Russia's asymmetric federalism is inherently unstable because of its two-tier federation in which some of the ethnic republics enjoy a privileged constitutional position.

Eighteen ethnically based republics signed the Russian Federal Treaty with Moscow in March 1992. Only Tatarstan and Chechnya refused to sign it because of their intention to secede from the Russian Federation. However, Tatarstan later signed a “bilateral treaty” with Moscow, which gave it some extra privileges. There are thirty-four non-Russian ethnically based political entities in the Russian Federation apart from Chechnya (Balzer, 1999).

Chapter 3 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation describes the federal structure of the Russian state. Article 65 of the Constitution recognizes a number of areas and territories, as well as regions. The Russian Federation has the following twenty-one autonomous republics: the Republic of Adygeya, the Republic of Altai, the Republic of Bashkortostan, the Republic of Buryatia, the Republic of Dagestan, the Republic of Ingushetia, the Republic of Kabardino-Balkaria, the Republic of Kalmykia, the Republic of Karachayev-Circassian, the Republic of Karelia, the Republic of Komi, the Republic of Mari El, the Republic of Mordovia, the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), the Republic of

North Ossetia-Alania, the Republic of Tatarstan, the Republic of Tuva, the Republic of Udmurtia, the Republic of Khakassia, the Republic of Chechnya, and the Republic of Chuvashia.¹⁴

Federal law on national-cultural autonomy adopted by the State Duma on May 22, 1996, and approved by the Council of the Federation on June 5, 1996 determines the legal grounds of national-cultural autonomy in the Russian Federation, which is a form of national-cultural self-determination. Article 4 of this law sets out the rights for national-cultural autonomies as follows:

- to receive support from the government and local self-government bodies which is necessary for preserving the national identity, development of the national (native) language and national culture;
- to address the bodies of legislative (representative) and executive power, local self-government bodies, representing its national-cultural interests;
- to create mass media in the order established by the legislation of the Russian Federation, to receive and disseminate information in its national (native) language;
- to preserve and enrich its historical and cultural heritage, to have free access to the national-cultural values;
- to follow national traditions and customs, renew and develop art and folk trades;
- to create educational, scientific and cultural establishments and to provide their functioning according to the legislation of the Russian Federation;
- to participate through its plenipotentiaries in the activities of international non-governmental organizations;
- on the basis of the legislation of the Russian Federation, to establish and maintain, without any discrimination, contacts with the citizens and non-governmental organizations of foreign states.¹⁵

The autonomous republics are allowed to establish their own official language in addition to Russian, but are represented by the federal government in international affairs. Republics are meant to be home to specific ethnic minorities.

The Russian-type of federalism is unique in the world and has a number of problems related to center-peripheral relationships. In fact, not all the constituting members of the Russian Federation enjoy the same rights politically or economically. One of the first autonomous republics that posed challenges to Russian national unity was Tatarstan, which perceives federalism as “strong center, strong regions” (Sdasyuk, 2000).

In 1994, Tatarstan, which declared its independence in 1992, was the first republic to sign the power sharing treaty with Moscow. This became a template for center-regional agreements throughout the federation. With this bilateral treaty Tatarstan withdrew from national secession, and instead changed its focus to increasing its economic autonomy, especially in the areas of attracting both municipal and foreign investment (Giuliano, 2000).

Moreover, Tatarstan passed a law allowing foreign ownership of land and tax incentive breaks for joint ventures with foreign partners. It has concluded trade agreements with a large number of foreign countries as well as entered the international arms market as an independent entity. Tatarstan has also deliberately established relations with the newly independent states and with other regions within the Russian Federation. Tatarstan’s recent political interactions with the central government in Moscow have demonstrated steady attempts to increase or maintain its autonomy, tempered by a commitment to remain a constituent member of the Federation (Jack, 2004).

Tatarstan continues to set trends in its economic and political relations with the center and with surrounding foreign countries by taking on responsibilities independently without waiting for either Moscow’s permission or influence. Tatarstan has positioned itself as an exemplary model for the other regions, and, because of its actions, is defining

what it means to be a successful region; this success has created expectations for the other regions (Jack, 2004).

Tatarstan has issued strong statements concerning the possible unification of Russia and Belarus, the two former Soviet Republics that became independent states with the disintegration of the USSR (Sharafutdinova, 2003). Tatarstan's former President Shamiev had repeatedly stated that if Belarus unified with Russia, he would take this opportunity to renegotiate the political status of Tatarstan in order for his country to have equivalent status with Belarus (Sharafutdinova, 2003). Tatarstan, therefore, continued to lead the challenge to the federal center that the regions and republics represented (Giuliano, 2006).

Without resorting to violence, Tatarstan has come so far as to achieve economic independence and nationalizing policies that has made the republic a quasi-independent nation state (Stepanov, 2000). The Tatar government has also managed to keep most of the profits of its oil industry within its borders. Even though the proportion of Tatars and Russians throughout the population of the republic is almost equal, the former occupy about 75 percent of all positions of administrative power at the republican, town, and municipal levels (Adrahmanov, 1999; Stepanov, 2000). However, there is no evidence that interethnic tensions have been of a violent nature in Tatarstan. President Shaimiev's moderate policies have played a considerable role in the smooth transition from dependency to relative independence. Although the intellectual and political elites with reactivate historical collective memories spread a nationalist ideology, there is no evidence in Tatarstan of the aggravating factors that are at work in Chechnya. Those factors can be classified as being caused by overpopulation within rural areas, and

interethnic competition for the use of land coupled with a high unemployment rate, as well as the spontaneous militarization of large segments of the population (Stepanov, 2000).

The irredentist project of Kazan nationalists aimed at reunifying the large Tatar diaspora into a new Tatarstan extending far beyond its current federal borders may, in turn, destabilize the entire region in the future and create interethnic tensions. The neighboring republic of Bashkortostan is home to about 1.2 million Tatars and the prospect of a union with Bashkortostan, which is divided from Kazakhstan by a narrow stretch of land that today is included within the Orenburg oblast, is particularly relevant for Tatarstan's geopolitical advantages. Thus, a political approximation of Tatarstan with Bashkortostan would imply a favorable geopolitical position for the former, since its territories would come closer to international borders. The current "enclave" position of Tatarstan, coupled with the absence of an international border, has been some of its major predicaments. The presence of considerable Tatar communities in the Republics of Bashkortostan, Chuvashia, and Mari El, as well as in the Ulyanovsk oblast, increases Tatarstan's influence in the region (Stepanov, 2000).

The course of events in Tatarstan has especially influenced interethnic relations in Bashkortostan. Both Bashkirs and Tatars are Turkic ethnic groups that have major cultural commonalities. These cultural similarities enable them to perceive each other as natural allies against the Russians in the region. The number of Russians in Bashkortostan has been steadily decreasing since the 1970s as a result of migration trends (Busygin, Zorin, & Stolyarova, 1991; Stepanov, 2000). Bashkortostan, though to a lesser

degree, has followed the Tatar model of separatism, resulting in practice to a very large degree of economic independence from Moscow.

The other republics of the Volga-Urals region—Chuvashia, Mari-El, Mordovia, and Udmurtia—are also characterized by having lower levels of political tensions and yet have not been able to follow the successful separatist strategy employed by Tatarstan and Bashkortostan. For example, in 1992 Tatarstan transferred to the federal budget only 0.1 percent of taxes collected in its territory, Bashkortostan gave 4.7 percent, while Chuvashia remitted 55.9 percent, Mordovia 52.1 percent, Mari El 52 percent, and Udmurtia 49.4 percent (Stepanov, 2000).

Apart from Tatarstan and Chechnya, a number of regional entities within the Russian Federation displayed secessionist tendencies that were apparent, especially after the crisis of August 17, 1998 that ruined Russia's financial capabilities when Moscow lost, in practice, all its tools of control in the peripheral regions (Stepanov, 2000). As a result, the Russian regions in the Far East demanded President Yeltsin's resignation. Several eastern regions permanently ceased tax payments to Moscow. Russia's tax problem became so serious that it threatened the existence of the state (Treisman, 1998). In practice, the Far East regions of Russia commenced final steps toward de-facto independence. The leaders of Yakutia, Magadan, Sakhalin, and Khabarovsk behaved more or less as independent rulers, both in the realms of internal and external policies.

The secessionist tendencies in the Kalmyk Republic in the southern part of the Volga basin began in the early 1990s (Tolz, 1993). As one of a number of deported nationalities, Kalmyks have lost some of the territories to the Astrakhan oblast and to Dagestan that earlier formed part of "their" republic. Kalmyk nationalists raised claims

over such territories as early as 1991, which led to a countermobilization by local Cossacks (Stepanov, 2000). The Kalmyk Republic has been negatively influenced by the destabilizing impulses coming from both the North Caucasus and the Volga-Urals regions. In addition, there are also negative impulses coming from the south in the form of the influx of forced migrants from the North Caucasus, as well as the influence exerted by Kazan nationalists on the Tatar diaspora present in Astrakhan that makes the stability in the city volatile (Stepanov, 2000; Viktorin, 1993). The fact that Cossacks see Astrakhan as one of the territories of their historical settlements is a potential factor that could provoke ethnic destabilization in the region.

Another major region of ethnic tension and instability is the Republic of Tuva (Sdasyuk, 2000). In 1989, the Tuvinian Popular Front (TPF) demanded Tuva's independence from Russia. The tiny Republic of Tuva is economically very weak, therefore, this case falsifies the cause of Russian secessionist movements as related to a strong economic potential hypothesis (Giuliano, 2006). Tuvinians' aspirations toward independence have been limited by the subsidies they receive from the federal center (Balzer, 1999).

Tuva was an independent administrative unit within the Chinese empire from 1757 to 1912 (Alatalu, 1992). Tuva was never conquered by Tsarist Russia, but in 1914, it became a Russian protectorate and in 1921, after a referendum, it became the independent state of the Popular Republic of Tuva (Alatalu, 1992). Independence lasted until 1944 when Tuva was annexed by the Soviet Union as an autonomous oblast within the Russian Federation, and after seventeen years was granted the status of an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (Rupen, 1965). Tuva borders Mongolia to the

south, and this makes its secession more feasible. Moreover, Tuvinians who speak a Turkic language and are Buddhist are an overwhelming part of the population. Culturally they are distinct from the Russians and are much closer to neighboring Mongolia (Alatalu, 1992). The increasing level of unemployment in rural areas in addition to the rise of crime in urban centers makes the Tuva situation very similar to that of the North Caucasian Republics (Sullivan, 1995). During the 1990s, a series of interethnic clashes took place in several public meetings in the Republican capital of Kyzyl. In October 1991, radical Tuvinian nationalists almost managed to seize power (Sullivan, 1995). After the failed “putsch,” the Republican leadership that remained in power, thanks to Moscow’s support, moderated its separatist demands. Such demands are constrained by the extreme poverty of the republic whose economy depends largely on the transfers it receives from the federal budget (Balzer, 1999).

Events that develop in Tuva have a marked influence on the situation in neighboring Khakasia, where the titular nationality numerically amounts to a small minority relative to the local Russian population, and the Buryat “national” territories, which include the Republic of Buryatia and two Buryat national districts (Stepanov, 2000). Among Buryat intellectuals and nationalist politicians there is very strong support for the idea of recreating the Buryat-Mongolian Republic that existed until 1937 and included all Buryat “national” territories, which are today divided into three distinct non-contiguous federal areas. Buryats’ negative attitudes toward the Russians stem from the memories of the destruction of Buddhist temples and schools in the 1920s and 1930s by the Soviet authorities (Stepanov, 2000). As in Tuva, Buryat separatism has similarly

slowed down because of the republic's dependence on subsidies from Moscow (Balzer, 1999).

In mid-November 1998, the Kalmyks tried to claim formal independence from Moscow. This attempt turned into a call to action for many peripheral regions. Indeed, in early November 1996, in Khabarovsk, Far Eastern leaders issued a warning to Primakov's government that they would take extreme measures, including withholding payments to the federal budget, if the government did not meet its financial obligations toward Russia's eastern regions (Kommersant Daily, November 12, 1996). In October and November 1998, Russian and American media started discussing the possibility of the exchange of Chukotka, Kamchatka, and Sakhalin for Russian foreign debts.¹⁶ In the spring of 1999, the Russian media started publishing detailed scenarios of disintegration.

The heavy military losses of Russian troops in Chechnya in early 1995 revealed the integral weakness of the central government, thus encouraging the Far East governors to be bold in their disputes with Moscow. Both governor Nazdratenko of Primorsk and the Khabarovsk governor Ishayev blamed Moscow directly for local problems, intimating that Moscow's policy caused the destruction of the local economy and infrastructure. At the same time they tried to establish strong ties with the political and business circles of the United States and Japan (Meyer, 1999).

The withdrawal of Russian troops from Chechnya in August 1996 added fuel to the mood of disintegration in the peripheral regions of Russia. The growth and maturing of the secessionist atmosphere in the Russian Far East took place from the end of 1996 to the autumn of 1997. By this time the eastern regions from Chita to Vladivostok, which

were already suffering from the ravages of socioeconomic devastation and poverty, considered Moscow to be the major enemy (Stepanov, 2000).

Several local leaders, including Nazdratenko in Vladivostok, Ishaev in Khabarovsk, President Nikolayev in Yakutiya, governor Tsvetkov in Magadan, and governor Farkhutdinov in Sakhalin, began considering opportunities for separating from Russia by transforming into independent states (Stepanov, 2000; Alexeev & Troyakova, 1999). To prepare for this possible impending transformation, they began to establish local stocks of precious metals as the base for the future issuing of independent currencies as well as putting local power systems under their control. In addition, from August 1996 to August 1997, Far Eastern leaders were engaged in a number of centrifugal activities that are briefly summarized below.

Khabarovsk's governor Ishaev became influential over the local troops of the Russian army and border guards. Simultaneously, as the chairman of the Far Eastern and Trans-Baikal Association, he tried to transform this group of regions into a united block opposing Moscow. Ishaev considered the United States and Japan as the political and economic protectors of the future Far Eastern Republic (Stepanov, 2000). Primorye's governor Nazdratenko produced a new series of anti-Chinese and anti-Moscow statements. Moscow's attempts to limit his authority during the summer-to-autumn period of 1997 failed, and became a new source of courage to the others (Alexeev & Troyakova, 1999).

Magadan's governor Tsvetkov established strong ties to potential investors in the local gold, silver, oil and fish industries in the United States, Japan, and Canada, and concluded several large-scale investment agreements (Round, 2005). Despite fierce

resistance from Moscow, he simultaneously transferred the Magadan seaport to local control and established an independent regional Precious Metals Fund. By every means possible he tried to protect the region's interests against the central power (Round, 2005).

The struggle between Moscow and the Yakutia Republic for the control of local resources such as gold and diamonds took on an especially dynamic form in the 1990s (Balzer & Vinokurova, 1996). Moscow used all means available, including the economic blockade of Yakutia, to stop this. Finally, Yakutsk yielded to Moscow's pressure and in October 1997 signed a new agreement with De Beers about diamond exportation on Moscow-dictated terms. By the end of 1997, Yakutia had its own Golden Fund and even started the use of gold chips as salary payment. Simultaneously Yakutia upgraded its ties to the business circles of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Japan, and reportedly made definite attempts to establish serious political ties with these countries (Balzer, 1999).

In March 1997, the relations between Sakhalin and Moscow were tense. By that summer, coupled with the growth of American and Japanese business presence at Sakhalin Island and a new deterioration of the local economy and the social sector, the secessionist moods became very vocal. Severe economic problems in Sakhalin encouraged regional cooperation between Sakhalin and Hokkaido of Japan (Okuyama, 2003). By that autumn, despite Russian leader's opposition to any territorial concession to Japan, a significant part of the population of the South Kurile Islands openly claimed a merger with Japan (Okuyama, 2003). Kamchatka's fishing industry effectively established ties with the Japanese, South Korean, and other economies, thus almost eliminating a Russian role in the fisheries (Allison, 2001; Thornhill, 1996). The desires of

local people moved in a similar direction. In Chukotka, a large part of the local population and some of the districts' leaders were actively considering "selling off" this region to the United States (Grey, 2005). In a short time, the entire Eastern Arc became the zone most distant from Moscow and closest to the United States, Canada, and Japan, not only geographically, but also in economic and political terms. By the autumn of 1997, the Eastern Arc was dreaming of secession from Russia and initiating a form of merger with the United States or Japan (Stepanov, 2000).

By the end of 1997, the trend toward separation was growing throughout Eastern Siberia and in the Northern Caucasus Muslim-dominated republics (Sdasyuk, 2000; Stepanov, 2000). Under the environment of a new economic crisis, the flame of separatism embraced not only the Russian Far East, but also Eastern Siberia, the national Republics of the Northern Caucasus, the Muslim-dominated Republics of the Volga-Ural zone, and even St. Petersburg (Stepanov, 2000). Animosity toward Moscow was becoming the dominating factor in all of these regions. The dismissal in March 1998 of Chernomyrdin's government, which had very strong ties to regional leaders, became a crushing blow to the political integrity of Russia (Gidadhubli, 1998). From January through March 1998, the situation in these regions was chaotic as I briefly summarize below.

Surprisingly, a separatist movement began in St. Petersburg, a second biggest city of Russia, as well. The movement in St. Petersburg gained extra strength with the adoption of the "Petersburg Constitution" by the local Duma, demonstrating the influence of separatist forces (Stepanov, 2000). In 1997 and in the beginning of 1998, the most serious political situation formed in Tatarstan, where President Shaimiyev was

transformed into an almost sovereign ruler. The number of ethnic Russians among the local leaders diminished significantly, thus making the political aspirations of the Tatars stronger (Sdasyuk, 2000).

Political developments in the Kalmyk Republic were also significant. In February 1998, the Kalmyk Republic's President Ilyumjinov dismissed the republican government and put all executive structures under his own direct control, thus severely reducing Moscow's influence, which had already ebbed to insignificance (Sdasyuk, 2000).

The separatist aspirations of the people of the Tuva Republic, located in the most southerly part of Eastern Siberia, were strong. Tuva reestablished the culture of shamans and lamas where they exerted considerable influence as executive advisers. The republic almost broke away from the Russian Federation and was considering codification of this separation (Balzer, 1999).

By the spring of 1998, in addition to Chechnya, the Muslim-dominated republics of the Northern Caucasus, namely Dagestan, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachaevo-Cherkessia, and Adygea, became, de facto, independent from Moscow. They began establishing their own armies not controlled by Moscow. Some even started guerrilla warfare against the ethnic Russian-dominated Stavropol region. Arguably, Moscow had been holding these regions inside Russia only by paying tribute, just as in the sixteenth and seventeenth century Moscow had to pay tribute to the Crimean Khan. Simultaneously the Russian-dominated Stavropol, Krasnodar, and Rostov regions formed new Cossack troops to fight against the Muslim republics without any support from Russia (Stepanov, 2000).

By the spring of 1998, it became clear that even such centralization of a united power supply system, monetary system, army, and a legal system based on the Russian Constitution became extremely weak and could not hold Russia together (Alexeev & Troyakova, 1999). All these factors made disintegration tendencies stronger. Leaders of the Russian Far East regions primarily along the Trans-Siberian Railroad, most importantly, Khabarovsk's governor, Ishayev, started open discussions about the Far East reestablishing itself as a separate republic. They even attempted to reestablish control over local armed forces. Ishayev published an interview in a Moscow paper that warned Moscow that the Russian Far East was ready for separation, or was separating already. By the spring of 1998, the influence of Moscow in the Russian Far East was reduced, in practice, to zero. Cessation of attacks on Primorye's governor Nazdratenko demonstrated that point perfectly. During the period from September 1997 to April 1998, the political-economic elite of the Far Northeast regions also upgraded their ties to foreign countries such as the United States, Japan, Canada, and the United Kingdom, dealing in the trade of raw materials to export and subsequent investment- project realization. Simultaneously, the local political elite, especially, inside the Eastern Arc, did its best to establish strong ties to the governors of Alaska and the state of Washington, Japan's Hokkaido Island, and the Canadian province of British Columbia (Alexseev & Troyakova, 1999).

Thus, the separation trend in the Russian Federation during the 1990s was not limited to Chechnya alone. Popular support for nationalism and separatism varied significantly among Russia's ethnic republics throughout the decade of the 1990s. However, political protests in Russia's various regions on purely ethnic grounds were rare (Alexseev, 2001). The exploitation of economic hardships associated with the ethnic

problems made more sense. Russia's failing economy allowed particular issues to be articulated by nationalist leaders and to resonate with certain ethnic populations. In almost all the aforementioned cases, nationalist leaders were able to win popular support through politicizing ethnicity by persuading people to view their personal chances in life as dependent upon the political fate of their ethnic community (Alexseev, 1999).

However, it is worth noting that the only separation movement that is still active today in Russia is in Chechnya. The character of those different separation movements was not the same. Stepanov (2000) has identified three main forms of separatism in Russia: (1) radical separatism (i.e., polity seeking, for example, Chechnya), (2) moderate separatism (i.e., polity upgrading), and (3) internal or intrafederal separatism (i.e., sub-polity seeking, this is peculiar to Russia) with the possible variant of intrafederal irredentism (sub-polity seeking/expanding).

Radical separatism is based on the mobilization of peoples for full independence and the creation of a new independent state that enflames violent ethnic wars (Hughes, 2007). A number of these types of war emerged in the territory of the former Soviet Union with thousands of victims and hundreds of thousands of forced migrants (Gilligan, 2010). So far, none of those conflicts has ended in a successful secession or has resulted in a peaceful and stable settlement. The Russo-Chechen conflict is one of the most violent conflicts in former Soviet territory and the only ethnic conflict in the territory of the Russian Federation (Wood, 2007). After the dissolution of the USSR, the republics constituting the Russian Federation, with the exception of Chechnya, in practice continued to bargain with Moscow for more powers and autonomy (Mikhailov, 2005).

Chechnya is the only republic to insist on full political independence from the Russian Federation, suggesting that a new approach is needed to characterize this conflict.

The conflicts in the Far East were based on ethnic issues as well as economic concerns. The conflict in Tatarstan was initiated to gain more political and economic autonomy from the Kremlin. Movements in Karelia and the Kalmyk Republic also sought more autonomy. The Tuva movement has had the character of radical separatism; however, it lacked the economic might necessary for maintaining the struggle, especially without any considerable external support (Balzer, 1999).

The Chechen movement, however, seeks full independence from the Russian Federation, and it is the only ethnic group that has utilized armed struggle against Moscow. Although all of the ethnic movements in Russia might have influenced one another in some way, only the Chechen ethnic movement has continued to challenge the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation (Hughes, 2007). Thus, it can be distinguished from the rest of the ethnic struggles in terms of its positive moral force on the people of the republic and the legitimacy needed for the justification of the war. Russia, under its then president Vladimir Putin, managed to end all the separatist movements in Russia in the early 2000s. Chechnya is indicative of the Chechen movement's strength fed by the aspirations for independence as well as the historical grievances felt by the Chechen people among other issues (Jack, 2004).

Although Moscow gained control of the Chechen Republic during the early 2000s, Russia has not had the ability to end the conflict totally, by neither the application of brute force or by political means. This political reality displays both the complex character of this conflict and Moscow's weakness in handling it in a constructive way to

bring about a long-lasting peace to the region. Hence, it seems quite justified to argue that among all the other ethnic conflicts existing in the Russian Federation only the Chechen struggle with Russia has a moral right to be labeled as a national liberation movement due to its character and persistence.

Territorial Integrity versus Self-determination

Territorial integrity is the principle under international law that nation-states should not attempt to promote secessionist movements or border changes in other nation-states. Conversely it states that border changes imposed by force are considered acts of aggression (Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff, 2001). This international norm is also one of the generally accepted rules of international law that is enshrined in the UN Charter. The rule of territorial integrity is associated with the notion of national unity. In addition, this principle is considered one of the most important outcomes of the 1648 Westphalia Peace Treaty that marked the beginning of a new era in the political history of the modern age by establishing the nation-state system. This concept is especially significant for the states experiencing ethnopolitical secessionist conflicts. It is not easy to decide who has a right to secede, or to what extent political states are legitimate. The benefits of political stability have always been important to states. Self-determination should be accommodated whenever it does not conflict with political order as well as the security of political states (Wellman, 2005).

Thomas Hobbes, a classical realist philosopher of power politics, appreciated the benefits of political security. He advocated granting unlimited power to rulers, or Leviathans, in order to keep order by having complete control over all aspects of their

constituents' lives (Hobbes, 1968). John Locke, however, was against Hobbes' ideas, stating that many areas of human life should be off-limits from political interference by the state (Wellman, 2005). In fact, he was an advocate of the ideas for a type of limited government that later emerged in the United States. Human self-determination, according to Locke, should be given priority in all cases. People should insist upon the rights to self-determination where the consequences would not be excessively harmful (Wellman, 2005).

The Russian administration has always used the principle of territorial integrity to justify its policies toward Chechnya. This principle is also associated with the principle of non-interference, which forbids foreign entities from interfering in the domestic affairs of a nation-state (Puri, 2001). On numerous occasions, Russia has accused foreign countries of interfering in its domestic affairs when the latter criticized Moscow for its human rights abuses in Chechnya (Stephen, 2004).

More importantly, Russia has claimed that the separatist governments of Chechnya under such leaders as Dudayev, Yandarbiyev, and Maskhadov were unable to protect their constituents' basic rights, at least because of their limited capacity in keeping order and a just political environment in the Republic (Lieven, 1998). Hence, the separatist governments of Chechnya did not have the right to declare political self-determination. However, the Chechen leadership claimed that Chechens had sufficient justification to advocate for political self-determination, and to hold Russia responsible for the harmful events occurring in Chechnya (Wood, 2007).

Thus, the most crucial point is that Russia, as a rump state, also appeared unable or unwilling to protect its constituents' basic human rights. Russia's brutal policies have

limited its own moral rights to territorial integrity. Both Chechnya as a separatist group and Russia as a rump state have displayed their inability to maintain a secure and just political environment in Chechnya.

In recent years the rule of territorial integrity has been challenged by a number of scholars and experts, mainly because it is at odds with the doctrine of human rights (Freeman, 1999). Mass human rights abuses in the name of the preservation of territorial integrity seems obsolete to many who argue that a group can have a remedial right to secede if it has suffered severe and long-standing injustice due to the harsh policies of the state (Wellman, 2005). This, in turn, means that there are clashing rules within international law and political theory, none of which in essence prevails over the other.

The international legal system is conservative, failing to recognize Chechnya's right to secede from Russia (Wellman, 2005). Scholars such as Copp (1998), Buchanan (1991, 2004) and Wellman (2005), among others, have discussed the necessity for a revision of the international legal system.

Copp, for example, argues that the issues related to secessionism should be dealt with by the International Court of Justice, and the necessary amendments should be made in the working policies of this legal body (Copp, 1998). However, bringing the international legal system into line with the functional theory of secession seems unrealistic because nation-states, still the key international actors, are concerned with their territorial integrity. Reforming existing international law in terms of the moral rights to political self-determination would be possible with the development of democratic principles, which receive greater international support (Wellman, 2005).

Self-determination

Considering the fact that it is the will of the people that makes a state legitimate, it can be argued that national self-determination challenges the territorial integrity of states, which implies that a people should be free to choose their own state as well as its territorial boundaries (Freeman, 1999). In addition, there are far more self-identified nations than there are existing states in the world, and there is no legal process to redraw state boundaries according to the will of these peoples (Talbot, 2000). Consequently, one of the key problems with the principle of political self-determination is associated with its own limitations.

Another problem with the principle of self-determination is related to who should be given a right to secede. There are a number of conflicting views on this issue. Allen Buchanan (2007), for example, supports territorial integrity as a moral and legal aspect of constitutional democracy. He also argues that a group has a general right to secede if it has suffered certain injustices, and for whom secession is the appropriate remedy of last resort. Secession should be recognized if the state grants, or the constitution includes, a right to secede (Buchanan, 2007).

The principle of political self-determination is the rising value of human rights protection and morality under international law. One may consistently affirm the legitimacy of political states and their rights to national unity, but this does not imply that there can be no primary rights to secede. The idea of reconfiguration of the territorial boundaries of existing states is defended by many people if this reorganization will not interrupt the vital interests of political society (Wellman, 2005).

Secessionist movements have usually claimed that they have a right to self-determination. Although this idea has been supported by many activists and theoreticians, some argue that it may form a dangerous precedent for peace and stability (Shaw, 1997). Fulfilling its requirements may mean putting a country into additional turmoil, which may be dangerous for the national unity of existing states as well, creating serious international concerns in similar situations (Shaw, 1997). Hence, the principle of self-determination comes into conflict with the rule of national unity and territorial integrity. It is generally argued that the internal requirements of the principle should be met in the case of an ethnonational entity seeking to become a state (Shaw, 1997).

The UN Charter's Chapter 1 (Purposes and Principles), Article 1, Part 2, states that the purpose of the UN Charter is: "To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace."¹⁷ Article 1 of both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) states that: "All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development."¹⁸ Moreover, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights article 15 declares that everyone has the right to a nationality and that no one should be arbitrarily deprived of a nationality or denied the right to change nationality.¹⁹ However, the Charter and other resolutions did not insist on full independence as the best way of obtaining self-government, nor did they include an enforcement mechanism. Moreover, nations were recognized by the legal doctrine of *uti possidetis juris*, meaning that old administrative

boundaries would become international boundaries upon independence, even if they had little relevance to linguistic, ethnic, and cultural boundaries (Shaw, 1997). Justified by the language of self-determination, between 1946 and 1960 the peoples of more than thirty new nations freed themselves from colonial status in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The territoriality issue inevitably led to more conflicts and independence movements within many nations challenging the assumption that territorial integrity is as important as self-determination.

This principle was for the first time practically used by the American President Woodrow Wilson in 1918 when his famous Fourteen Points contained plans for the independence of certain Middle Eastern peoples such as the Kurds and Armenians. According to this document, these peoples had a right to self-determination, meaning they could determine their own the political fate. Wilson was not able to apply his ideas fully, however, his ideas have influenced the world agenda ever since (Lynch, 2002).

In fact, the evolution of self-determination ideas has also affected Chechens, who believe they have a right in determining their own national fate. Chechens justify their right to self-determination by stressing that Russians initially applied brute force to include Chechnya into its territories, and ever thereafter used force to keep Chechnya as an integral part of Russia. Thus, the initial invasion and subsequent union of Chechnya with Russia was forceful and unjust, legitimizing the Chechens' aspirations for self-determination.

Violating the Basic Needs and Aggressive Behavior of Chechens

During the nineteenth century, the basic needs of the Chechen people were subject to

violation because of the tsarist advance into the Caucasus. During the Soviet era the violation of Chechens' basic needs became exacerbated. During post-Soviet times, the violation of the basic needs of Chechens by Russia went downhill from bad to even worse (Gall & Waal, 1999).

In 1944, when the Chechen people were forced to leave their homes, they were deprived of their basic needs for health and welfare. Thousands died on the sealed train cars carrying them to Siberia and Kazakhstan because of lack of water and food, bad sanitation, and disease. The Chechens were forced to find refuge in a climate very different from the Northern Caucasus in Northern Kazakhstan and Siberia (Williams, 2001). Many people in exile succumbed to diseases, and some died in their new inhospitable homes. The Chechens were unprotected against diseases and intentionally put into conditions where the risk of getting sick was much higher (Seely, 2001).

The Chechens' needs for security were violated by Russia for a long time. In the middle of the 1940s, almost the entire nation was sent into an exile that was enforced by the Soviet military and police, who, by definition, were supposed to satisfy the Chechens' security needs as citizens of the Soviet Union. As a result, the Chechens have had good reasons to lose their trust in the Soviet military and police as their permanent "security satisfiers" (Galtung, 1990:309).

This need of the Chechen people has been violated to the extreme by the Russian state. The Chechens, for example, were deprived of the choice of the place they wished to live in, since they were sent to exile in the 1940s. For these mountain people whose dearest value is freedom, life in exile was incredibly hard (Flemming, 1998).

In 1944, train cars taking Chechen people into exile were sealed, and the trips to

Kazakhstan, Siberia, and Central Asia ranged from two to three weeks in duration. Russian frustration shaped Chechens' attitudes, and these aggressive feelings, in turn, resulted in fostering more aggressive behavior, resulting in a continuous cycle of violence and revenge that exacerbated the conflict situation. Another example of the violation of the Chechens' needs was the fact that for a long period of time Chechen men in Chechnya were forced to remain in their homes or at the filtration centers (Seely, 2001). This Russian policy was aimed to block their "terrorist" activities (Politkovskaya, 2003). However, by doing so the Russians also blocked the men's energy and freedom of movement. These frustrated Chechen men gradually directed their aggression against the initial source of their frustration (Askerov, 2008). The reverse may also be true, as Russian soldiers who became frustrated by the Chechens' actions became aggressive in turn. Frustration generates aggression, and then aggression itself generates further aggression as the vicious cycle perpetuates itself (Galtung, 1964).

The psychological effects of difficult life conditions eventually brings about violence (Askerov, 2008). Chechen attitudes after World War II towards Soviet rule were a direct reaction to Soviet policies and illustrate this point well. During the early 1990s, the Chechens' tough behavior against Russian rule began to escalate as a result of Chechen aspirations toward independence and their old grievances against Russian rule (Williams, 2000, 2004).

Nazi Germany's threats to invade the Soviet Union, as well as to seize the oil fields of the Caucasus, encouraged Soviet suspicions of the probability that Chechens were cooperating with the Germans, which constituted the rationale behind the mistreatment of the Chechen people by the Kremlin in 1944 (Williams, 2000). Moreover,

the Chechens were very much influenced by the difficult and restrictive life conditions they faced in exile, thus impacting the Chechen collective memory. Even the details of the events are known by Chechen youth through *transgenerational externalization* (Volkan, 1997). Most of the people interviewed for my study were either born in exile or subject to it. The Chechen peoples share a *chosen trauma*—a shared mental representation of a massive trauma that the group suffered at the hand of an enemy—to maintain their group identity (Volkan, 1990). This chosen trauma, which was reactivated with Chechen efforts in the 1990s to support the group's threatened identity, has had dramatic and destructive consequences (Volkan, 2001).

The memory of many battles with the Russians remains alive today for most Chechens, and it played a decisive role in many Chechens' willingness to take up arms in 1994 against their historic enemy. Williams (2000) argues that the gravest event affecting the Chechens' collective psyche was the mass deportation of Chechens in 1944. This tragic event has played a salient role in shaping the collective actions of Chechen people against the Russians today (Lieven, 1998).

The Russians may also have chosen traumas arising from the Chechen raids on their territories (Askerov, 2008). Perhaps it is true that as time passes the initial motives for hostilities are forgotten by the adversaries and both sides start to see themselves as right and their own reasons as just. Today, hardly any Russian official would hold Russia responsible for tsarist Russia's Chechen atrocities. It is likely that people forget their forefathers' wrongdoings for a variety of reasons. In some cases, the in-group stories that highlight the other's unfriendly attitude to them and their own victimhood is the primary reason (Arthur, 2009). It is hard to determine whether the Russians think of Chechens as

identical with potential or actual terrorists due to the Russian state's anti-Chechen propaganda that started during tsarist times in the wake of occasional Chechen terror acts. Whatever the reason, the Russians also have a need for physical and emotional security, which is threatened by the presence of Chechen fighters in Chechnya (Askerov, 2008). The capture of a hospital in Budyonnovsk in 1995 (Wood, 2007), a Russian ferryboat in Istanbul in 1996 (Askerov, 2008), a theater building in Moscow in 2002 (Bhattacharji, 2008), the tragic Beslan school events of 2003 (Satter, 2006), and the Moscow subway blast in 2010 (Pan, 2010) that culminated in the death of tens of hundreds of hostages remains a fresh memory for Russians (Felgenhauer, 2002; Gentchev, 2002; Kinzer, 1996).

A process of dehumanization of the enemy by nationalistic propaganda on both sides has induced very bloody actions as reflected in the *Prisoners of the Mountains*, a film by Sergei Bodrov.²⁰ The fact that the film is based on Leo Tolstoy's short story *Prisoner of the Caucasus*²¹ written in 1872, reveals the reality of unchanged goal incompatibility between both conflict parties for almost 150 years. What has changed are conflict behaviors and attitudes, evidenced in the dynamic processes occurring throughout the history of this intractable conflict influencing the behavior of both parties changing from manifest to latent forms, and vice versa. These dynamic processes have engendered new conflict situations on different levels, exacerbating and deepening the initial conflict between the Chechens and the Russian state (Askerov, 2008).

The aggressive behavior of Chechens is also grounded in their frustration by their unfavorable political situation. Frustration from outgroups produces increased nationalist hostility, which is most intensely focused on the perceived source of frustration

(Rosenblatt, 2006). It is argued that not every frustrating situation causes overt aggression (Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff, 2001). In cases where the frustration is stronger with an authority capable of retaliating, indirect aggression, rather than direct aggression, is more likely to take place. Although frustration is not the only source of aggression, its role in the Chechens' readiness to be included into the armed struggle is significant.

Indeed, most Russian servicemen have regarded all Chechen males as enemies. They have gathered Chechen civilian males into temporary filtration centers where the detainees have been subject to brutal interrogation and torture, or they simply disappear (Politkovskaya, 2007). During my interviews with young Chechens, they mentioned the names of their relatives, friends, or acquaintances that have been missing since they were taken to the filtration centers. In one case, the interviewee received countless phone calls from other Chechens during the course of our interview who provided him with information about their missing people. I understood that he and those who called him regarded me as a representative of a foreign organization who could probably help them find their missing people. Not to dash their hopes, I did not reveal my own helplessness in this matter.

Oleg Orlov, one of the leaders of Memorial, a Russia's human rights organization based in Moscow, noted that filtration centers are places not sanctioned by any law, prosecutor, or court. They are places where people are interrogated with no records kept. After interrogation, those who are still under suspicion are taken somewhere else for further investigation. The Russian forces try to extract evidence from the detainees against their neighbors, relatives, and people who live in the same village. Forcing people to betray their neighbors or co-villagers burdens these Chechen detainees with an

incredibly hard psychological load.

A large number of detainees are freed but some are taken to official temporary detention centers. Others simply disappear. This is also a war crime. These people disappear without trace. Officials will take no responsibility for these people and will even refuse to admit they were arrested in the first place. When a detainee disappears completely it may mean he has died during the course of interrogations at the filtration point; more often it means the detainee is suspected of having ties to the rebels. They are suspected of knowing more than they say they know and so Russian forces continue to 'work' with them. If the bodies of these detainees are found, they usually bear the marks of torture and violent death. It's clear that they were brutally tortured in order to try to extract information from them before they died. Sometimes, particularly over the past few months, security forces blow up the bodies in order that they cannot be identified. But in some cases they still can be identified. When 10 bodies were found in January, in the outskirts of Grozny, two of them were positively identified and it was established that they had been detained earlier by federal forces. The Russian Prosecutor's office has told us that it recognizes that people are sometimes detained by federal forces and that they sometimes disappear during the sweep operations (Lagnado, April 18, 2003).

Chechen citizens of Russia have also suffered serious human rights problems in Russian cities outside of Chechnya. They are either fired by the companies they work for who worry about having problems if their Chechen workers are arrested by the Russian police on false grounds, or they are simply discriminated against (Poltkovskaya, 2005).

In their temporary places of refuge, Chechens faced other types of problems associated with human rights such as housing, humanitarian, financial, food, and health issues (Musayev, 2003). In one case, one of the subjects of this study reported to me that he and his family had shared a two-bedroom apartment with four large families for an extended period of time. The same person later stressed this point at a press conference in Baku while rejecting claims that the late Abdurrahmanov gave financial aid to the Chechen fighters. Moreover, he mentioned how two young Chechen men were recently

detained by the local Azerbaijani police for allegedly selling drugs. He declared that it was impossible that both young men were dealing drugs. He added that the Chechen leadership knows full well who among them is doing what. He highlighted the increase in human rights abuses against members of the Chechen community as a result of increasing Russian influence in the country (from the materials of my interview with Ramazanov).

Causes for Disunity among Chechens

An overt conflict has a dynamic nature. Mitchell (1982) makes the point that there are three main areas where dynamic processes in conflicts may occur such as: (1) within the parties, (2) between the parties, and (3) between the parties and their environments. Changes and developments over time within these three areas also influence other aspects of the conflict although they vary from case to case. In the Russo-Chechen conflict, developments have taken place within both parties over time. After the Russian conquest of Chechnya in the nineteenth century the Chechens, or at least a segment of them, adapted to a new way of life, new environment, new administration, and later—under Soviet rule—adapted to a new education system, a new military service, as well as the use of the Russian language (Askerov, 2008). This list is not exhaustive, however, it is important to emphasize that those and many other changes within the Chechen community have influenced the group's attitudes and behavior over time. Some scholars call these kinds of changes structural changes in the group (Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim, 1994). For example, Rubin, Pruitt and Kim (1994) discuss six mechanisms that influence how groups tend to change, and which contribute to the process of conflict escalation or de-escalation. The importance of group change lies in its actual impact on the conflict

dynamics.

Tishkov contends that the Chechen coalitions are false, as they were formed by “groups of battlefront warriors camouflaged as ‘traditional’ Chechen clans ... these armed coalitions are extremely volatile, that their members’ solidarity is limited to microgroups of men coming from the same village, most likely with a more informed city man as their commander” (Tishkov, 2004:14). To identify the Chechen coalitions as false and volatile does not seem to reflect the reality on the ground. It is true that rivalries exist among different Chechen groups, which deepens disunity in presenting a unified Chechen military strategy or in supporting peace talks. The reasons for Chechen disunity are multiple, requiring some detailed discussion.

First, individual group members’ attitudes and perceptions become extreme—what Moscovici and Zavalloni call *group polarization* (Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim, 1994:92). In this case, the Chechens started to polarize at the very beginning of the separatist movement when they had to formulate a military strategy. They articulated conflicting views such as either: (1) follow a peaceful policy; or (2) strike for independence using armed struggle. Alik Aluyev, one of the leaders of the Chechen liberation movement, informed me in Baku that Dudayev, the first president of Chechnya, initially was an advocate of the first view, but unfortunately he was provoked by group members to choose the second (from my interview materials with Aluyev).

Second, some *runaway norms* develop over time that includes behavior and attitudes, which are shared by the majority of group members (Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim, 1994:93). Negative attitudes like zero-sum thinking, distrust, a reluctance to communicate with another party, etc. can become subject to such norms. As a result, they

become group property and are more likely to escalate conflict. Both parties to the Russian-Chechen conflict have apparently developed similar “norms” as they use violence repeatedly over time.

Another change is related to the development of *contentious group goals*, which grow from the conflict experiences and further exacerbate the conflict situation (Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim, 1994). In fact, the way that groups pursue their goals is different from those of individuals, because the activities of the members of a group can be coordinated as groups become more effective at conflict escalation. The Russian-Chechen conflict, involves groups, and if the members of these groups are inclined to escalate conflict then the escalation is more likely to take place.

The fourth type of change is the development of *group solidarity*, which may be higher at the start of a conflict than as time passes by (Mitchell, 1982:48). The degree of success may play a decisive role in this respect. For example, when the Chechen military leadership lost most of its material resources toward the end of 1996, group solidarity declined sharply, which, in turn, contributed to the commencement of a round of negotiations. The Chechens were united at the very beginning of the war when the fast and dramatic development of the situation in the republic was unforeseen. Group solidarity, therefore, is not only a state but it is also a process.

The fifth type of change highlights the fact that the leadership of groups embroiled in intractable conflicts is more likely to fall into the hands of *militant leaders* (Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim, 1994:94). These types of leaders carry particular negative feelings toward their adversary, and are very rigid in their demands. Once the militant groups take over, they use extreme tactics to unify and commit the group to action. In 1991, Dudayev,

a former Soviet general who emerged as Chechnya's leader, made sure to retain the support of the more militant Chechen highlanders, who were less Sovietized and were more responsive to Dudayev's policy to play the ethnic and religious cards (Seely, 2001).

The sixth type of group change that takes place in escalating conflict is the emergence of *militant subgroups* (Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim, 1994:94). An example is the formation of other military groups in Chechnya under the leadership of Raduyev, Khattab, and Basayev, among others, who have been renowned for their extreme military tactics. Once different warlords appeared in Chechnya with considerable military might, the power of a single leader to unite the group diminished sharply. In this sense, Maskhadov, for example, lost his power to a considerable degree, making his legitimacy as president of the republic suspicious. It is not the difficult war conditions that make field commanders disagree with each other, rather, it is their principles and sources of financing (Politkovskaya, 2007).

Thus, it would be erroneous to assume that preferences within the Chechen ethnic group are uniform, shared, and fixed. Even a strong sense of ethnic and religious shared identities among the group members did not prevent the emergence of different preferences, interests, and policies among the group's leaders.

The Criminal Elements on the Stage

The Chechen community has been unfairly portrayed as rogue criminals by the Russian government and media to de-humanize and demonize rebel elements fighting in Chechnya and to legitimize Russia's policy in the Caucasus (Russell, 2005). Valery Tishkov, for example, argues that it is not only the Russian media but also the foreign

press that has created an image of the Chechen mafia that neutralized global sympathy toward Chechens, thus having an adverse effect on international support for the Chechens (Maltsev, 2002).

It is possible that some of the Chechen criminal gangs found Chechnya to be a safe haven for their activities (Nikolaev, 2003). However, it should be noted that compared to the entire number of organized criminal gangs in Russia, Chechen criminal groups thinned out when Russia's influence in Chechnya diminished in the second half of the 1990s. Moreover, there were a number of organized criminal groups in other parts of the Russian Federation as well (Dempsey & Lukas, 1999). Just as Russian security forces appeared unable to eliminate decisively the criminal gangs in the Russian cities, the Chechen national government was unable to control criminal groups in Chechnya.

The abduction of hostages for ransom flourished especially during the first Chechen war as well as the period between the first and second wars. The number of hostages reached hundreds, and the amount of circulating ransom money was in the tens of millions of dollars (Tishkov, 2004). The hostage-taking business blossomed because the Chechens had business partners in Russia. In many cases, Chechen fighters claimed responsibility for a kidnapping out of vanity. Both they and some Russian politicians colored the rescue process to influence the Russian people (Tishkov, 2004).

Hostages were taken in Chechnya for ransom by: (1) criminals who wanted to make money for themselves; (2) criminals aided by some warlords to finance their warlike activities; (3) criminals collaborating with the Russian authorities to share the ransom money; and (4) Russian mediators who were also making money independently by taking their own cut from the amount demanded by the criminals.

As Tishkov describes, in one case the hostage-takers in Chechnya were counting on getting \$1 million for three hostages, but the intermediaries between the kidnappers and the Russian authorities or media millionaires were receiving about \$2 million from the latter (Tishkov, 2004). Large amounts of ransom money contributed to a flourishing criminal business. On the other hand, the Chechen people paid Russian authorities large amounts of money to liberate their incarcerated relatives, and even for their dead bodies. Roza Gantemorova (a fictitious name), an informant of this study who lives in the United States, said that she and her husband sent a large sum of money to Chechnya to pay the Russian authorities to free her brother-in-law. He had been arrested because they both gave a public talk in Washington. They have never publically spoken again about the Chechen issues (from my interview with Sulimov).

In the early 1990s, some of Russia's mass media started to degrade Dudayev, the first president of Chechnya, portraying his regime as an illegal force pushing the Chechen people into organized criminality. The Russian media suggested that the branches of Dudayev's secret service were made up of criminal structures (Nikolaev, 1996). Dudayev was also blamed for providing asylum to criminals in Chechnya (Nikolaev, 1996). The former deputy Prime Minister of Russia, Sergei Shakrai, held the Chechens responsible for smuggling currency, as well as illicit drugs and arms, in order to make large amounts of money (Nikolaev, 1996). The Russian media has worked to "prove" that Chechen politics had been criminalized in Chechnya due to the corrupt leadership in the republic. Undoubtedly, these and similar crimes had taken place in Chechnya since 1991. However, blaming the entire Chechen people does not reflect the reality on the ground.

Rather, it would be more constructive for the media to discuss the criminal groups that make use of the fertile conditions to make money illegally.

Anna Politkovskaya (1999) argues that many elements other than criminals make money out of the war in Chechnya. The level of inhumanity to which the Russian authorities and some Chechen leaders have sunk in Chechnya is shocking. During the first Chechen war, she notes, hundreds of Russian soldiers disappeared, and their mothers did not even know where their children's bodies were buried. A year after the war, the Russian Ministry of Defense privatized the business of identifying the missing. A company called Military Commemoration Ltd. received \$4 million from the state to find and bury Russian dead soldiers. However, "the number of war casualties used to be a military secret, now it's a commercial secret. The strictly confidential information about those missing, presumed dead, is today an entirely tradable commodity: it can be sold, when and to whom you wish" (Politkovskaya, 1999:9). The company traded the missing soldiers' bodies with the parents of the deceased.

Politkovskaya describes the hatred that resulted from such an inappropriate policy of the Russian *apparatchiks* in Chechnya, which both escalated the war, and made it more intractable. She also explains how the Chechen bandits use the convenient conditions created by the war for kidnapping, and how they tortured kidnapped Russians and Chechens mentally and physically (Politkovskaya, 2001).

In the other parts of Russia, most Chechens are considered terrorists. They do not have freedom of movement because they may be detained and arrested any time. For example, two of the family members of a Chechen family travelling to Moscow for cancer treatment faced a bitter problem there. On the street the two men were arrested

and “witnesses” on the scene confirmed that they had grenades with them (Politkovskaya, 2001).

Politkovskaya (2001) also determined that war crimes were hidden by some Russian authorities. The war crime in the village of Novye Aldy, where Russian soldiers killed more than one hundred civilians, became public knowledge thanks to her. She argues that it is not only the criminals, but also the Russian authorities, who make money out of this war. To illustrate the point, Politkovskaya conducted detailed research about how Shamil Basayev’s guerrillas left the village of Pervomayskoe in neighboring Dagestan, where they were surrounded by Russian troops. The Chechen fighters drove out unimpeded in a motorized column led by Basayev’s Jeep. Politkovskaya notes, “Furthermore, we have good reason to suppose that someone paid a very large sum of money to ensure that things ended this way” (Politkovskaya, 2001:25).

In fact, Anna Politkovskaya herself was arrested in Chechnya by Russian military forces. She was detained for two days, and subjected to a mock execution, which is a method of psychological torture in which the subject is made to believe that s/he will be executed. She was also poisoned on her way to Beslan, but she survived. Unfortunately, her opposition to the war and to President Putin, put an end to her courageous life in 2006 when she was assassinated by unknown assailants in Moscow.

Perhaps in every major conflict there are certain elements who find the chaotic conditions fertile for material benefits, as they perceive the overall circumstances as a historical moment for creating new “businesses.” In this sense, the Russo-Chechen conflict should be regarded neither as an exception to the rule, nor as a major surprise. For example, mafias found the conditions in Chechnya created by the war suitable for a

number of “businesses” such as kidnapping people, drug trafficking, and the guns trade (Cockburn, 2001; Schandermani, 2002).

However, it was not only the mafia who made a profit from the war. Russian servicemen also engaged in robberies in addition to taking bribes from locals (Lagnado, 2003). The frequent sweep operations by the Russian military were usually accompanied by crimes against the local population. Robberies on a mass scale are the most common and basic form of war crimes. The troops or police not only take people’s money, but they also organize operations in which they openly load peoples’ property onto trucks or armored personnel carriers and take it away (Lagnado, 2003). As a number of human rights experts argue, this is a major business for the military and is clearly sanctioned by the soldiers’ officers (Lagnado, 2003).

The Chechen leader Maskhadov repeatedly started campaigns against the criminals in Chechnya without achieving much success. One of the reasons for his failure was the difficulty of controlling the republic during the war as well as the indirect encouragement of criminals by important Russian politicians and businessmen (Tishkov, 2004).

Atabay (a fictitious name), an informant of this study, is also an important figure in the Chechen separatist movement. He related to me that almost all of the criminal elements in Chechnya who were kidnapping and beheading foreigners were either collaborating with Russian servicemen or supporting them. The purpose of these activities was to undermine the Chechen liberation movement and equate the fighters with terrorists. He added, “Let them call us terrorists, bandits; however they want to, we know who we are and what we want” (from my interview with Karayev).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I provide contextual information for discussions in the subsequent qualitative chapters. Many themes outlined in this chapter are developed in the four following chapters based on the information provided by the subjects of this study.

The central premise of Russia's policy on the Chechen question has rested on the rule of territorial integrity, which opposes any kind of secessionism. The Chechens try to justify their secessionist attempts with their right to political self-determination. Both territorial integrity and self-determination notions are either rejected or supported by different scholars, although the former is still perceived as a stronger rule of international law than the latter as a moral rule.

The Chechen secessionist movement is not the only separatist movement in the Russian Federation. There have been many other cases of secessionism with varying degrees of success such as those with Tatarstan, the Kalmyk Republic, Tuva, Karelia, Bashkortostan, Yakutia, Primorsk, Sakhalin, Khakasia, Mari El, and Buryatiya. However, the only movement that Moscow failed to suppress forcefully or by economic means is the Chechen movement in its armed struggle against Russian troops.

The Russian officials have claimed that Chechens have engaged in criminal activities such as hostage-taking, drug-trafficking, and robbery in an attempt to undermine the integrity and character of the Chechen liberation movement. But facts illustrate that Russian troops in Chechnya carry out similar crimes that support the argument that all the illegal activities are associated with the fertile war conditions that give rise to war-related businesses. In general, the Chechen leadership has made a number of attempts to eliminate these kinds of criminal activities with little success. Facts

demonstrate that the crime rate in other parts of the Russian Federation is also very high as Russian security forces are not able to eliminate criminal gangs entirely. Chechnya and its organized criminals are only a small part of the entire picture in Russia.

Ethnocentrism in Chechnya escalated in the early 1990s due to a number of factors including peoples' desire to forge a nation state as well as a perceived threat posed by the Kremlin. Later on nationalism started to decrease because of the increase of in-group threats and rivalries. Today, most Chechens see the pro-Russian Chechen government as their number one enemy.

One of the factors that impede positive change is the intra-group rivalry of the Chechens. There are a number of reasons for Chechen disunity. These range from the development of group polarizations to runaway norms, contentious group goals, the emergence of militant leaders, and diminishing group solidarity. Chechens value freedom very much; it is the most important aspect of their identity and, therefore, any outside threat to their freedom unifies the group. Their basic needs for security, food, and shelter, have also been violated for a long time. The deportation of the Chechens in 1944 to Central Asia, Kazakhstan, and Siberia has especially traumatized the Chechen people. Almost thirty percent of the deportees did not survive the two- to three-week-long trip into exile under such harsh conditions. When the Chechens were allowed to return to their homeland after thirteen years, they faced new problems, since their homes were occupied by newcomers. This condition may be compared with the situations of Palestine's Arabs, but the consequences for the Chechens were much more favorable. Unlike the Arabs of the parts of Palestine where Israel was established and who were forced into exile, the Chechens managed to resettle in their homes. However, strikingly,

Chechens do not perceive Russian people as their enemies; rather they regard the Russian state machine as their real adversary. Consequently, the Russo-Chechen conflict is not cultural, rather, it is political. Nevertheless, psychocultural, economic, and historical issues are important in explaining and understanding this protracted ethnopolitical conflict and this approach will be employed in the next chapter.

The events in Chechnya have demonstrated that the Russian state's use of indiscriminate violence is highly counterproductive because it creates new grievances while forcing civilian victims to seek security in rebel arms. However, the endurance of the Chechen struggle is not only the result of Russian military mistakes or the Chechens' ability and willingness to fight. It is also the manifestation of the Chechen peoples' aspirations for independence.

Since the mid-2000s, there has been a significant reduction in the level of fighting in Chechnya between federal troops and Chechen fighters, indicating a substantial weakening of the Chechen resistance movement. Nevertheless, violence in the region has not entirely subsided. There is evidence that it has been spreading to the neighboring regions in the North Caucasus, such as the Muslim Autonomous Republics of Ingushetia, Dagestan, Karachaevo-Cherkessia, and Kabardino-Balkaria. The intricacies of the war and violence in the North Caucasus are so complex that they are only partially related to the spread of radical Islam and the aspirations for independence. Other underlying factors are related but not limited to the persistence of severe economic hardship, unemployment, social alienation, loose government, and disunity among the leadership of Chechnya, as well as Russia's determination to eliminate the "terrorists" by force.

In the following chapter, I introduce a number of PACS theories that shed light on the events taking place in Chechnya, and policies pursued by the parties. Moreover, it helps to formulate peacemaking strategies applicable to the case.

Chapter 4

From Multidimensional Analysis to Multidimensional Intervention

Introduction

In this chapter, I give a general idea of the theoretical literature that I rely on in this thesis in order to both explain the root causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict and to construct the methods for its transformation. After first describing and discussing a number of PACS theories and approaches important to the Russo-Chechen conflict, I provide a general overview of intervention common to all conflicts, including this one. Finally, I try to explain why multidimensional analysis and intervention are important for this case study of the Russo-Chechen conflict.

This study is based on the analysis and research of social phenomena specific to time and place, thus it may be considered as a case study. Cases are invoked by theories implicitly or explicitly before the research process starts. This study of the particular social settings has some sense of generality at least because it represents general categories of the particular social world. This study, therefore, utilizes a broad number of existing theories and approaches both to explain the root causes and methods of transformation of the Russo-Chechen conflict.

In particular, this research project uses a number of PACS theories to conceptually frame a theoretical model to understand the Russo-Chechen conflict and to frame the qualitative chapters. The chapter (1) portrays a detailed profile of events, situations, or people; (2) seeks an explanation of an event, situation, or problem, as well as the practice, or the action or performance of doing something; and (3) outlines a policy prescription to formulate a policy direction.

PACS theories such as basic human needs (Burton, 1979, 1986, 1990), direct and structural violence (Galtung, 1964, 1969, 1971, 1990a, 1996), frustration aggression (Dollard, 1939), psychocultural (Volkan, 1990, 1997, 2001; Ross, 2001, 2007), culture (Avruch, 1998, 2003) social identity (Black, 2003; Jeong & Vayrynen, 1999), gender (Keashly, 2001; Marini, 1990), emotions (Byrne, McLeod & Polkinghorn, 2004; Wilmot & Hocker, 2010), memory (Arthur, 2009; Campana, 2009; Senehi, 2009; Volkan, 2001), and metaphors (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007) are used to frame the conceptual approach for designing the qualitative chapters. Unlike the theories discussed below that are used to frame the intervention chapters, these theories are tied to the qualitative Chapters 6, 7, and 8. The PACS theories presented here assist in analyzing the deep-rooted causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict that are key to a successful intervention, and formulation of a thoughtful policy. This theoretical framework is also employed to organize the qualitative and intervention chapters of this thesis.

The intervention chapters are framed by the practical approaches that refers to the work that professionals in the PACS field do such as mediation (Bercovitch, 2009; Bush & Folger, 1994, 2005; Folger & Bush, 2001; Herrman, 2006; Maundi, Zartman, Khadiagala, & Nuamah, 2006), negotiation (Fisher & Ury, 1991; Spangle & Isenhardt, 2003; Zartman, 2009), facilitation (Cheldelin & Lyons, 2008; Schwartz, 1994), peace building (Lederach, 1997, 1998; Nan & Jeong, 2008), structural transformation (Botes, 2003, 2008), collaborate problem-solving (Fisher, 2005, 2008; Kelman, 1972, 1976, 1992, 1997, 2000), storytelling (Bar-On, 2002; Senehi, 2000, 2008), indigenous approaches (Fry, 2006), and human factors (Azar & Burton, 1986; Burton, 1979, 1987,

1990b). These theories and approaches are used in Chapters 9 and 10 to help shape the intervention system.

Multidimensional Analysis of Ethnic Conflict

Kurt Lewin said many years ago that there was nothing as practical as a good theory while using applied social psychologies (Lewin, 1951). However, this view is contested on the grounds that theories are a luxury in evaluation research (Scriven, 1991), or they have a stifling effect on practice (Thomas, 1997). Nevertheless, it is generally accepted by peace and conflict studies (PACS) scholars that the role of theoretical principles, explanations, hypotheses, and propositions in understanding and explaining the causes and dynamics of human conflict is crucial. Identifying the sources of ethnic conflict, in turn, is crucial for successfully designing intervention strategies to deal with the structural sources and specific triggers, among other factors (Byrne & Keashly, 2002; Cheldelin, Druckman, & Fast, 2003). In other words, successful interventions into conflict situations are dependent on thoughtful and accurate analyses of conflict that is informed by theories (Rubenstein, 2008). Hence, the role of PACS theories in conflict analysis is essential to long-term social and structural change.

Although different scholars define theory differently, in general, theory explains what is going on in a particular situation (Cheldelin, Druckman, & Fast, 2003, 2008; Robson, 2002). In addition, theories explain why a particular answer is predicted, especially in fixed research design where a researcher should be in a position to make predictions before the data are gathered and hypotheses can be made. In flexible research

design, however, a researcher needs to gather data in order to make any conclusions (Robson, 2002).

Kenneth Waltz has stated that the superficial virtue of the single-cause explanation is that it permits a simple, neat solution (Waltz, 1959). Sandole (1999) relates this to the human tendency to simplify reality that would provide a partial and distorted picture. Consequently, there is a need for a holistic approach to act on the view that ethnic conflict is the result of a complex network of causes (Sandole, 1999).

Starting with the multidimensional and multilevel analysis of ethnic conflict is important to understand the origins, development, and dynamics of conflict before taking any steps to resolve it or make any policy recommendation (Byrne & Carter, 1996). Sandole (1998, 2008) formulated a three-pillar framework through which ethnic conflicts can be analyzed, and resolution policies can be designed at any level. A particular conflict is located under pillar 1, the causes and conditions of this conflict are located under pillar 2, and conflict intervention design is located under pillar 3. Under pillar 1, parties, issues, objectives, means, conflict handling, orientations, and conflict environment are studied. Under pillar 2, conflict causes and conditions are researched at individual, societal, international, and the global/ecological levels. Under pillar 3, intervention and third-party objectives are discussed that include conflict prevention, conflict management, conflict settlement, conflict resolution, and conflict transformation, as well as competitive and/or cooperative processes, negative and/or positive peace orientations, and track 1 and/or multitrack actors and processes. As Sandole argues, more types of conflict provide more angles and perspectives on conflict that help us capture the

whole complexity. All three pillars are interrelated to each other to a varying degree depending on the case and context (Sandole, 1998, 2008).

In fact, it is usually necessary to combine variables from different levels. Waltz's *Man, the State and War* (1959) looks at the causes of conflict on three levels: individual, state, and system, arguing that the combination of the three would explain the causes of war better than any one single level alone. Marie Dugan (1994), however, addresses an ethnic conflict case through the "nested paradigm" she put forth to relate the immediate issues within a conflict to the larger systemic aspects. According to the nested paradigm, particular issues arise within relationships, which exist within the larger context of subsystems, and ultimately society-wide systems (Dugan, 1994; Lederach, 2008).

In PACS, two types of theories—micro and macro—are largely used. Micro theories such as psychoanalysis, frustration aggression, and relative deprivation, are related to individual behavior, and macro theories such as social identity theory, rank disequilibrium, etc. explain societal and/or structural causes of ethnic conflicts (Jeong, 2000). Consequently, one can use a combination of micro and macro theories to explain the causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict penetrating into the deep layers of it rather than simplifying it into one single level of analysis and intervention.

In addition, Johan Galtung (1996) discusses ethnic conflict theory in which he explains conflict formations, life cycle conflicts, conflict transformations, conflict interventions, and non-violent conflict transformation. He discusses the manifest-latent dialectic and the conflict triangle in which he includes attitude, behavior, and contradiction, unlike Christopher Mitchell (1981), who defines the structure of international conflict as a sum of attitudes, behavior, and issues. Galtung argues that

understanding the life cycle of an ethnic conflict is important because it is about conflict dynamics (Galtung, 1996).

Moreover, John Burton argues that conflict theory is a radical political philosophy because its mission is to challenge the status quo by fostering processes that will generate a positive orientation to change, and devise institutional mechanisms to do this nonviolently (Burton, 1993). In this sense, conflict resolution theory has the characteristics of diagnosis, prognosis, and therapy (Galtung, 1996). Galtung distinguishes between three branches of peace studies: empirical peace studies based on empiricism, critical peace studies based on criticism, and constructive peace studies based on constructivism. In the first case, theories are compared with empirical reality in which theories may be revised if they do not agree with data. In the second case, empirical reality is compared with values in which reality is changed if it does not agree with the values. In the third case, a comparison of theories with values takes place with efforts to adjust theories to values, producing visions of a new reality. In the first case, data is stronger than theory; in the second case, values are stronger than data; in the third case, values are stronger than theory (Galtung, 1996).

Galtung (1990, 1996) discusses whether there is anything particular to theory formation in connection with positive peace and the absence of direct and structural violence. He argues that there is no such thing that creates the conditions for social disputes. A good peace theory is a good social science theory, although the reverse is not necessarily the case. However, the problem lies with what researchers consider a good social science theory to be. According to Galtung, a good theory is based on more experience in the field rather than a priori abstract reasoning.

The majority of intractable wars around the world are protracted ethnic conflicts. A number of new ethnic conflicts have emerged after the Cold war that need to be studied (Wolff, 2006). Several of those ethnic conflicts that are highly visible erupted as a result of the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in early 1990s. The clashes between the armies of Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia, and the battles that pitted Bosnians and Serbs against each other took place in Yugoslavia. Wars in Georgia, Azerbaijan, Chechnya, Prednestrovie, and Tajikistan also erupted in the former Soviet Union. Theories of ethnic conflict help to explain the origin, persistence, and course of ethnic disputes (Wolff, 2006).

Dennis Sandole (1999) also uses a variety of approaches to explain the root causes, dynamics, and the resolution of ethnic conflicts in general, as well as specific violent ethnopolitical conflicts in the Balkans, the former Soviet territories, and many other parts of the world. He discusses the psychosocial dynamics that keep conflicts ongoing over generations. These conflicts are manipulated by national leaders when needed by them. He integrates research, theory, and practice. Data assists the theory building, and theoretical findings, in turn, are applicable to practical situations in order to remove the causes of ethnic conflicts (Sandole, 1999). He developed a three-level taxonomy- decision making, societal, and transsocietal drawing on Kenneth Waltz's (1959) three images (individual, the state, and system). However, this taxonomy includes many recent ideas such as the psychodynamics of conflict put forth by Vamik Volkan (1997). He also introduces new concepts such as manifest conflict processes (MCPs) and aggressive manifest conflict processes (AMCPs). Sandole applies many conflict theories such as basic needs, frustration-aggression, relative deprivation, and psychoanalysis to

different cases of ethnic conflict. He argues that major multiethnic and multicultural conflicts persist and either become a continuing part of a social-political system or erupt, thus leading to the destruction of the system through violence (Sandole, 1999). Sandole also discusses complexity theory, which is associated with the inability of conflict researchers and policy makers to predict with certainty what kinds of conflict processes will develop from different types of initial conditions. The danger here is that conflict researchers may not be able to recommend effective policies to policy makers (Sandole, 1999).

Historical memory makes groups hold a deep-seated hatred against their enemy over many generations (Sandole, 1999; Volkan, 1997, 2001). Especially in divided societies, people who have experienced direct violence hold on to their memories of the past that over time become their chosen traumas (Volkan, 1990). Vamik Volkan uses numerous different examples, ranging from the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan to the childhood psychology of the Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan to explain and support his arguments (Volkan, 1997). Moreover, Paul Arthur also discusses the role of memory in retrieving and recovering truth, applying the framework to the cases of Northern Ireland and Israel (Arthur, 2009).

Psychocultural interpretation theory also gives a central role to culturally rooted social and psychological processes that produce dispositions such as images, perceptions, and motives important for constructing interpretation of the world when ethnic conflicts develop (Ross, 1995). Marc Howard Ross (2007) discusses the role of cultural expression and enactment and links them to conflict expansion and settlement, as well as to a number of intractable ethnic conflicts such as those in Northern Ireland, Catalonia, and

the politics of archaeology in Jerusalem, among others, by using psychocultural approaches.

Ethnopolitical conflict is one of the challenges of contemporary geopolitical order (Byrne, 2002). Shift in the international distribution of economic and military power have given rise to new centers of growth and conflict in the world's peripheries (Vayrynen, 1984). Recent political fragmentation and the emergence of divided societies in the course of the collapse of the Cold War order resulted in the formation of a new transnational order with an integrated financial system, and the decline of the nation-state (Agnew, 2000).

The ethnic fissures that received close attention for about two decades from world public and international policy makers are not new phenomena, since many of them have their roots in clashes and invasions that occurred centuries before (Klare, 1996). For example, the ethnopolitical conflicts in the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia drew upon deep-rooted ethnic hostilities, even if they were not visible during much of the communist era.

Most ethnic conflicts are expressions of modern hatred and are largely products of the twentieth century since the epoch of decolonization began after 1945 (Wolff, 2006). Sadowski (1998) defines those wars as persistent battles that have been simmering for decades. Nevertheless, he argues that ancient tribal and religious rivalries are not the initial causes of ethnic conflicts. He supports his arguments with the examples of the Rwandan genocide, the Kurdish revolt against the Turks, the Bosnian tragedy, and the Arab-Jewish conflict. None of these conflicts has its roots in ancient rivalry and hatred; rather, all of them are the products of the twentieth century (Sadowski, 1998).

Global social movement theories and the world culture approach explain the linkage of rising ethnic mobilization to global civil society that diffuses models of claim making based on human rights ideas. Linkage to global civil society raises the potential for ethnic social movements, while intergovernmental networks do not have a strong impact on ethnic mobilization (Tsutsui, 2004).

The role of education in conflict issues is important. Lack of education may create and exacerbate ethnic conflict; however, well-organized integrated education may bring about the positive social change needed for conflict resolution. For example, Coenders and Scheepers (2003) analyze the effect of education on different dimensions of nationalism and ethnic exclusionism with data collected in twenty-two countries. They conclude that educational attainment is strongly related to ethnic exclusionism and chauvinism, but not to patriotism (Coenders & Scheepers, 2003).

Many ethnic conflicts have multiple facets rather than a single one (Byrne & Carter, 1996). Each major party to the ethnic conflict may be subdivided within itself into further parties on the basis of such differences as ethnic, religious, and economic factors. Also, present tensions may elicit latent conflicts of the past, and these tensions may interact in dynamic ways, reinforcing one another. Therefore, the image of a single and polarized conflict may be misleading and oversimplified (Bar-On, 2002).

Social and political problems in different countries associated with slow political and social reforms become unresolved, bringing about new and deep-rooted conflicts (Carter, Irani, & Volkan, 2009). For example, the social and political situation of the Roma ethnic group in Eastern Europe is influenced by discrimination and ethnic violence in the post-Communist era. The examples may be drawn from the history of the Czech

Republic, Kosovo, Bulgaria, and Romania (Crowe, 2008). Instances of forced sterilization of Roma women in the Czech Republic constitutes some similarities to the fates of Chechen women during the Russo-Chechen wars, suggesting perhaps some types of generality and uniformity under certain tense circumstances.

The significance of culture and ethnicity related to local conflicts is also studied in different cases. For example, Malitza (2000) discusses the role of ethnicity and culture in local conflicts with special reference to the former Yugoslavia. He examines the literature on conflict resolution, leading to a discussion of the probability of numerous new regional conflicts (Malitza, 2000). The historical and cultural background of the modern ethnopolitical processes in Latvia, for example, is an important problem of cultural identity within the consciousness of oppositional ethnic communities and their cultural interests, leading to interethnic conflicts (Ustinova, 1992). Also, this contributes to the process of the formation of new relationships between the major competing ethnic communities accompanied by ethnic tensions in the republic (Ustinova, 1992).

The lack of interaction and cooperation between two ethnic groups living together or close to each other as well as the lack of political leadership, also contributes to ethnic tensions. Somer (2008) discusses such a lack of cooperation between the moderate Turkish majority and Kurdish political actors in Turkey, examining whether there may be more cooperation in the near future. He argues that the mono-causal explanations based on cultural stereotypes should be avoided to understand the problem better. Among other factors, cooperation in the Turkish-Kurdish case is constrained by relations with Iraqi Kurds and the difficulty of identifying the moderates (Somer, 2008).

Brandt et al (2008) interpret several theories of ethnic conflict connoting reciprocity, accountability, and credibility. The authors use different structural models to fit the events of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with variables of United States intervention and Jewish public opinion about prospects for peace. They argue that a credibility model, allowing Jewish public opinion to influence American, Palestinian, and Israeli behavior within a given month, fits best. According to the model, more pacific Israeli opinion leads to more immediate Palestinian hostility toward Israelis (Brandt, Colaresi, & Freeman, 2008).

Similarities of ethnopolitical cases are sometimes likely to inspire certain people with secessionist aspirations. Fawn (2008), for example, discusses how the independence of Montenegro and Kosovo has encouraged, at least to some extent, other secessionist people and would-be states, particularly in the former Soviet Union. Further, Fawn discusses the Russian position on Kosovo, and Western policy towards both Kosovo and the post-Soviet conflicts. The Western position is that irrespective of the exact form of Kosovo's independence, neither Russia's own interests nor broader West-Russia relations would be served by using or reacting to any Kosovo "precedent" (Fawn, 2008).

As it was observed in the Russo-Chechen conflict, ethnic groups and conflicts often transcend national borders. When a state experiences ethnic conflict, neighboring states that are ethnically polarized are also likely to experience ethnic conflict. When an ethnic group involved in conflict has a kinship tie to a group in a neighboring state, the latter group is increasingly likely to end up in ethnic conflict (Forsberg, 2008). Indeed, the spread of conflict across borders is a contemporary phenomenon, and cross-border religious ties facilitate the contagion of ethnic conflict. Religious contagion influences the

extent of both ethnic protest and rebellion whereas nonreligious contagion influences only ethnic protest. Only violent conflict, unlike mass political movements, in one state influences conflict in a bordering state (Fox, 2004).

The dynamics of intrastate conflicts is one of the principal sources of current protracted ethnic conflicts. Yilmaz (2007) argues that ethnopolitical conflicts around the world have some common salient points. Among other factors, ethnic conflicts are correlated with the desire to express cultural identity, discrimination, an anti-democratic political system, economic underdevelopment, and unjust distribution of national wealth, unresolved past traumas, as well as external support. In the resolution process, multilevel efforts are needed by domestic and international actors to be responsive to the underlying causes of intrastate conflicts (Yilmaz, 2007).

Jenne, Saideman, and Lowe (2007) discuss why for example, some ethnic minorities seek affirmative action while others pursue territorial autonomy or secession. A history of autonomy, foreign military support, and territorial concentration are all positively correlated with a group's propensity to advance more extreme demands from the central power. They also illustrate that minorities with greater power, vis-à-vis the center, are more likely to both rebel and mobilize around separatist demands. However, group deprivation may also trigger minority rebellion (Jenne, Saideman, & Lowe, 2007).

Unlike the Chechen case, in some situations ethnic conflicts do not develop into ethnic wars (Lounsbury & Pearson, 2009). For instance, the conflict in Iraq is an ethnic civil war, a type of conflict different from ideological wars such as that of Vietnam. There is no necessary overlap between ethnic conflict and ethnic war, since some ethnic

conflicts evolve into ethnic wars, and others develop dynamics virtually indistinguishable from those of ideological civil wars (Kalyvas & Kocher, 2007).

Peterson (1995) seeks to identify the motivations of individual perpetrators of ethnic violence. He develops and discusses four models that he names *fear*, *hatred*, *resentment*, and *rage*. These four models are applied to important cases of ethnic conflict in Eastern Europe that took place from the 1905 Russian Revolution onward to the collapse of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s (Peterson, 2005).

It is also important to study the causes and effects of crime, corruption, politics, and ethnic extremism on ethnic conflicts. Walter (2004) argues that many ethnic conflicts are intractable because in each case at least one of the parties has a vested interest in perpetuating and profiting from instability. He suggests that attempts should be made to decouple ethnic issues from criminal ones to resolve conflict (Walter, 2004).

The end of the Cold War reduced superpower rivalry substantially. However, it has proved to be an impetus to other types of conflict and tension, particularly regional and ethnic conflicts. New conflicts necessitate a new way of thinking and an altered role for NGOs. International collaboration in research is required across all academic disciplines to fully understand the problems and issues that arise in the new ethnic conflicts (Sriastava, 1996).

As Senehi (2000) discusses, the self-determination principle is another cause of ethnopolitical conflicts. Quinn (2008) also argues that there are different phases that group tactics and strategies for self-determination often move through. In 2006, there were twenty-six armed self-determination conflicts in the world, some of which were Assamese, Kashmiri Muslims in India, Kerenni and Shan in Myanmar, the Arabs in

Israel, the Oromos and Somalis in Ethiopia, the Corsicans in France, and the Chechens in Russia (Quinn, 2008). In some cases, the ethnic movements are thwarted by repressive policies by governments, or are induced to alter their tactics by new leadership. Senehi argues that the experience and knowledge of ordinary people are dismissed by leaders and their voice is not heard, as a result the intellectual, political, and cultural elites are able to own and control knowledge, which helps their oppressive policies to regenerate (Senehi, 2000, 2008).

American liberal internationalism sees its own norms as universal and transferable to other cultures. Galtung (1990) believes that western bias is usually prevalent in approaching the needs of other people with different cultures that, in turn, brings about the application of Western methods to resolving problems people of different cultures face (MacGinty, 2006; MacGinty & Williams, 2009). This belief has developed into an intellectual tradition that is deeply embedded in the PACS field, making people ignore indigenous mechanisms for conflict resolution (Nagle, Pearson, & Suprun, 2000).

Ganguly and Taras (1998) also examine ethnic conflict and nationalism at the international level, employing a number of theories, concepts, and approaches such as ethnic identity, internal colonialism, relative deprivation, etc. to explain certain causes of conflicts in such countries as Sri Lanka, Russia, Congo, and Ethiopia, among others. They also discuss how international norms affect ethnonationalism, the third-party role in resolving ethnic conflicts, the moral grounds that justify secession, the peacekeeping role of international organizations, and the role of international nongovernmental organizations as third parties (Ganguly & Taras, 1998).

Correlation between ethnic and other forms of social diversity and the militarization of society is also an important issue. Highly diverse societies may face a lower risk of civil war, as opposed to relatively more homogenous populations. Sometimes diversity may prompt governments to militarize heavily in order to prevent armed conflict. Higher levels of ethnic diversity may predict lower levels of militarization (De Soysa & Neumayer, 2008).

In the following sections, this chapter discusses eight key theories/concepts relevant to framing the qualitative component of the study: basic human needs, violence, structures, agents, and ranks, emotions and aggression, psychological and cultural analysis, identities, the media, and gender.

Basic Human Needs

One set of PACS theory rests on an analysis of basic human needs, although there are variations in the details. The crucial point of basic needs theory is that needs are perceived as an explanation of human behavior. The basic human needs theory/approach is relevant to this study in a number of ways that are especially explained/utilized in Chapter 6. Considering the violation of the basic human needs of the people who live in war conditions, one can conclude that this theory is relevant to this study. Although scholars explain basic human needs theory slightly differently, its core idea is the same: all human beings have certain basic needs that if not satisfied can be a source of conflict. Some scholars such as Galtung describe their work as a basic needs approach, rather than needs theory (Galtung, 1990b). John Burton (1979, 1986, 1987, 1990) among others, such as Abraham Maslow (hierarchy of needs) (Maslow, 1962), Paul Sites (who gives

emotional groundings to basic needs) (Sites, 1990), Oscar Nudler (conflicts and metaphors) (Nudler, 1990), Ronald J. Fisher (social identity and an eclectic interactive model of conflict resolution) (Fisher, 1990), and Dennis J. D. Sandole (biological basis of needs) (Sandole, 1990), have elaborated and discussed basic human needs theory.

Sandole (1990) argues that human needs are related to biology while Burton (1979, 1990) postulates a linkage between needs satisfaction and social harmony. He considers that human beings will do anything to satisfy their needs at any expense (Burton, 1979), as well as argues that people of all races and beliefs have some common values and similar aims (Burton, 1987). The notion of universal sociobiological values that Burton (1987) developed explains human behavior at different levels. He argues that these sociobiological values are closely related to, if not direct expressions of, biological drives and motivations. In the *Generic Theory: Basis of Conflict Resolution*, Burton and Sandole (1986) presented a fully developed universalistic and biologically based human needs theory. According to this theory, the fundamental drives and motivations that cannot be repressed are based on universal and generic basic needs (identity and development, for example) that direct human behavior (Burton & Sandole, 1986).

Rehnsen (1977) argues that needs may seriously impact the perception and organization of reality. This, in turn, leads to the impact of behavioral activities by needs within the framework of that reality (Rehnsen, 1977). In other words, basic human needs theory postulates that needs can act as a motivational force (Vayrynen, 2001). Then it can be argued that almost all versions of basic human needs theory give biological grounding to behavior.

Burton (1979) differentiates action from behavior, arguing that action is observable, whereas behavior is the motivation, thus it is the reason for action. He differentiates needs from interests and values as well. For Burton, needs are universal, values are cultural, and interests are transitory. He argues that values may alter over periods of time, therefore they are not generic (Burton, 1990a).

Human needs theory identifies a hierarchy of human needs, ranging from basic physiological requirements to psychological needs of esteem and self-actualization (Maslow, 1987). Maslow argues that human behavior is basically a function of attempts to fulfill these needs. Human needs theory has attracted the interest of conflict theorists due to its potential to explain conflict causation (MacGinty, 2006). Moreover, Burton (1979, 1990) argues that there are universal basic needs such as identity, recognition, and security, without the satisfaction of which the individual will find the norms of the society to be inappropriate because to secure his or her needs one cannot use these norms. In this situation, he/she will invent his/her own norms and consequently be labeled deviant. He/she will disrupt himself/herself as a person, rather than forgo these needs (Burton, 1979). There are also some material needs such as shelter and food; however, non-material needs such as identity, security, and recognition are more productive for causing violence, if unsatisfied, since they are more likely to affect people emotionally as a social group. The identity needs of the Chechens in the Russian Federation, for example, have been severely violated over a long period of time, resulting in the current violent conflict.

Fitzgerald (1985) also discusses basic needs by referring to Herbert Marcuse's work, which defines true and false needs. The vital needs that include nourishment,

clothing, and lodging are one's true needs, the satisfaction of which is the precondition for the realization of all other needs. False needs are those that are imposed upon people by particular social interests to repress them, and these needs perpetuate aggressiveness, misery, and injustice (Fitzgerald, 1985). It is not easy to decide what elements of the basic human needs approaches are, or which ones should be the core constitutive elements of this theory, but whatever parts of it are generally accepted the situation is the same: the theory is applicable to ethno-political conflicts including the Russo-Chechen conflict.

In addition, Galtung's list of basic human needs mainly includes security needs, welfare needs, identity needs, and freedom needs (Galtung, 1990b). He argues that the list of needs "has a Western bias and may be of some use as a checklist to discuss problems of Western societies" (p. 312). Yet he gives a clear idea about the needs which, when violated, exacerbate ethnic conflict. Moreover, interpreting the relationship of Galtung's approach with different cases within the framework of cultural, regional, or structural context is quite possible. All human beings have security needs, which are specified by Galtung (1990) as needs against assault, torture, and wars, both internal and external. He also defined the satisfiers of security needs as the police and the military. Another important set of needs specified by Galtung (1990) is welfare needs that he explains as needs for protection against climate, environment; needs for protection against diseases; and needs for nutrition, water, air, sleep, etc.

Galtung (1990) also elaborates identity needs in more detail by listing various needs under the rubric of needs for roots, belongingness, support, esteem, association with similar humans; needs for understanding social forces; needs for social transparency;

needs for a sense of purpose; needs for realizing potentials, and needs for self-expression and the like. He also presents some need satisfiers like political activity, religion, ideology, jobs, and leisure, etc. To evaluate the situation it is essential to look at the availability of the need satisfiers. Another important need defined by Galtung (1990) is that of freedom, which is also presented as a need to avoid repression. Freedom needs includes choice in receiving and expressing information and opinion; the choice of people and places to visit and be visited; and individual choice and freedom.

The basic needs theory can be regarded as useful for description and explanation of conflict situations. A researcher may describe and explain the situation of people in a conflict area by taking the components of this theory into account. Williams (2000, 2001), Gammer (2006), and Seely (2001) among others described and explained many aspects of the Russo-Chechen conflict through the lens of basic human needs. Basic needs theory is also useful for practice and policy prescriptions, given its descriptive and explanatory nature. A combination of human needs and some other transdisciplinary theories (Galtung 2008) would yield outcomes that are more successful.

Violence

All kinds of violence—structural, cultural, or direct—are relevant to the Russo-Chechen conflict¹. Galtung (1996) argues that peace and violence are interconnected because to know about peace we have to know what violence is. Also, to know about peace we need to know about conflicts as contexts and conflict transformation as a nonviolent and

¹ In Chapter 2, the structural dimensions of this war are discussed. However, this thesis does not claim that cultural and direct violence are absent in the context of the Russo-Chechen conflict.

creative process. Peace and violence are interrelated and even interdependent in terms of explaining each other.

Galtung (1996:32-33) has created six divisions: *direct violence*, *structural violence*, *cultural violence*, *direct peace*, *structural peace*, and *cultural peace*. Violence can start at any point of the direct-structural-cultural violence triangle, and it can easily be transmitted to the other corners. As the violent structure is institutionalized and the violent culture gets internalized, direct violence also tends to become institutionalized, repetitive, and ritualistic. Nevertheless, this violence triangle is contrasted with a triangular syndrome of peace where cultural peace engenders structural peace and direct peace. Simply assuming that the change in one of the corners will automatically lead to changes in the other two may be misleading; rather, one should work on all three corners of the triangle at the same time to reach a peace realm convenient for conflict transformation. Galtung further discusses civilization theory in depth, because a peace student should also deal with deep culture that is the most important border area of peace research. He argues that problems of political, military, and economic power are manageable, whereas the problems of deep cultural power are not (Galtung, 1996).

Structural violence has an important place in the basic human needs discussions as well, since it offers another meaning of violence in addition to physically violent behavior (Galtung, 1969). Structural violence is not actual physical violence; rather, it arises from social, political, and economic structures that give rise to the unequal distribution of resources and power. The sources of structural violence, as its name suggests, are political systems, social, and organizational structures. These very structures may deprive people of the basic needs that Burton, among others, advocates. Salem and

Kaufman, for example, discuss how and why Palestinians mostly see Israeli violence against them as structural violence that involves constraints on access to health care, food supplies, employment opportunities, and decent shelter resulting in premature death, reduced life expectancy, and post-traumatic stress disorders (Salem & Kaufman, 2008).

The concept of *cultural violence* also integrates with direct and structural violence (Galtung, 1990a). Galtung defines cultural violence as any aspect of the culture that can be used to legitimize direct or structural violence. The aspects of a culture are exemplified as religion, ideology, language, art, stars, crosses, crescents, flags, anthems, and the like. There are linkages between structural, direct and cultural violence, and this is relevant to many existing protracted ethnic conflicts around the world. For example, the Chechen fighters translate their popular songs that all Chechen youth know by memory into direct violence, whereas the Russians perform their cultural symbols such as perception of Russia's regional hegemony into direct and structural violence.²² Russia made a sustained effort to make the Chechens see themselves as inferior, especially over the last fifteen years, keeping them outside Russian society by applying intolerant behavior against them in Russian cities.²³

The theory of structural and cultural violence can be regarded as useful for description, explanation, practice, and policy prescription in a number of ways. In descriptive research, it can be used to describe an ethnic conflict situation or event successfully, since one may capture the complexity of the case with the help of culture and structure-related concepts. A researcher may employ this theory to explain a conflict case as well because it is applicable to any social or ethnic conflict. Practitioners, on the other hand, may formulate a better policy of intervention by understanding the situation

or event by means of this theory, and be able to counsel the authorities for a better remedy.

Structures, Socialization Agents, and Ranks

The Russo-Chechen conflict has many important aspects related to the institutional structures, political, or social agents, as well as the ranks that people possess. A number of structure-agent related social theories have evolved over time, the underlying assumption of which is that there are institutional and discursive continuities that enable conflict as a form of human conduct, and are reproduced by actors in strategic interactions. Two important elements of structuration theory are institutional agents and social structure, whose central relevance is the reproduction of institutional practices (Jabri, 1996). The sources of a deep-rooted, intractable ethnic conflict, such as the Russo-Chechen conflict, may relate to the social actions of individuals and institutional structures. Any protracted ethnic conflict can be regarded as a social continuity institutionalized over time, thus making it arguable that the ethnic conflict is a practice derived from purposive human conduct situated within embedded institutional frameworks. This argument makes both human nature and social structure important for the emergence and generation of violent ethnic conflicts.

Agency and social structure relate to one another in the process of production and reproduction of human conduct. Individuals are social beings, thus “these categories cannot be neatly separated” (Rubenstein, 2003:43). Indeed, agents and structures are mutually constitutive entities; therefore, instead of considering them separately, it is necessary to conceptualize fundamental mechanisms, where the primary concern is with

the constitutive potentials of social life. These mechanisms are helpful in explaining how generic human capacities and conditions generate courses and outcomes of social processes and events in very different ways (Cohen, 1989). This is related to the social practice ordered across time and space that is proposed as a domain of study by Anthony Giddens (1984). As such, social practice entails the clarification of the interrelatedness of the individual and social structure, between which there is an epistemological conflict (Giddens, 1984). Giddens regards this as ontological, which is not subject to refutation on empirical grounds, but which requires substantive research on particular social phenomena such as human conflict to determine how these processes and properties operate and appear in any given context (Jabri, 1996). It is necessary to research a particular ethnic conflict within its own time and space continuum in order to critically analyze and demonstrate how agency and structure are mutually constitutive. Action is only meaningful in terms of its relationship to structure, and structure only exists as such in terms of human behavior, a contextual framework for the research of a social conflict simultaneously applies to both agency and structure.

In analyzing social and ethnic conflicts, it is necessary to add the role of human agency to structure, since structure does not alone give rise to the reproduction of the institutional practices. The social continuity of the Russo-Chechen conflict, for example, means that it is institutionalized over time. Therefore, the element of a purposive human conduct situated within the embedded institutional structures has existed for a period of time. Moreover, both human nature and social structure are important for the latent conflict to become manifest, which, in turn, implies that structures and agency mutually

constitute a whole. Consequently, both human and structural factors should be equally used to analyze any social conflict (Giddens, 1995).

Studying institutions and agency in order to differentiate between groups, structures, the practices, rules, norms, and other resources that the system uses to function and sustain itself, we see that it is groups that both produce a system, and are the outcomes of a system. Group members interact according to particular rules, and they also produce those rules through their interactions. They can negotiate group structures, but at the same time, their interactions are constrained by those interactions. In a political or social system where structures and agency perpetuate each other, inconsistency in people's status may also be long-lasting.

The theory of rank disequilibrium is related to status inconsistency. One may be high on educational status, but low on job, security, and income status (Galtung, 1964). As the status inconsistency grows, the perceived structural violence becomes greater, which in turn generates a condition in which a frustrated actor responds aggressively to the perceived source of inconsistency. To illustrate, Russian citizens with Central Asian and Caucasian origins rarely occupy high level professional job positions in Moscow, despite their high level of education.²⁴ Here, identity belongingness and structural violence as well as ethno-nationalism are relevant to the conflicts between the Chechens and Russia. Russian security personnel, for example, have alienated Chechen nationals by forcefully beating and detaining them in Russian cities, as well as indiscriminately bombing civilian areas of Chechnya. Meanwhile (ironically) Russian authorities talk about the preservation of Russia's national unity (Cornell, 1999).

Moreover, structural aggression theory makes the point that a social system is a system of units in interaction and it is multidimensionally stratified according to a number of rank-dimensions (Galtung, 1964). The theoretical basis is the differential treatment and relative deprivation that follows from rank disequilibrium, the resources that the high status confers on the unit to improve his/her low status, and the sense of self-righteousness that easily develops. According to Galtung, three world orders are thought to be aggression-reducing: a feudal international order; a highly pluralistic system with many nations or rank criteria; and a highly unitary system with a world-state or one rank-criterion. He emphasizes the importance of economic development in such a way that there is multi-dimensional growth and a parallel development between nations (Galtung, 1964). Galtung (1964:98–99) also argues that aggression is most likely to happen in social positions in rank-disequilibrium: “In a system of individuals it may take the form of crime, in a system of groups the form of revolutions and in a system of nations the form of war.” In the Chechen case, for example, rank disequilibrium is wide enough to bring about aggression and violence in a system of groups that contributes to the war between Russia and Chechnya.

Rank or status disequilibrium is an important PACS theory, especially in explaining a conflict situation and human behavior. It is closely related to economic and political factors in a conflict’s context. In fact, its contribution to the understanding of the Russo-Chechen conflict through collaboration with other theories is important.

Emotions and Aggression

Both emotions and aggression are integral part of the Russo-Chechen conflict, since the most important factor of the war is human. Frustration-aggression theory stresses that human beings who are prevented from getting what they desire naturally become frustrated (Dollard, 1939). The energy blocked and accumulated inside a person is directed to the source of frustration through aggressive action. Life in any society is inevitably frustrating to varying degrees, and tendencies towards aggressive behavior are continuously generated because aggression is always a consequence of frustration. In other words, frustration has the status of a contributory condition of aggression (Sandole, 1999:119). Similarly, frustration almost always leads to aggression. As Dennis Sandole argues, there are three important factors for consideration in examining frustration aggression: (1) the importance of the frustrated (blocked) goal; (2) the intensity of the frustration (blocking); and (3) the frequency of the frustration (blocking) (Sandole, 2003). The degree of the importance of the frustrated goal is likely to be associated with the intensity of frustration against that goal. In turn, greater frequency of blocked goal attainment generates more intense attacks by the frustrated against the oppressor. For example, the oppressive policies of Moscow on the Chechens create a source of frustration, which in turn generates aggression in different forms including terror activities.

Moreover, relative deprivation theory is strong in explaining and describing events and situations because conceptually it deals with peoples' perceptions and the ways they are formed. People also believe that they are entitled to certain goods and conditions of life, and they have capabilities to keep them (Gurr, 1969). A sense of

entitlement is likely to grow faster than it can be fulfilled, thus generating anger and unrest. The wider the distance between value expectations and value capabilities, the greater is the perceived structural violence. The greater the perceived structural violence, the greater is the possibility for an aggressive response from the suppressed actor experiencing deprivation.

The history of the Russo-Chechen war illustrates that the Chechens believe they are entitled to independence or freedom. This belief is the greatest part of the value expectations of the Chechens. While believing that they have the capability to achieve and hold independence, Chechen efforts have been thwarted by Russians, thus influencing the perceptions of Chechens' discrepancy between their value expectations and value capabilities.

Personal relative deprivation differs from group relative deprivation. The initial promise of relative deprivation to explain collective behavior has not been fulfilled. There are a number of inconsistencies, since some investigations strongly support the relative deprivation models, but others do not. However, dismissing its value and usefulness may be premature because most negative reviews of the relative deprivation literature have not taken the theoretical distinction between group relative deprivation and personal relative deprivation into account. The feelings of group relative deprivation may promote political protest and attempts to change the social system. In contrast, personal relative deprivation is related to personal reactions to certain disadvantages (Smith & Ortiz, 2002).

Davies (1973:251) wrote, "Violence ... is produced when certain innate needs or demands are deeply frustrated". He links fulfillment of basic needs into frustration-

aggression, thus making an explicit theoretical connection between Dollard's formulation of frustration-aggression and Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Hence, the degree of the frustration of basic needs has a direct impact on the conflict dynamics (Davies, 1973).

The psychoanalytic model of aggression deals with biological drives, which must be released, or cause trouble when repressed. Lorenz's theory is another biological theory of aggression (Lorenz, 1966), while behaviorism is an environmental theory. Frustration-aggression theory translates Freudian theory into behaviorism. Dollard saw the frustration-aggression link as a two-way arrow—whenever one was present, the other had to be. In this regards, many illustrative correlations were found (Borden, 1980).

According to Galtung (1964), the difficulty with this theory is that it is non-structural; therefore, it does not sufficiently take into account the social context. However, situations causing aggression are closely linked with structures. Understanding frustration-aggression requires making a thorough structure-related analysis. Thus, our holistic approach to the Russo-Chechen case acquires more importance as the theories in some sense complete each other.

Moreover, according to frustration-aggression theory, human beings who are deprived of what they desire naturally become frustrated, and the energy blocked and accumulated inside a person is directed to the source of frustration through aggressive action (Jeong, 2000). Nevertheless, it is almost impossible to measure the degree and power of frustration. It is practically impossible to measure the degree of the Chechens' frustration by Russians as well as the degree of aggressive behavior toward Russia, even though it is quite possible to imagine that the Chechen people would become very

frustrated, for example, when the Soviet NKVD troops initiated a forced exile by fitting as many Chechens as possible into a rail cart to maximize efficiency (Nekrich, 1978).

The frustration-aggression theory is important for this study, because as an individual-related theory it explains the meaning of aggressive acts of the individuals carrying them out. It needs to be used together with other theories because it is based on psychology, and does not consider political, economic, religious, demographic, as well as historical factors within its theoretical framework more than what is needed to describe the context of frustration.

Psychoanalysis and Cultural Analysis (Psychocultural)

This section is instrumental to interpreting and discussing the data presented in Chapter 7. Psychological and cultural-psychocultural analysis is important to turn out deep layers of ethnic conflicts (Ross, 2007; Volkan, 2002). In this sense, psychocultural analysis plays an important role in studying the Russo-Chechen conflict. The answer to the question of whether aggression is innate or learnt has been interpreted differently at various times. Goldstein has defined several influences that have strengthened the instinctual bias: (1) the accounts of aggression by sociobiologists (e.g., Konrad Lorenz); (2) the research on electrical and chemical stimulation of the brain; (3) the popularity of Freudian theory; (4) the idea that aggression is in our genes (Fry, 2006; Goldstein, 1989).

The ethological arguments by Lorenz, among others, reasoned that there is evidence that our animal ancestors were instinctively violent beings, and, therefore, we too must be the bearers of destructive impulses in our genetic makeup (Lorenz, 1966). There are two difficulties with this argument. First, the evidence that animals are

instinctively aggressive is not very convincing. Second, even if it is true that animals are instinctively aggressive, we would still have to ask whether this proves anything at all about the proneness to aggression in humans (Goldstein, 1989).

Delgado's experiment on controlling aggressive behavior has been sensational in contemporary science. He implanted radio receivers in the brains of some species such as cats and monkeys that made him able to some degree to control aggressive behavior of the animals under research by stimulating the hypothalamus (Delgado, 1969). This scientific research paved the way to the most frightening implication about human aggression—that it can be manipulated without the actor's awareness. However, the stimulation of particular brain areas does not mean that aggressive behavior will follow in natural situations (Goldstein, 1989). Moreover, Freud's psychoanalytic theory is a major influence on twentieth-century thinking about human nature. He considered aggression as an instinct that constantly builds up if not satisfied in reality or in fantasy, providing us with a justification for human violence (Mitchell & Black, 1995). Many psychoanalysts used Freud's approaches to build their own psychoanalytic approaches (Volkan 1987).

The idea that aggression is in our genes is challenged by a number of world scientists. The 1986 Seville Statement on Violence is very articulate about this. The signatory scientists from around the world challenged a number of biological findings that have been used to justify war and violence (Fry, 2006). This statement declares that it is scientifically incorrect to say that we have inherited a tendency to make war from our animal ancestors, and that violent behavior is genetically programmed into our nature or humans have a violent brain (Adams, 1994). It has been believed for centuries that stone artifacts found with ancient humanoid skeletal remains were weapons that were taken as

evidence of our ancestors' aggressiveness (Goldstein, 1989). However, a number of late anthropological findings support the belief that these agricultural tools were not weapons at all but tools used to scavenge for food (Fry, 2006; Kemp & Fry, 2004).

Psychology and psychoanalysis play a significant role in understanding some dimensions of conflicts. For instance, some tenets of human psychology may explain why victims cannot forget the past and the conflict is kept alive (Volkan, 1997). Psychoanalysis helps to understand how political power fosters genocide, mass murder, and other organized acts of violence against a minority, as well as how difficult life conditions, mistreatment of a group, and attacks on human life contribute to intractable conflicts. Staub argues that difficult life conditions have psychological effects on people, and in dealing with them people often make scapegoats of others, as well as adopting ideologies that bring some hope while at the same time identifying other groups as enemies (Staub, 1984).

Another psychological approach, *chosen trauma* and *chosen glory*, outlined by Vamik Volkan, is also applicable in understanding protracted ethnic violent conflicts (Volkan, 1997). Volkan argues that a member of another group is perceived as a "container" of unacceptable psychic content previously built into unconscious mechanisms (Volkan, 1990). Based on this argument, it is possible to argue that Russians, at least to some extent, became an enemy of Chechens through an unconscious psychological process. As Jeong put it referring to Volkan, "in group dynamics, the most hated aspects of ourselves and our own group are transferred to other groups who are depicted as an enemy" (Jeong, 2000:68).

Moreover, Volkan (1998:43) talks about *transgenerational externalization*, which is “when an older person unconsciously externalizes his traumatized self onto a developing child’s personality.” The elders’ influence on children makes them absorb their wishes and expectations, on which the children are driven to act. It is not simply the result of handing down stories about group tragedies, and past humiliating events from one generation to the next. Volkan stated, “Patterns of behavior and nonverbal messages are intuited and acted upon accordingly” (Volkan, 1998:44). It happens as if psychological DNA is planted into the psychology of a younger generation as it contacts the older one, thus affecting individual identity and behavior. Volkan also argues that what is transmitted orally may change as well in the course of transmission from one generation to the next (Volkan, 1997).

Together with cultural approaches, this theory has great explanatory power. Marc Howard Ross employs a psychocultural approach in his *Cultural Contestation in Ethnic Conflicts*, in which he innovatively discusses a plethora of ethnopolitical conflicts such as Israeli-Palestinian, Northern Ireland, and Catalonia, among many others (Ross, 2007). Common past experiences and perceived shared future expectations connect individuals together helping to form identity-based worldviews that are concerned with group judgments and judgments about groups (Ross, 2001a). Learning why and how narratives are emotionally powerful, as well as examining the narratives’ role in shaping beliefs that influence actors’ choices while analyzing the power of collective memories of people is important. Linking individuals to larger social and political identities considering how political actions shape identity, culture, and interests while recognizing the ways that the constructed nature of narratives contributes to successful conflict mitigation may be

crucial for offering an alternative method for ethnic conflict management (Ross, 1993, 1997, 2001, 2007).

Avruch and Black (1991) also discuss the role of culture in conflict resolution. They present a perspective on culture that is analytically more powerful than the monodimensional view, which is often found in the conflict resolution literature. They call it “thick” culture, while indicating that this perspective grows out of recent developments in cultural anthropology (Geertz, 1973) that champion an interpretive and constitutive understanding of culture, particularly with reference to concepts of personhood and self. Avruch and Black also distinguish among three separate contexts—cross-cultural, intercultural, and transcultural approaches to the study of conflict and its resolution—to which the notion of culture can be applied. The ethnographic case study method focuses on elucidating what has been called ethnoconflict theory and associates conflict resolution techniques and processes. Such a methodology has the additional benefit of increasing the analyst’s awareness of his/her buried assumptions regarding the nature of conflict and conflict resolution (Avruch & Black, 1991).

Galtung (1996:37) discusses a “body-mind-structure-culture” paradigm, which he defines as a rich discourse that covers nature, person, social space, world, culture, and time. In this space, he brings out two different but not mutually exclusive analytical perspectives: inner dialectic and outer relational perspectives. These four factors—body, mind, structure and culture—make the discourse so simple that we may be tempted to reduce it to one single factor. However, as he points out, “a single-minded focus” on one of them should be avoided, and the interplay between these factors should be pursued (Galtung, 1996:40). Galtung’s civilization theory is connected to culture as well. He

argues that cultural violence means those aspects of culture that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence. The symbolic sphere of our existence is also important through flags, emblems, colors, national anthems, etc. However, all these features are aspects of culture, not an entire culture. Therefore, entire cultures can hardly be classified as violent, and Galtung offers to avoid cultural stereotypes (Galtung, 1996).

Abu-Nimer (2001) outlines how conflict resolution practitioners and scholars began exploring the application and compatibility of theory and practice to different religious and cultural contexts and conflicts. He bridges conflict resolution and intercultural training concepts. Based on the narratives and stories he uses, Abu-Nimer argues that moral, ethical, and spiritual dimensions would often prevent individuals from adopting integration or adaptation responses (Abu-Nimer, 2001).

In addition, Ross (2007) illuminates the role of culture in ethnic conflicts. He focuses on the role of cultural expression and enactment and links them to conflict analysis and resolution. He does not reject the importance of structural and institutional analyses, rather, he argues that “political analyses tend to ignore, dismiss or under-theorize the role that identity and emotional framing play in long-term conflicts” (Ross, 2007:112). He uses numerous cases to demonstrate the multiplicity of forms that cultural expression in conflict situations may take on. He discusses parades in Northern Ireland, holy sites in Jerusalem, Confederate flags in the southern parts of the United States, and Islamic headscarves in France, among other cultural symbols to explain ethnic conflict, and to contribute to their settlement (Ross, 2007). Ethnicity is not equally important everywhere as a marker of social position or as a determinant of political rights and privileges, however, ethnic frameworks offer worldviews to interpret complex actions to

make sense of them (Ross, 2001b). The psychocultural stories of the past and present that are the natural starting point for peacemaking explain why an enemy behaves as it does (Ross, 2001b).

Culture is also an important factor in peace building, where it should be taken into consideration before and during the process of conflict resolution. Ignoring it during the pre-negotiation and negotiation processes would bring about some further complications to the overall peace process. Avruch (1998) discusses the role and place of culture in the process of conflict resolution. He argues that culture is a crucial factor in the evolution and resolution of conflicts, since it has vital relevance to negotiation, power, and third-party roles. An intercultural negotiator, for example, should learn about the culture of the other party, if he or she is to succeed. He also stresses that culture is dynamic, and it can change over time, thus its adaptive nature should widely be used in conflict resolution (Avruch, 1998).

Ross (2007) also argues that constructive conflict management in deep-rooted intergroup conflicts may be facilitated through the development of inclusive narratives, symbols, rituals, and other cultural expressions. In other words, inclusive narratives must replace previously predominated mutually exclusive claims. Managing long-term intractable conflicts requires “modifying competing psychocultural interpretations or narratives so that the parties in conflict come to believe that there are people on the other side with whom they can negotiate, and issues that are negotiable” (Ross, 2007:4).

Moreover, Avruch (1998) argues that cultural analysis should be an irreducible part of problem solving and introduces the concept of culture as an analytical tool for understanding conflict and conflict resolution. Culture consists of experientially derived

images and encodements, schemas and models, more or less organized, either learned or created by individuals (Avruch, 1998). Culture is complex, fluid, and may constitute only one of many cultures distributed across the social landscape. Current theories and methods in the field of conflict resolution might profit from a greater sensitivity to the culture concept (Huspek, 2000). In fact, in the post-Cold War era, when the state's position in international politics is relatively loose, the concept of culture has a vital place in conflict resolution theory and practice. Culture does not cause conflict (Avruch & Black, 1993), rather it helps to understand it (Avruch, 1998). It is an essential tool for conflict analysis, and therefore, at least indirectly, it is an effective instrument for conflict resolution because the latter heavily relies on the detailed and in depth analysis of the sources and causes of the problem.

Galtung (1996) defines culture as individualistic, competitive, and aggressive having a linkage with such factors as a history of inflicting traumas upon others, isomorphism between domestic and world structure, implementing human rights, inner power struggle, inner peace surplus, and self-righteousness being a democracy. Changing these factors is hard as they are strongly interlinked. He also links the peacebuilding and peace threatening dimensions of the state systems to the morphological inclination in culture.

Social Identity

The section of *Social Identity* is connected to Chapter 7 that deals with different types of identities such as cultural identity, national identity, ethnic identity, and religious identity. Chapter 7 also discusses the impact of the war on identity dynamism in Chechnya, since

deep-rooted violent ethnic conflicts affect identity change or formation. The salience of Chechens' identities has shifted, especially under the influence of prolonged war conditions.

Social identities have been a driving force behind many intractable social conflicts in the world, as scholars define social identity differently. Henri Tajfel provides one of the most common definitions of social identity, which refers to that part of an individual's self-concept that derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership (Jussim, Ashmore, & Wilder, 2001). In contrast, Peter W. Black defines identity as the concept that refers to the social use of cultural markers to claim, achieve, or ascribe group membership (Black, 2003). In addition, Milton Esman defines the term as the set of meanings that individuals impute to their membership in an ethnic community, including those attributes that bind them to that collectivity and that distinguish it from others in their relevant environment (Esman, 1994). Social identity does not reside exclusively within the individual; rather it resides within one's cultural community, at least to some extent (Jussim, Ashmore, & Wilder, 2001). Identities may vary from individuals to groups and they may be long enduring or relatively short-lived.

Clearly, there is no unanimity among experts on the definition of identity. This may fuel the controversies over the formation and persistence of ethnic identity. However, regardless the definition it is widely accepted that conflicts and identities have strong relationships with one another. Identities can cause conflicts, but they can contribute to conflict resolution as well. Mutual trust and acceptance, cooperation, and

consideration of mutual needs help the formation of peaceful relations that, in turn, contribute to the shift in social identities, and are consolidated by social identities.

However, in order to understand how conflicts erupt, escalate, de-escalate, and become transformed or resolved, we must know how identities are formed and re-formed (Kriesberg, 2003). Identity formation is generally explained with either human needs theory or the socio-psychological approach (Jeong & Vayrynen, 1999). As discussed earlier, basic human needs theory dictates that identity is one of the most important basic needs that human beings strive for. As one of a person's basic needs is a need for identity, its non-satisfaction is seen as a source of conflict. According to socio-psychological theory, however, the psychology of group relationship is essential for identity formation and for identity as a general concept. In addition, socio-psychological theory stresses that the notion of friendship and hostility is inherent in human evolution. This notion plays an important role in the development of "we-ness" and "otherness". "We-ness" is a core of ethnicity, and comes from a positive projection, whereas "otherness" originates from negative projections (Jeong & Vayrynen, 1999).

Identity-based group conflicts have existed across the world for decades. Those conflicts are deep-rooted and protracted by nature that makes the parties in conflict less likely to reconcile their differences. For, example, identity-based group conflict has existed in Northern Ireland for a very long time. The perception of the "other" contributed to the chosen traumas and chosen glories of people in Northern Ireland, and the continuation of mistrust among the people of the region (Byrne, 2008b).

Cultural and religious issues also play a crucial role in destroying ethnic and racial harmony in different parts of the world. Sri Lanka, where the Sinhalese majority

and the Tamil minority assert their respective identities on the basis of language, religion, territory, and cultural attributes, is an example. The Sinhalese are mostly Buddhists and they consider themselves to be descendants of the fair-skinned Aryan people of North India, whereas the dark-skinned Sri Lankan Tamils are largely Hindus with South Indian origin. The Sinhalese-Buddhist clergy's role in the escalation of the conflict in Sri Lanka was considerable (Ganguly & Taras, 1998).

Imperialism and colonialism policies of the Great Powers during the past few centuries also led to artificial identity creation either totally or partially. Ethnic identities in central Africa are not inherited at birth, rather they are “engendered by the need to anchor artificial states in collective identities” (Ganguly & Taras, 1998:241). The colonial powers in Africa politicized ethnicity. For example, Lemarchand argues that the root cause of the Hutu-Tutsi conflict in Rwanda was the interplay of ethnic realities and their subjective reconstruction by political entrepreneurs (Lemarchand, 1994).

Thus, social identity theory can contribute to the discussion of causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict. In many examples, we can see how identity formation, re-formation, and shifting in salience are related to conflict eruption, escalation, de-escalation or resolution. During the 1920s with the establishment of the Soviet Union, the new identity—a Soviet identity—was formed. The people living within the boundaries of the country ultimately accepted the Soviet identity. In other words, people generally accepted themselves to be Soviet citizens (Barner-Barry & Hody, 1994). This meant that old hostile nations or societies like Azerbaijanis and Armenians, or Chechens and Russians, and many others, gained a new common identity, which existed until the early 1990s. Especially during the 1940s and 1950s, during and after World War II, the Soviet

identity was highly salient. The soldiers fought against the Nazis and died on behalf of the Soviet Union, rather than, for example, Armenia or Uzbekistan. This was partially a result of active patriotic propaganda of the time. In the late 1980s, however, most people of the Soviet Union felt that their identities as Kazaks, Ukrainians, Tatars, Georgians, and Turkmen, etc. were more salient than their identity as Soviets. This, however, was partially the result of the *perestroika* and *glasnost* policies of Gorbachev. Such as a drastic shift in identity salience caused or escalated many ethnic conflicts on the territory of the former Soviet Union (Lynch, 2002; Tishkov, 1999).

With the failure of the modernist state building project, identity change, formation and re-formation become more apparent (Jeong & Vayrynen, 1999). In the 1950s and 1960s, people living in Yugoslavia regarded themselves as Yugoslavs. Today they are Serbs, Croats, Bosnians, Slovenes, and Kosovars, etc. Identity change does not take place instantaneously; however, it has close relationships with socioeconomic and political processes. The problem was even more serious in the Soviet Union, since the number of different nations and nationalities constituting it were far greater than that of the former Yugoslavia. Perhaps no nation of the ex-Soviet Union suffered more than the Chechens from the continuously changing sociopolitical processes in the Soviet Republics (Hughes, 2007).

To summarize this section, identity theories are crucial to PACS and to this study as they explain an important aspect of a problem that is related to such factors as religion, demographics, and psychoanalysis. However, identity theories ignore political and economic factors to a greater extent, and a detailed historical account except for some of the historical events that are frequently evoked by both sides of the conflict. Arguing that

identities are dynamic raises a legitimate and tough question of how dynamic they really are, and what factors are decisive in this regard. However, social identity theory plays an important role in analyzing the root causes of protracted ethnic conflicts. It is especially powerful if employed together with some other theories while explaining or describing this case study.

Gender

This section of *Literature Review* partially frames the qualitative Chapter 7. Gender is defined as one's socially constructed identity as male or female (Woehrle & College, 2008). Gender studies as a field is multifaceted, dealing with social structures and social relations replete with violence, peace and conflict. Therefore, the field of gender studies brings its contributions to the PACS field.

Kunovich and Deitelbaum (2004) explore the relationships between war-related experiences as well as in-group and out-group polarization. They argue that ethnic conflict promotes both in-group and out-group polarization, which leads to a resurgence of traditional values, including traditional gender attitudes. Out-group polarization has the most powerful effect on both gendered family role attitudes and policy attitudes for men and women. However, in-group polarization does not affect gender attitudes. Traditional gender attitudes during periods of war and political and economic transition change drastically (Kunovich & Deitelbaum, 2004). An extended period of ethno-political warfare especially affects women's lives negatively, violating their rights to equal participation in political decision-making (Snyder, 2009).

Women and men may differ in their social roles to some extent, as well as in the abilities and traits associated with those roles. The roles of both biological and social influences are relevant to the differences. Although biological origins are important for some sex differences in behavior and attitudes, the existence of historical and cross-cultural variation in gender role differentiation and stratification provides strong evidence that social influences also play an important role in the determination of differences between the sexes (Marini, 1990). Gender is embedded in the individual, interactional, and institutional dimensions of any society. To conceptualize gender as a structure is important, since different structures of inequality have different constructions and perhaps different influential causal mechanisms at any given historical moment. Understanding gender structure as well as race structure helps to deal with structures of inequality (Risman, 2004).

Widely shared and hegemonic cultural beliefs about gender and their impact in social relational contexts are among the core components that maintain and change the gender system (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004). While the biasing impact of gender beliefs may be small in any one instance, the consequences accumulate over people's lives and result in substantially different outcomes for men and women in a society. Gender as a system may constitute differences and organize inequalities on the basis of those differences, and then the widely held cultural beliefs that define the distinguishing characteristics of men and women becomes a central component of that system (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004).

The role of gender in both making conflict and peace is important. For example, in discussing the differences in approaches and perceptions of negotiation between men

and women, it is possible to consider what is observed as a possible function of the differential power relationships between men and women. The relationship between gender and power in negotiation is complicated (Kolb, 2009). Miller argues that women do not have a history of believing that their power is necessary for the maintenance of self-image such as men have and perhaps still do (Miller, 1976). Women, according to Miller (1986), generally have inexperience in using all of their power openly. As women are moving into greater activity and scope however, they face new kinds of power struggles and rivalries. It is important to note that some women start from a position in which they have been dominated. Women's full development requires a significant degree of power to overcome this historically subordinate social role. Dominant groups tend to characterize even subordinates' initial small resistance to dominant control as demands for an excessive amount of power. Miller (1976) proposes that the greater development of each individual will mean less limitation and restriction of others. In a war context, however, the conditions for human development are drastically restricted.

Storytelling and Memory

This sections deals with theoretical approaches to storytelling and memory that play an important role in both conflict analysis and conflict resolution. It informs primarily Chapters 8 and 10.

By providing necessary information for people, storytelling may become a means of conflict analysis. However, it is also of a vital importance as a means of transforming conflicts constructively. It also plays a role in transforming relationships at grassroots, middle tier, and the elite levels. Senehi (2000, 2008) argues that story and social structure

are interrelated. The production of meaning is an important process in social life, and storytelling as a process can deal with it. Stories are the source of local knowledge that is necessary to be included in the application of conflict resolution projects, not to reproduce colonial, oppressive, or coercive policies in the interventions (Senehi, 2002). Moreover, storytelling is a type of process that contributes to empowerment (Senehi, 2008).

Memory and history are significant in ethnic conflicts because the conflict is often framed as being about past events that have disrupted relationships (Senehi, 2008). Memories of past conflict, violence, and injustice are passed from generation to generation through stories (Volkan 1996, 2001). One of the most difficult problems confronting any society coming out of intense conflict is that of truth recovery and memory retrieval (Arthur, 2009). The past, present, and future mutually determine one another as parts of a whole (Carr, 1986). True memory is different from artificial history, since memory is life itself, whereas history is the reconstruction that is always problematic and incomplete (Nora, 1989). Individual and collective memory need to be distinguished to acknowledge that that societies are capable of appropriating historical trauma for political purposes (Arthur, 2009). The role of collective memories of past tragic events in reshaping myths and their political significance is remarkable (Campana, 2009).

At the individual level, art, literature, and storytelling are employed as a means of sustaining people's ability to deal with the past. There is a fine balance between remembering and forgetting. Even though remembering may not always produce the truth, it usually affects people, influencing them to act in a certain way.

When it comes to the resolution or elimination of certain historical grievances, the forgetting part of the issue becomes important. Then a question has to be asked about leaving the past behind, which is not always easy and acceptable to the people involved. People insist on remembering mostly because they want to avoid oblivion (Arthur, 2009).

There is no simple panacea and there is not a quick fix for traumas. Individual and collective memories do not change easily to adapt themselves to a fixed formula. In certain circumstances, we should not remember unless and until we are convinced that the past is not about determining the future. The past needs to be faced and reviewed because it has the capacity to reemerge in a malign manner (Arthur, 2009). Small, constructive steps can lead to greater understanding what Boulding (1989) calls the watershed principle, since a small change may cause water to flow in a particular direction.²⁵ A more benign scenario can be constructed through the art of storytelling and other mechanisms of peacebuilding to a more general consideration of the role of the arts in reconciliation.

The Roles of Theories in Assessment and Practice

In this section, PACS theories that are crucial in not only analyzing conflicts, but also in providing assistance for intervention as well as policy formulation will briefly be presented. Theories of practice and intervention are as important as theories of analysis and assessment due to their assistance to formulate peacebuilding goals and strategies as well as to mobilize the means to reach them. As discussed in Chapter 10 of this thesis in more details, there are many theories of intervention that might be useful for the

resolution of this conflict on different levels. Hence, I utilize some of the theories or approaches to design an appropriate dispute system.

The main role of the theories discussed above is in their ability to analyze the causes and origins of different conflicts at different levels that are important for formulating a successful intervention policy. Analysis is an essential prolegomenon of resolution and policy formulation, or any other type of conflict intervention. The aforementioned theories, among others, are tools for analysis, and therefore, they are indirectly related to intervention strategy and policy formulation. In this sense, all the aforementioned theories play a vital role in analyzing the root causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict. In general, they give meaning to the data, and assist me in organizing them for a meaningful interpretation, which, in turn, helps with formulating intervention strategies.

Intervention into Conflict

Lederach defines conflict transformation this way: “Conflict transformation is *to envision and respond* to the *ebb and flow* of social conflict as *life-giving opportunities* for creating *constructive change processes* that *reduce violence, increase justice* in *direct interaction and social structures*, and respond to real-life problems in *human relationships*” (Lederach, 2003:14).

Byrne and Keashly (2002:98) also define intervention as “any efforts involving external and/or internal parties that focus on amelioration of social, economic, political, physical, and psychocultural conditions in the conflict region.” In addition to the formal and informal methods of conflict resolution such as mediation, negotiation, conciliation,

and reconciliation, etc., they offer other forms of interactive conflict resolution. Those include structural change, short- and long-term economic investment plans, public integrated education, community-building efforts, physical and mental health care, religious reconciliation efforts, community empowerment, healing and storytelling, forgiveness, and problem-solving workshops (Byrne & Keashly, 2002). This multimodal nature of intervention in conflict entails an analysis of a number of factors associated with history, religion, demography, politics, economy, and psychoculture (Byrne, 2008a).

Elsewhere, Byrne (2002) discusses the intractable-tractable model, relating it to micro-macro peacemaking efforts in Northern Ireland and South Africa, explaining the driving forces behind the peace processes in both regions. He analyzed the underlying causes of these two conflicts as well as settlement efforts in both regions. Byrne (2002) argues that ethno-political conflicts are socially constructed, and they have a dynamic nature that changes over time, therefore their multidimensional aspects should be explored by scholars to understand fully their intractability. In the examples of the South African and Northern Ireland peace processes, he persuasively discusses that transforming an intractable ethno-political conflict into a tractable one is not impossible, although this requires some compromise between the parties before a resolution is reached. This end stage is contingent, however, on the pre-negotiation processes, and in-depth analysis that forms an understanding of the underlying issues (Byrne, 2002).

Like other conflict areas, ethnic conflict resolution involves a third-party role, when an intervention with professional practitioners takes place. Ryan (2008:302) discusses conflict transformation that “aims for deep and profound changes in conflict situations that go beyond the limitations of traditional approaches.” He argues that the

concept of conflict transformation covers many different ideas and strategies; therefore it is not easy to be for or against it. It is necessary that when used the approach balances a number of competing pressures. However, this usually involves the tension between the external environment and local cultures, long-term strategic thinking and short-term perspectives of the political elite, as well as promoting positive change and causing new opposition from those who value the status quo. Developing an honest and open dialogue between all points of view, therefore, is an important starting point (Ryan, 2008). Moreover, Galtung (1996) argues that transformation is a never-ending process to help build peaceful and democratic societies.

Based on the nature of a conflict situation and process, a specific approach to conflict transformation may be preferred. Byrne (2001b), for example, discusses consociational elite powersharing (top down) and civic society (bottom up) approaches to peace building in Northern Ireland. From 1972 to 1985, the British government tried on a number of occasions to implement a power-sharing government between the Unionist Protestant and Nationalist Catholic elites that failed because of the opposition of one or other of the political parties (Byrne, 2001b). The Irish government's inclusion in the political process with the Anglo-Irish Agreement (AIA) in 1985, which in turn resulted in the inclusion of previously marginalized Republican and Loyalist paramilitary groups in the processes, brought new dynamics and hopes into the conflict resolution process in the region. Since 1985, the British and Irish governments—the external ethnoguarantors—managed to mitigate the conflict through a coercive consociational approach to elite conflict management (Byrne, 2007a).²⁶ The efforts to bring Unionists and Nationalists together at different levels demonstrated that such a transformational approach is

necessary to constructing a multimodal, multilevel contingency approach to conflict resolution in Northern Ireland (Byrne, 2001a).

In contrast, Moore (1996:8) defines mediation as “an extension or elaboration of the negotiation process that involves the intervention of an acceptable third party who has limited or no authoritative decision-making power”. The mediator assists the parties in conflict in reaching an acceptable settlement by problem-solving, transformation, or some other means (Moore, 1996). Woolford and Ratner (2008) also examined three mediation types: transformative, facilitative, and evaluative, the goal of which is to end a conflict, bringing the parties to the conflict to a mutually acceptable resolution. Facilitative mediation, on the other hand, focuses on the processual dimensions of justice, and it is characterized by an open communication style amongst the parties. Transformative mediation, however, encourages moral growth in each party, inviting them to see the concerns and problems of the other as well (Woolford & Ratner, 2008). Bercovitch (2008, 2009) studied the role of mediation in international conflict resolution. He argues that mediation is one aspect of the broader process of conflict management, and it may offer a more effective response to international conflicts than old techniques of power and deterrence can do (Bercovitch, 2008, 2009).

Many scholars also believe that peace education is a possible solution to conflicts on many levels, including ethnic conflicts (Bekerman & McGlynn, 2007). Sustained education is considered a necessary tool in moving toward peace, but it is not sufficient by itself, since it depends on political, economic, and social structures to change. Peace education needs to struggle against dysfunctional human relationships, as well as commit

itself to more critical approaches through which it may disclose the historical forces and political structures that generate and sustain conflict in our world.

Peace education as an effective means of conflict resolution may significantly contribute to bringing peace to ethnic conflicts through empowering necessary cross-cultural dialogues (Senehi & Byrne, 2006). The ability to resolve conflict by peaceful means is probably one of the most important skills that one can learn: cross-cultural dialogue is one of those skills (Tanqeren, Brenk, Hellema, & Verhoeven, 2005). Constructive dialogue assists parties in conflict to liberate themselves from interlocking situations that are dangerous for the possibilities of searching for alternatives that allow them to seek a creative solution to the problem that enables them to satisfy their needs (Senehi, 2009). This approach would permit the parties in conflict to achieve a gradual agreement effectively without all the transactional costs of digging into interlocked positions (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 1991).

Interactive conflict resolution can take place in the form of dialogue, conflict analysis, and problem solving (Fisher 1997, 2005, 2007, 2008). Fisher (2007) argues that the theory and practice of third-party intervention continue to develop in constructive directions. In addition, the utility of unofficial methods directed more toward the subjective and relational aspects of international conflict is increasingly acknowledged. A contingency model of third-party intervention articulates the potential complementarities of an unofficial approach of problem solving workshops with more traditional official method of mediation in pursuit of resolution. Fisher stresses the necessary interplay between official and unofficial interventions in order to effectively address retractable ethno-political conflicts (Fisher, 2007, 2008). Moreover, he discusses the development of

a theory of practice, as a number of different theorists have studied the essence of dialogue, conflict analysis, and problem solving. He argues that interactive conflict resolution needs to be documented and conceptualized in order to develop a body of knowledge and theory to guide further practice. Consequently, practitioners should write about their work indicating which principles, strategies and skills led to successful outcomes. Also, in this way similarities can be induced toward a consensual theory of practice (Fisher, 2008, 2005).

In addition, a capacity-building approach to conflict resolution, which is also called premediation, trust building, and conflict assessment is important for constructive conflict resolution. This approach is relatively new in the PACS field, although it is similar to empowerment strategies. It is designed to prepare parties for a dialogue or negotiations by enhancing their motivation, skills, and resources. A capacity building approach is especially needed in cases in which parties to a conflict do not want to meet for any reason (Barsky, 2000, 2008).

Moving from unpeaceful to peaceful relationships is the core argument of conflict resolution processes. Lederach (1997) argues that there are at least three key peacemaking functions towards change: education, advocacy, and mediation. The first is needed when the conflict is latent, and people are unaware of imbalances and injustices. As the awareness of issues, needs, and interests grows, people increase their demands for changing the situation. Advocates work with and support people pursuing change. The fact of confrontation increases the awareness of interdependence, making negotiations possible. As a result of this, the role of mediation emerges. Successful negotiations and mediation deal with fundamental concerns of people and lead to a restructuring of the

relationship in a constructive way (Lederach, 1995). Lederach also compares mediation with nonviolent activism to show differences and similarities between them.

Thus, Lederach (1998) suggests that we must approach peacebuilding as a system with a design and architecture. It has the operational function of linking immediate action and long-term goals. Its primary task is to develop a conceptual plan for social change. Typically, the process of peacebuilding is driven by a crisis orientation that tends to produce a response to immediate needs through short-term objectives. Long-term projects and programs for social change are defined by what is necessary and possible emerging from the crisis. The social architectural design of peacebuilding thinks in decades, where long-term goals and plans are defined by a measured understanding of the context, purpose, and program. The long-term vision of peacebuilding should not be allowed to isolate us from practical steps related to the realities of day-to-day life (Lederach, 1998). Lederach also notes that actors of peacebuilding play an important role in both short- and long-term social change.

Other Intervention Methods

While addressing ethnic conflicts governments consider developing early warning systems, preventative diplomacy, training special negotiation and mediation teams, and multinational rapid reaction teams to intervene in ethnic conflicts. NGOs seek in a variety of ways to transform ethnic conflicts in constructive ways. These efforts are less visible, less expensive, faster, more flexible and focused, as well as far less politically complicated than governmental efforts (Ross & Rothman, 1999). NGOs have the ability to create special institutional structures, valued by all sides, to deal with the conflict.

Also, NGOs are able to create contexts in which parties can explore options without the risks of committing themselves to any outcomes (Ross & Rothman, 1999).

A number of other intervention methods and models in ethnic conflicts (three-pillar approach, tractable-intractable model) and specific policies (consociational-civic society approach) may be utilized by a conflict resolver, in addition to interactive problem-solving approaches, as well as some reflexive practice methods such as mediation, transformation, dialogue, capacity-building approach, and storytelling. It should be noted that the list is not exhaustive. A conflict practitioner always needs to consider that there are alternative perspectives, propositions, hypotheses, and so forth that are needed to intervene in social and ethnic conflicts and formulate policies depending on their nature and context among other factors. Also, practitioners provide intervention at multiple levels, such as intrapersonal, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, and international. Although there are certain similarities across levels (Kelman, 2000; Rubin & Levinger, 1995), each may require a special approach and modeling in order to be successfully handled. However, whatever the level, conflict analysis has linkage to the practical activities of interventions intended to resolve conflicts. PACS theories assist us in analyzing the sources of ethnic conflicts, which in turn inform the treatment of processes and interventions (Druckman, 2008b; Rubenstein, 2008).

Moreover, Mitchell (2002:19) in his overview of the differences and similarities between the concepts of conflict resolution and conflict transformation concludes that whereas conflict resolution tends to focus primarily on elites and decision makers, conflict transformation “advocates and practices the conception that processes have to take place at all levels, including the very grassroots.” Furthermore, he argues that

conflict resolution deals primarily with short-term problems, whereas conflict transformation also works with long-term and deep-rooted issues especially in protracted ethnic conflicts. More importantly, conflict transformation assumes necessary structural changes that have led to conflicts, unlike conflict resolution, which may work within the existing structure (Mitchell, 2002).

Byrne (2001a) describes transformative conflict resolution in ethnic conflicts in terms of ten major propositions that focus on the following themes: (1) reconciliation and restoring relationships, (2) liberation education, critical consciousness, and indigenous knowledge, (3) participatory democracy and politics, contact, and confidence building, (4) personal and political recognition and empowerment, (5) non-violence and full community participation in minority rights protection, (6) imagining a shared future and building a shared collective memory, (7) involvement of middle-range leaders and all key stakeholders in peacebuilding, (8) people- and peace-friendly socioeconomic development, (9) spiritual transformation, and, (10) the perception by all parties in the conflict of moving toward accommodation and trust building, as well as the implementation of all agreements (Byrne, 2001a).

In contrast, Schwerin (1995:6) discusses transformational politics as a concept wider than conflict transformation that has a number of key intrinsic values: (1) participatory politics; (2) socially just relationships; (3) cooperative communities, built through conflict resolution and reconciliation; (4) personal development; and, (5) ecological unity and spirituality. Moreover, he notes that empowerment represents the “core concept” of transformational politics and of conflict transformation (Schwerin, 1995).

Conflict transformation as an element of transformational politics has been defined and reviewed by a number of scholars such as Lederach, Botes, Vayrynen, Galtung, Byrne and Ryan who provide a detailed analysis of conflict transformation and its definitions, acknowledging that in the PACS field there seems to be a tendency to move from conflict resolution toward conflict transformation. Nevertheless, Botes argues that the differences between the two concepts are not delineated clearly yet, neither is the application of conflict transformation in practice (Botes, 2003, 2008).

Conflict transformation includes a whole collection of processes and their results. The processes aim to make relationships more just, meet the needs of all, allow for the full participation and dignity of all, address conflicts without violence, mitigate hatred and violence, make co-existence possible as well as develop a constructive conflict culture to prevent new and ongoing conflicts from being destructive (Francis, 2002).

Transformative conflict resolution is very closely related to ideas raised by Galtung (1985, 1990). He conceptualized several important issues, such as negative and positive peace, and structural and cultural violence. Whereas the dangers of direct violence are usually easily recognized, not everyone is aware of, and willing to challenge the dangers of structural and cultural violence. Galtung (1985:155) also stresses the importance of the cultural context in understanding and defining peace: “it is as if somewhere there was once a rich, holistic peace concept which was then split into several components, one component being given to each part of humankind.” Thus, as mentioned by Lederach (1996), we should focus on the elicitive, grassroots approach in order to arrive at a shared meaning for peace and justice.

There is always a need for acknowledging power asymmetries in ethnic conflict

transformation. Väyrynen (1999:148) points out that the process of conflict transformation and peacebuilding require “a critical analysis of asymmetric social relations in conflict and a strategy to empower the weaker parties,” since the underlying value of conflict resolution should be the search for justice. Väyrynen (1999) further elaborates on the process of conflict transformation, which, unlike conflict resolution, addresses and seeks the rectification of structural issues which had led to the conflict in the first place. In order to facilitate necessary long-term structural changes, conflict transformation should “aim to redefine and rearrange key parties and their coalitions, issues, rules, and interests in a manner that the conflict becomes less violent and destructive” (Väyrynen, 1999:151-152).

The role of power in transformational politics, especially in relation to empowerment, is also significant (Schwerin, 1995; Francis, 2002). Schwerin (1995) and Francis (2002) distinguish between power *over* and power *for* or power *with*. Whereas power *over* is generally seen as disempowering, power *for* and power *with* are “truly empowering” (Schwerin, 1995). However, Schwerin (1995) warns that although “usually well-intentioned,” power *for* can sometimes lead to paternalism and the potential to move to power *over*.

Bercovitch and Derouen (2004), also examine how internationalized ethnic conflicts can be managed and resolved. They argue that mediation is particularly relevant in the contexts of intractable conflicts. They develop a framework of mediation and present the significant features that may affect its outcome (Bercovitch & Derouen, 2004). In addition, Kaufmann (2007) proposes a standard for evaluation of possible solutions to communal conflicts, including partition, based on protection of human life.

He avows that partition should be judged successful only if it costs fewer lives than the expected loss of life under any alternative. Solutions to communal conflicts should also be stable over long periods, eliminating or drastically reducing fears of people in the affected communities that they could become victims of renewed violence (Kaufmann, 2007).

External economic aid may also play an important role in transforming ethnopolitical conflicts. Byrne and Ayulo (1998) and Byrne (2008) discuss how economic aid plays an important role in helping to build the peace in the protracted and violent ethnopolitical conflict in Northern Ireland. Specifically targeted economic aid may help to generate sustainable economic development, employment, contact, and a sense of purpose and social pride across political and religious divides. There are direct links between economic development and the resolution of ethnic conflict as well as how intervention through external economic aid could set the stage for conflict transformation and the building of a positive peace in divided communities coming out of war (Byrne, 2008b; Byrne & Ayulo, 1998).

However, Tishkov and Igrounov (1993) among others make the point that the economic reforms that are implemented without taking into account specific ethnic and regional features are likely to create interethnic tension and outright violence. Economic factors often underlie ethnic confrontation even though they may be less pronounced in the course of conflict dynamics (Tishkov & Igrounov, 1993). Also, political decentralization is believed to reduce ethnic conflict and secessionism, although decentralization is more successful in reducing conflict in some countries than in others (Brancati, 2006). Decentralization may decrease ethnic conflict and secessionism directly

by bringing the government closer to the people and increasing opportunities to participate in government. However, at the same time decentralization may increase ethnic conflict and secessionism indirectly by encouraging the growth of regional parties that increase ethnic conflict and secessionism by reinforcing ethnic and regional identities, producing legislation that favors certain groups over others, and mobilizing groups to engage in ethnic conflict and secessionism (Brancati, 2006).

The promotion of participatory democracy as a remedy to reduce ethnic-based conflicts and violence is critical. Piazza (2007) empirically evaluates the question of whether or not the promotion of democracy in the Middle East will reduce terrorism. The more politically liberal Middle Eastern states are actually more prone to terrorist activities than are Middle Eastern dictatorships (Piazza, 2007). The intensity of state failures, or episodes of severe political instability that limit central government capacity to hold power in its domestic affairs, is an even more significant predictor of Middle Eastern terrorist attacks. States with weakened political capacity to respond to fundamental challenges to political stability are significantly more likely to host terrorist groups (Piazza, 2007).

Democracies are most likely to defeat ethnic insurgencies by employing more cooperative or balanced strategies (Horowitz & Sharma, 2008). Although such strategies employ economic and political inducements and rely on local ethnic elements to help fight the insurgents, they also depend on a credible state commitment to sustain the counterinsurgency for as long as it takes to win. Case studies of India's multiphase counterinsurgency efforts in the Punjab and Kashmir offer some preliminary evidence in support of this theory (Horowitz & Sharma, 2008).

Having external ethnoguarantors as effective third parties is an important mechanism in enforcing peace. Byrne discusses the roles of external ethnoguarantors and primary mediators in the cases of Cyprus and Northern Ireland (Byrne, 2007b) as well as Russia's military presence in Chechnya with that of the United States in Afghanistan (Byrne & Rudoi, 2006), and the South African and Northern Ireland peace processes (Byrne, 2002). In addition, Cunningham and Byrne (2006) discuss how urban planners can escalate or de-escalate conflict. For example, Northern Ireland Executive's urban policies served to decrease intergroup tensions in Belfast. Rather than focusing on the nation-state as the sole territorial scale of political, social, and economic conflict, scholars examine ethnopolitical conflicts within the borders of nation-states. Cities with their ethnically divided populations may create and reinforce ethnic conflicts. Belfast urban planners' creative proposals such as cross-cultural school programs, storytelling festivals, and integrated spaces. may have a positive impact on the city's two communities (Cunningham & Byrne, 2006).

There is also a need to balance group rights and individual rights in divided multiethnic societies. The observance of group rights is often a necessary condition for the enjoyment of individual rights. The Nigerian case is suitable to discuss the human rights approach to ethnic conflict management (Osaghae, 1996). Further, Leatherman (1996) argues that one of the great promises of the post-Cold War era is building international security on cooperative approaches. There are new threats to security such as ethnic conflict and collapsed states that need new cooperative security tools. The lack of effective global leadership poses significant obstacles to the construction of a global cooperative security regime (Leatherman, 1996).

This section offers a comprehensive approach to explaining the causes and sources of ethnic conflicts as well as appropriate conflict resolution methods. It uses a holistic analytical framework to provide a comprehensive approach to understanding the Russo-Chechen conflict, demonstrating that no single theory is adequate in explaining the complex causes of this protracted ethnic conflict alone. Likewise, it suggests that using a number of conflict resolution strategies would be more effective than the employment of just one. Taken together, these theories may be more productive and effective in explaining the causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict and violence, as well as the intervention methods that may be more successful and long-lasting in transforming this conflict. It seems necessary to acknowledge that a context-based and flexible multidimensional and multilevel approach to conflict analysis as well as resolution is needed to understand the root causes of this complex ethnic conflict, and to make an effective strategy of conflict resolution.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I utilize the lens of the aforementioned PACS theories to analyze the root causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict and review the intervention efforts at improving the relations between Russians and Chechens. The usefulness and strength of these theories and approaches derives from the PACS paradigm, which encompasses many areas and levels.

The PACS theories discussed in this chapter allow for our comprehension of the ongoing conflict between Russians and Chechens in a holistic manner and it provides a comprehensive approach to the transformation of this conflict. It was, therefore,

important to review both conflict analysis and transformation from a theoretical perspective and outline their main premises. Hence, I have critically reviewed the relevant literature in framing the study.

Moreover, the theories and practical approaches to conflict transformation inform the construction of a comprehensive and organic PACS model, which contains both formal and informal elements, to apply to the Russo-Chechen conflict in order to reach a long-lasting political resolution of this protracted ethnic conflict. Chapter 11 takes the discussion one step forward by constructing a conflict resolution model that arguably would be effective in transforming the Russo-Chechen conflict.

Chapter 5

Project Narrative and Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter, I deal with the research methods used to collect data for this study and describe the research process. When conducting research, a researcher faces primarily four problems pertinent to methods: (1) methods for designing research; (2) methods for sampling; (3) methods for collecting data; and (4) methods for analyzing data. As Bernard (2006:3) put it, “method” has at least three meanings, which are about (1) epistemology or “the study of how we know things”; (2) strategic choices, i.e., which strategy or method to employ to collect data; and (3) a choice of technique, like whether to do face-to-face interviews or use the telephone (Bernard, 2006). When it comes to epistemology, there are also a number of key issues. The first is related to whether a researcher subscribes to the philosophical principles of rationalism or empiricism—two opposing currents of thought. Another question is whether a researcher adopts assumptions of the scientific method, which is also commonly known as positivism or humanism, also known as interpretivism.

PACS researchers generally use either the positivistic approach in which the logic of the natural sciences is applied or the humanistic approach that enables the researcher to study idiosyncratically constructed conflict cases (Cheldelin, Druckman, & Fast, 2003). From the rationalist viewpoint, there is an *a priori* truth that may become evident to us if we prepare our minds adequately. Rationalism proposes that progress of the human intellect over the centuries has resulted from reason. Many philosophers such as Plato and Leibnitz subscribed to the rationalist principle of knowledge (Bernard, 2006). Nowadays,

many scholars such as Charles Taylor, Martin Hollis, Steven Lukes, and Jon Elster, among others, have contributed to rationalist thinking (Hollis & Lukes, 1984).

Given the objective and perception-based nature of this thesis, the research methodology I employed is a qualitative research methodology. A qualitative study does not necessarily include a detailed and heavily structured research proposal (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). On the other hand, research results and understanding of the phenomenon explored emerge inductively through the research process itself (Meloy, 2002). Following qualitative study guidelines in order to successfully elicit answers to the research questions, most of the field research was conducted in Azerbaijan. However, I also conducted interviews in Washington DC and Winnipeg. I focused on the meaning of issues that emerged during the research, as well as theoretical conclusions that emerged during the research and as a result of data analysis.

To collect data I interviewed fifty-two people in Baku, two persons in Winnipeg, two persons in Washington, DC, one person in Grozny (via the Internet), and one person in Moscow (via the Internet) to elicit their images of the war, violence, deprivation, sacrifice, education, hopes, fears, leadership, media, and future, etc. In Baku, the research participants were mostly refugees from Chechnya, and a few were of Russian background. To locate the research subjects was quite difficult, and the task of building trust and getting their approval to conduct an interview was a long and difficult process. I interviewed all of the people who consented to be the subjects of this research. The interviews were individual-based, and I also conducted three focus groups. In the following section, I describe the course of the data collecting process in some detail.

Research Questions

The main research question of this study refers to the participants' images of the Russo-Chechen conflict and peace processes. Also, a sub-question refers to the underlying causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict, and its transformation by nonviolent political processes. To answer the research question the research project had several interviewing questions with a number of sub-questions that address the topic of the thesis.

In the study, therefore, I focused on a number of questions to elicit the views of the Chechen and Russian peoples with regard to the different causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict such as its origins, dynamics, and the third-party role to reconcile the parties. I formulated certain questions to ask the participants during the course of the field research, depending on the situation and in accordance with the nature of the research. I conducted the research through a number of qualitative approaches, particularly through interviewing. I focused on three important points related to the Russo-Chechen conflict that include analysis, impact, and transformation. The primary purpose of the research was to study how people understand and think about the Russo-Chechen conflict and how it has had an impact on their own lives.

I asked the respondents in this study a number of relevant questions to address the major research question of the research (see Appendix 4). Moreover, the collected data assisted me in clarifying the following aspects of the Russo-Chechen conflict: (1) the historical context; (2) the attitudes the parties hold toward conflict; (3) the metaphorical images of the conflict that the parties use; (4) the psychocultural context in which the conflict takes place; (5) the ways in which the parties clarify their goals and their priorities at different stages of the conflict; (6) the destructive effect of the use of force on

the parties; (7) the options for change and management of the conflict; (8) the roles of third parties in attempting to transform the conflict; and (9) the solutions that can also be formulated.

Types of Data

I started the research with the data collecting process. The interview questions were formulated in such a way that the collected data would include information ranging from existing interethnic and conflict resolution activities to the key issues causing the conflict that impact people's lives as well as their hopes and fears for the future. Also, I sought data on Russian perspectives of the Russo-Chechen conflict. To this end, I interviewed seven Russian people in Azerbaijan and Canada. In addition, I e-mailed my qualitative instrument to Russian civil society organizations such as Memorial, a Russian civil society organization that were contacted via the Internet to answer some research-related questions. One Memorial activist responded.

A number of Russian as well as non-Russian regional newspapers and audiovisual material were also used as data sources. The availability of some on-line databases about the Russo-Chechen war buttressed the information gleaned from the interviews. For example, the data collected from the interviewees on the Chechen and Russian media's positions toward the war in Chechnya was enriched by the on-line archives as well as an interview via the Internet. As a matter of fact, I have found them valuable as secondary and complementary sources many of which criticized both the official policies of the Russian governments and Chechen violence, since they present both facts related to significant events as well as views of the people. I found interviews with Russian human

rights activists such as Oleg Orlov, the leader of Memorial, in an on-line database. Moreover, I accessed many newspapers in the Russian, Turkish, and Azerbaijani languages, whose on-line archives provided rich and valuable information.

Description of the Participants

The research included qualitative interviews with fifty-eight participants. Demographic information was collected directly from each person. Out of the sample of fifty-eight participants, fifty-four were men, four were women, fifty were Chechens, and eight were Russians. Two participants out of the fifty-eight respondents reside in the United States, and two are from Canada.

I am aware of the imbalance between the numbers of Chechens interviewed in this study, compared to Russian as well as the male and female participants. However, I used a number of Russian sources such as newspapers, audiovisual material, and journals, as well as books to a large extent to ascertain the Russian point of view. Secondary sources and two e-mail interviews also provided access to additional data.

Nine of the participants completed university education, thirty-nine completed secondary, and the rest of the sample had completed primary education. Seven of the participants were between the ages of 18 and 30, seventeen between 31 and 40 years of age, twenty-three were between 41 and 50 years of age, eight were between 51 and 60 years of age, two were between 61 and 70 years of age, and one participant was over 71 years of age (see Table 1). The significance in the age differences was in the respondents' past experiences related to the conflict situations between the Chechens and the Soviet regime before its collapse.

Table 1: Participants' demographic data

#	Nationality	Gen.	Status/ Position	Age	Education	Place of Interview	Type of Interview
1	Chechen	M	Educator/ Linguist	31- 40	Uni.	Washington DC	Face-to- face/ Telephone
2	Chechen	F	Educator/ Linguist	31- 40	Uni.	Washington DC	Face-to- face
3	Russian	F	Educator	31- 40	Uni.	Winnipeg	Face-to- face
4	Russian	M	Healthcare Worker	31- 40	Sec.	Baku	Face-to- face
5	Russian	F	Retired	61- 70	Uni.	Baku	Face-to- face
6	Russian	M	Educator	51- 60	Uni.	Baku	Face-to- face
7	Chechen	M	Imam	71+	Prim.	Baku	Face-to- face
8	Chechen	M	Refugee	41- 50	Sec.	Baku	Face-to- face
9	Russian	M	Healthcare Worker	31- 40	Uni.	Baku	Face-to- face
10	Russian	M	Healthcare	41- 50	Uni.	Baku	Face-to- face
11	Chechen	M	Media	31- 40	Uni.	Grozny	Internet
12	Russian	F	Retired	61- 70	Sec.	Baku	Face-to- face
13	Chechen	M	Refugee	31- 40	Sec.	Baku	Face-to- face
14	Chechen	M	Refugee	41- 50	Prim.	Baku	Face-to- face
15	Chechen	M	Refugee	18- 30	Prim.	Baku	Face-to- face
16	Chechen	M	Refugee	18- 30	Prim.	Baku	Face-to- face
17	Chechen	M	Refugee	18- 30	Prim.	Baku	Face-to- face
18	Chechen	M	Refugee	18- 30	Prim.	Baku	Face-to- face
19	Chechen	M	Refugee	18- 30	Prim.	Baku	Face-to- face

20	Chechen	M	Refugee	18-30	Prim.	Baku	Face-to-face
21	Chechen	M	Refugee	18-30	Prim.	Baku	Face-to-face
22	Chechen	M	Refugee	51-60	Prim.	Baku	Face-to-face
23	Chechen	M	Refugee	51-60	Sec.	Baku	Face-to-face
24	Chechen	M	Refugee	51-60	Sec.	Baku	Group
25	Chechen	M	Refugee	51-60	Sec.	Baku	Group
26	Chechen	M	Refugee	51-60	Sec.	Baku	Group
27	Chechen	M	Refugee	51-60	Sec.	Baku	Group
28	Chechen	M	Refugee	31-40	Sec.	Baku	Group
29	Chechen	M	Refugee	31-40	Sec.	Baku	Group
30	Chechen	M	Refugee	31-40	Sec.	Baku	Group
31	Chechen	M	Refugee	31-40	Sec.	Baku	Group
32	Chechen	M	Refugee	31-40	Sec.	Baku	Group
33	Chechen	M	Refugee	31-40	Sec.	Baku	Group
34	Chechen	M	Refugee	31-40	Sec.	Baku	Group
35	Chechen	M	Refugee	31-40	Sec.	Baku	Group
36	Chechen	M	Refugee	31-40	Sec.	Baku	Group
37	Chechen	M	Refugee	31-40	Sec.	Baku	Group
38	Chechen	M	Worker	41-50	Sec.	Winnipeg	Face-to-face
39	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
40	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
41	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
42	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group

43	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
44	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
45	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
46	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
47	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
48	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
49	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
50	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
51	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
52	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
53	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
54	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
55	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
56	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
57	Chechen	M	Refugee	41-50	Sec.	Baku	Group
58	Russian	M	Civil Society Activist	51-60	Uni.	Moscow	Internet

Out of the fifty Chechen study participants one served as a community leader, forty-three participants identified themselves as unemployed refugees, one served as an Imam, while another participant worked as a soccer coach. Two research participants were educators/linguists, one participant was an auto mechanic/worker, one participant was a former journalist, and one participant served as a university professor. The Russian

subjects of this study identified themselves as educators (2), retired educators (2), healthcare workers (3), and a human rights activist (1).

I interviewed almost everybody with whom I could meet when I spent nine weeks in Baku in 2009. Given the nature and scope of this work—an exploratory case study—this group of people provided constructive feedback to the aforementioned interview questions. The commonality of most of the research participants in Baku was that they were either former fighters or simply victims of the Russo-Chechen conflict. Nonetheless, all of them had their unique fate, stories, and problems. Therefore, they seemed to be an ideal study group for this exploratory case study.

Sampling and Data Collection

Sampling is a crucial aspect of almost all scientific inquiry (Keeter, 2005). I used the snowball and purposive sampling methods, i.e., I identified an individual first who not only suggested other potential participants but also assisted with the research process (Babbie, 2007).

I utilized almost every opportunity to interview a research subject. Some participants were given special attention based on their leadership position in the community and their former position in Chechnya. In this sense, importance was placed on potential knowledge and experience, which the sample participants would provide in their stories (Merriam, 2002).

The process of securing the participants to participate in this study was done primarily by using friendship ties. I managed to meet one of the subjects, who in turn arranged a meeting with another, thus enabling the research process to develop. Although

the research objectives and the specifics of data collection were described in a letter, including all necessary warranties regarding the storage and access to the data collected, it was largely ignored, especially by the Chechens. A copy of the invitation letter is included in Appendix 3. Most of the Chechen participants refused to sign the agreement to participate in the research and objected to being tape-recorded. The main reason for this seemed to be their concern about their security. They simply agreed verbally to participate in the research and did not object to note-taking. A few of them gave their consent to being tape-recorded. They also shared with me a number of vivid amateur videos about Russian atrocities against Chechens that were taped secretly in Chechnya.

In addition to the face-to-face and focus group interviews, I utilized narrative analysis/storytelling, carried out participant observation as well as examined some existing research materials related to Chechen culture, educational publications, and media materials in Russian, Azerbaijani, and Turkish that focused on the Russo-Chechen conflict. The purpose of using these materials was to assist in framing the questions used in the interviews, as well as to support conclusions made during the data analysis. Moreover, I had prior exposure to these groups of people through other forms of social interaction. I had seen, met, or worked with a number of Chechens and Russians during the past twenty-two years in Chechnya, Russia, Georgia, Turkey, Azerbaijan, and the United States.

I attempted to make the data collection process as unobtrusive as possible to the participants. Fortunately, the focus of this exploratory case study coincides with the participants' lives, since war and violence have been part of their lived experience for the past fifteen years. Disseminating information about their lived experience is thus an

integral part of their “life description.” I guaranteed to each interviewee the appropriate ethical standards and protection of research participants by following the guidelines of the University of Manitoba’s Research Ethics Board for Research with Human Subjects.

The primary language used in the field research was Russian, but some of the Chechen and Russian participants also used some Azerbaijani. One of the first interviewees examined the original invitation to participate in the study and he let others know about the content of the letter.

Field Project Narrative

I arrived in Baku in early August 2009, hoping to meet a number of Chechens. The weather was very hot and I found the streets, buses, and metro very crowded. I knew that there were a few thousand Chechen refugees living in Baku. I had come to learn that they were not living close to one another in a single neighborhood. After a couple of days’ rest I tried a number of strategies to reach the Chechens to initiate my research. First I called a local journalist who periodically writes about the difficulties of the Chechen refugees living in Baku, asking him for assistance after explaining to him the purpose of my study. He gladly agreed to help me, stressing that my task was in our common interest, since learning and writing about the Chechen reality was one of his newspaper’s priorities. However, a number of days passed by fruitlessly, as my journalist friend was not able to persuade any of the Chechens to talk to me. I started to feel anxious after about two weeks and decided to seek some other strategies to access the Chechens. I also considered making a trip to Chechnya, which geographically is not too far from

Azerbaijan, although I was convinced that such a trip would not bring about rich research dividends because of the existing political tumult in the autonomous republic.

I asked almost everybody that I knew with any close ties to assist me in meeting a Chechen. Meanwhile I learned from local people that the number of Chechen refugees in Baku had sharply declined over the past two years because of the harsh anti-Chechen policy of the Azerbaijani government. My cousin, who knew a Chechen family, said that because of the local police and secret service officers, as well as Russian secret service agents, the Chechens had to be very careful, especially around strangers. I had the relevant paperwork from the University of Manitoba to show Chechens interested in my study but it seemed to me that at that point I had nobody to show the paperwork.

Once I was told that one of the newest multistory buildings in the center of the city housed Chechens refugees. I went there with the hope of meeting some of the refugees. I met with the site manager of the building. The people called him *Commandant*. I introduced myself and explained my situation to him, asking him for his assistance. He made a call and said on the phone that there was a journalist with him who was willing to talk to Chechens. I interrupted, trying to correct his mistake and clarifying my identity as a researcher, but then he got angry with me and those who accompanied me, saying that “it would be impossible to meet those people who were rich with the money of the international organizations.” I found his discussion about the Chechen residents uninteresting and irrelevant, and left quietly to calm myself by using the opportunity to drink the rarely available cool running water in a nearby tap.

In the early morning of the next day, my cousin called me. The tone of his voice was a premonition for the happy news he delivered. He informed me that his nephew had

arranged a meeting with a Chechen in his house at 2 PM, and asked me if that time would work for my schedule. I became excited, and expressed my happiness and gratefulness to him. Then I calculated roughly the amount of time I needed to travel to my cousin's house. I left where I was staying early enough not to miss the meeting. When I arrived at the street where my cousin lives I found it considerably changed because of a number of new buildings. I started to walk to the house, but as time passed I lost my confidence in my ability to find it. Finally, I understood that I was lost, and then I called my cousin's son. He asked me about my location, and soon thereafter he came to pick me up. However, by the time we arrived at my cousin's home the Chechen had left. I called him at the number he left with my cousin and apologized for being late. He said that he would return to my cousin's home in about two hours. In fact, he came back three hours later with another Chechen man. We talked to each other for about an hour. He promised to help me after taking my phone number and he left. A few hours later, he introduced me to the leader of all the Chechens living in Azerbaijan.

Finally, I managed to interview forty-six of the Chechen refugees living in Baku. Abdul (pseudonym), a middle-aged Chechen man, picked me up at a metro station called Ganjlik and we came to a private house that he called his headquarters. Later, I carefully asked him a number of times who was paying the rent for the two-story spacious house with a number of rooms in the most expensive part of the city. However, I did not get a satisfactory answer. This two-story building also served as a school that appeared to be functioning illegally, since it was not registered at the Ministry of Education of the Azerbaijan Republic. When I asked him why the school was in the building he sadly reported that once there were four schools in Baku, but only one was left because of the

government's new policy, which was hard for them to understand. More information about the school, which is a quite modern and interesting place, is provided below.

In fact, it took me about two weeks to fully penetrate the Chechen community. Within this time, I tried many times to talk to Chechens that I found with the assistance of some journalists and human rights activists as well as my friends and relatives. Those who wanted to help me explained the problem differently. For some, the main problem was associated with the security concerns of Chechen refugees, who have suffered because of intervention from the local police as well as Russian intelligence. One comment was especially interesting. It appeared that Chechen refugees in Baku lived better than the majority of the local people, which made them both indifferent to their national problems back home and fearful of losing their privileges in Baku if their real circumstances were known in certain circles.

As noted above, it was my cousin who arranged the first real meeting with a Chechen who was once his roommate. Abdul came with Seyid (pseudonym) to my cousin's home to examine my consent letter. I tried to explain to him my research mission as impressively as possible to win his approval and sympathy to further help me. However, in the end my efforts turned out to be fruitless, as Abdul said that he could not do anything if people refused to meet with me. Then we exchanged phone numbers, and Abdul and Seyid left. After a short while, Abdul called me back unexpectedly, saying that the head of the Chechen Refugee Council in the Republic was with him and that they were on their way to meet with me. I met with Oruj Osman (pseudonym) shortly thereafter. We arranged a time to meet at the Chechen refugee center on the coming Saturday.

The Chechens I met at the refugee center were of different ages. Some were in their seventies; while others were toddlers accompanying their dads or grandfathers. There were no impediments for me to talk to the children, but it was impossible for me to see a single female. Once I asked Seyid whether Chechen women came to the headquarters and he said they would come if there were some urgent necessity. I knew that this was a delicate issue, therefore, I decided not to ask to meet with any Chechen women. When I was invited to *iftar* (dinner after sunset when the fast is broken) in Oruj Osman's modest home toward the end of Ramadan I did not see any women there, not even little girls. I talked with young boys who were meeting and guiding the newcomers like myself to their home around the police station nearby and discovered that they were excellent speakers of the official language of the Azerbaijan Republic. The first impressions I had were that these young boys loved this country. They had lived in Azerbaijan long enough to learn the language well and they were attending a local school, although there are still a number of Russian schools in Baku. I asked them for their names and then discovered that they were named after the national heroes of Chechnya and Dagestan, Shamil and Gazi Muhammed, who fought against the Russians in the nineteenth century.

The Chechen School in Baku

When I came to the headquarters of the Chechen refugees the very first time, I was surprised with the orderliness of the place. The walls of the big room I was in were covered with maps, pictures, and paintings. Some of the photographs apparently were taken in classrooms, while others were taken around dining tables. After a while, I felt it

necessary to ask about the photographs, and it appeared that the headquarters also served as an unsanctioned school. Then I was invited to see the rest of the building, an invitation I accepted eagerly. There were four classrooms, a library, and a spacious computer room equipped with about twenty-five modern computers. The Imam explained to me that all the computers were donated by German Muslims. The books were mainly in Russian or English but I also saw a book in Chechen with Chechen grammar. Oruj Osman outlined how the school functioned. Due to the large volume of pupils, the school held classes in two shifts. He also shared with me that once there were four Chechen schools in Baku, but only one remained, as the number of Chechen refugees dropped drastically, and it became financially difficult for them to keep the four schools functioning.

The most surprising news was that the school was functioning as an unregistered school. The students obtain knowledge but they will not receive any diplomas or certificates, even though the school program overlaps with that of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In response to my question of why they had not tried to register the school, Oruj Osman reported that until 2004 it was illegal for the children of Chechen refugees in Azerbaijan to attend school. If, for example, a Chechen family fled Chechnya during the second Chechen war that started in 1999, it is easy to assume that the children's education has been interrupted. Also, it is likely that nobody would wait several years in order to attend school again, which means that many refugee children have been deprived of their rights to an education. Going back to regular schools after a long interruption, however, would mean losing several years of education, depending on each individual case. Finding the situation quite inhumane, I wondered why refugee children had not been allowed to attend school in Azerbaijan. Oruj Osman

illuminated this question for me, noting that the key reason for this policy was associated with Russia's political pressure on the Azerbaijani government to force the Chechens out of the country. He added that the Chechen refugees had not even been allowed to live outside Baku, the nation's capital.

I observed a large number of paintings on the wall, all of which contained war scenes. Examining them closely I noticed that all of them were painted by young children, one of whom was as young as five years old. The paintings reflected the underlying psychology of children, and I shared my thoughts and impressions with the people around me, getting their approval. One mentioned that his children still remember how their home was bombed by Russian helicopters about ten years ago. He commented that war was especially poisoning the minds of the children, which are very hard to heal even though the children are resilient.

When I asked whether the teachers were volunteers or were paid employees, Oruj Osman said that they volunteered if necessary, but normally they were paid by the center. He added that the Turkish and Swedish Embassies in Baku assisted the school financially. In fact, I observed a number of flags of foreign countries in the main room, including the Turkish and Belgian flags, but I did not see the flag of Azerbaijan anywhere. I was tempted to interpret this omission as the refugees' disapproval of the official policy of Azerbaijan toward the Chechen refugees, but I did not ask any related questions so as not to offend them. I let the people present start to talk about these issues.

Two Iftar Dinners

When I attended the headquarters of the Chechens in Baku for the first time in August 2009, I met about twenty-five people. It was the first day of Holy Ramadan, and it seemed to me that many of the refugees were wondering whether I was fasting or not. According to Islam, all Muslims have to fast during the entire month of Ramadan from dawn to dusk. A fasting person should not eat or drink anything as well as smoke or chew gum until sunset.

August days in Baku are normally hot and long, which creates additional difficulties for those who fast. The day I first visited the Chechen center was very hot and relatively humid, therefore I felt it necessary to wash my face and hands when I entered the hot room soon after coming from the dusty streets. When I asked the refugees whether they had running water, one replied with special emphasis in his voice “to drink?” I mentioned with confidence that I was fasting and observed that people liked what I had to say. Soon after, they said that in about ten minutes, they would do the afternoon prayer, and they invited me to join them. I evaluated the situation as favorable to building more confidence and trust with the refugees and vividly agreed to pray with them.

At this point, I encountered a problem. I was planning to remain in the rear of the room so that nobody could see me and where I could do my *Shia*-style prayer. However, they asked me to remain next to the Imam who stood in front of the people leading them in the process. I objected politely, but they insisted. I hesitated, as I did not want to reveal my *Shia* identity to the *Sunni* Chechens because I was not sure about their attitude to *Shiism*. However, I could not resist their requests, so I decided to perform a *Sunni*-style

prayer that once I learnt as a student in Turkey together with them. Later that day and often during subsequent days, the leader of the Chechen community among others mentioned to me that they were against any kind of nationalism. The Imam added that all the ideologies—isms—such as communism, fascism, Nazism, *Shiaism*, etc., etc., were against their beliefs. Of course, I could be involved in a debate and object to what they said about the Shia school of Islamic law, but I did not take offence deciding to focus on my goals only, and so I did not react. In fact, objecting to their ideas about *Shiaism* would probably affect the data-collection process negatively. In addition, I understood that the Chechen community regarded me as *Sunni*, with which I had had no problem.

After the afternoon prayer, I felt that the people's attitude to me became friendlier. I conducted a number of individual and group interviews that day. They also showed me a couple of amateur videos, which reflected the torture of a number of young Chechens by Russian military servicemen. An old-style Russian-made truck—KamAZ—stopped next to a railway. It was not a station, but there was a train waiting, and a number of Russian servicemen were there. Two of the soldiers opened the side door of the truck and in Russian ordered those inside to come out. However, it took about two minutes for the first person to come out. He was half-naked, and he tried to put his clothes on that he had in his hands. However, he was ordered to run fast to a cart beside the railway truck. Then the young men came from the truck one by one. Some of them could not walk. The Russian soldiers were very cruel to them, kicking and swearing. The captives helped each other to reach the railway car. I counted more than seventy Chechen captives coming out of the truck. I noted that it seemed incredible to cram so many people in that mid-size truck. Somebody commented that the prisoners were brought from one of the infiltration

centers after being tortured, then put into the carts and taken away. Their fate and that of many others is still unknown.

Oruj Osman mentioned that the Chechen diasporas has created two archives, one in Turkey and another in Belgium, which contain a large amount of secret data about the Russo-Chechen war that is not open to the public yet. I asked for further details, but he did not reveal any more information to me, simply noting that it was too early to publicize this news, since it was an ongoing process.

It was Saturday, and we were approaching the end of the interviews. The Chechen leader asked me if I had any more questions or comments to make. I thanked him and everybody in the room for assisting me and then clearly and politely explained that the data I collected was very important for my research, but I needed to talk to other Chechens in Baku. I added that a number of additional meetings would help me a lot. Before they replied I invited them to *iftar* the following Saturday in the Chechen center. I thought that it was the best place for an *iftar*, since they had all kinds of cooking appliances in the center. Oruj Osman said that in Islam an *iftar* invitation is very welcomed, so they would accept my invitation. However, he added that they did not eat every kind of meat; it should be very clean-cut *halal* meat, and he offered to buy it together with me. I promised Oruj Osman to take his concern into consideration. Just before shaking hands with me he said that he would announce my research activities to everybody in the community and ask people to cooperate with me. He added that he could not force anybody to meet with me. An *aksakal* sitting next to him who was an Imam said that he also would ask people to work with me. I happily left there that evening.

The following Saturday was one of my busiest days in Baku during the summer of 2009. I had to conduct interviews, go to the bazaar to buy products, and cook for the *iftar*. When I came to the center, I discovered that it was more crowded than in the previous days. After a while, I understood that if I were to interview the people I would not be able to deal with the *iftar* preparations. My priority would be with my field research, but I also had to keep my word. Then I called my cousin and his nephew for assistance and they agreed to help me.

I do not know how it happened, but it appeared that the dishes I prepared with my relatives were tasty. After having the lentil soup, one person mentioned that they all receive several packs of lentils as part of a humanitarian aid package each month from a local office of the Red Crescent Society, but they could not prepare it in the same way as we did. Then they asked us for the recipe. I described the way I cooked the lentils, and asked them about the other food products they receive as part of the humanitarian aid. Oruj explained that each person receives either 15 AZN (Azerbaijani currency), which is the equivalent of 20 USD, per family member, or some food products instead. But they have to ask the humanitarian organization in writing for cash in advance. He added that most of the people go with cash during summertime, because seasonal products in the bazaar are cheap.

Then I met a number of new people who were quite warm and friendly toward me. After asking me some general questions they started to talk about the Chechen and Karabakh wars. I met a young man who lost his eyes, right hand, and one of his left fingers in a battle. When he was talking, I understood that he fought both in Chechnya and on the side of Azerbaijanis in Karabakh against the Armenians, but I was not able to

ascertain where he had been wounded. I found it unethical to ask him about his wounds in public, although I very much wanted to. I asked to meet him another time. “Why?”, he said. “Because I would like to listen to you,” I replied. “If I speak out, it will be a humiliation for all Muslims in the world,” he said. “I need the truth, whatever it is,” I said. He did not answer. People continued to discuss why Azerbaijan lost the war to Armenia. Suddenly somebody asked me if I fought against the Armenians. It was the question that I did not want to hear. I said quietly that I had made an attempt to join the army but it did not work out, because I was a student abroad at that time. Maybe it was my paranoia but I felt that at this point I lost some people’s respect.

It was not a strange feeling for me, at least because I encountered the same reaction when I was informally interviewing a Chechen man in Winnipeg and another in Washington, DC. I did not ask them any questions related to the Chechen military struggle with the Russians. However, they both tried to justify their presence abroad. In fact, the Chechen culture is warlike, which is a legacy of the centuries-long resistance to Russian invaders, and the Chechens are proud of this facet of their culture. Moreover, almost all of the people in the Chechen center were former fighters with a strong sense of patriotism.

After a while, the direction of the discussions changed to the topic of the Russians. It was surprising for me to hear from the former Chechen fighters that the Russian people were good people with big hearts and excellent behavior. “They supported us in this war,” Oruj Osman said, “They demonstrated solidarity with us.” “So you don’t have any problems with the Russian people, do you?” I asked. “No, our

problem is with the Russian government, as well as with our own government in Grozny,” he replied, thus revealing the political nature of this conflict.

The second *iftar* was organized by Oruj Osman in his old pre-Soviet-style apartment that he had rented for a number of years. These types of buildings were built by oil magnates such as Nobel and Tagiyev in the suburbs of the city in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries before the 1917 October Revolution to accommodate oil workers in Baku. Later the city grew rapidly and those buildings ended up in the center of the city. During the early 2000s, with the beginning of the economic boom in the country, the authorities in the city started to demolish many old buildings, replacing them with modern apartment blocks. When I came to Oruj Osman’s home, I found a few buildings adjacent to each other like an island in the middle of new and modern taller buildings.

One of Oruj Osman’s young sons met me nearby to guide me to his home. On our way, we came across people whom I had already met. We went upstairs where Oruj welcomed us individually. He showed us into the room for men, and informed us that there were two other rooms, one for women and the other for youth. The room where the men gathered was quite small and almost empty of furniture. People sat on the floor, which was covered with carpets. I did the same but it was very painful for me, since sofas and chairs play an important role in my family tradition. Shortly afterwards, somebody read *azan*, a call to prayer, that was followed by Oruj Osman serving dates, grapes, apples, figs, and water to his guests. It took about ten minutes to eat the fruits and drink the water, and then all the utensils were taken out to clear a space for the evening prayer. Meanwhile, I counted twenty-one people in the room. Some were local people, a few

were neither local nor Chechen, but the majority were Chechen. The Imam was a foreigner and his style of reciting *Fatiha*, a Koranic *sura*- chapter-, was not similar to what I heard before. To my surprise, he was repeating one sentence of *Fatiha* after pausing a moment. I wanted to identify his nationality to have an idea about the Chechen's companions. During that evening and later, however, I could not obtain any information in this respect. After the prayer, Oruj Osman introduced me to the people, briefly describing my research mission. I greeted all of the people standing up as a sign of respect.

Fruits and water were served again followed by boiled meat, garlic sauce, and boiled thick slices of dough. The meat pieces were of all sizes, some of which seemed to me unusually large to serve. No spice or salt was added to the dishes. The garlic sauce that contained crushed garlic in the meat sauce was the only garniture. Somebody asked for bread, and another person mentioned that the boiled dough was a substitute for bread. I examined the non-air-conditioned room in the hot summer night, assessing its old, poor appearance that contrasted with its tenant's rich culture and gratitude.

Data Collecting Process

The Interviews

I conducted twelve in-depth, semistructured, face-to-face interviews and three focus group interviews with the Chechens at the center. I also conducted seven face-to-face interviews with some Russians in Baku. In Washington, DC, I had two interviews with

Chechen educators, in addition to two interviews in Winnipeg, one of whom was a Chechen, and the other a Russian.

The topics of the interview ranged from the participant's background and objectives to a more general discussion about their war experience, feelings, deprivations, and hopes and fears for the future. Each interview lasted a different amount of time, depending on the subject's willingness and ability to talk. Also, there were three focus group interviews with nine, eleven, and thirteen people, respectively, that lasted approximately between one to two hours.

All of the fifty-eight interviews were conducted in person, except for two interviews that were conducted via the Internet. Only one interview was conducted over the telephone, complementary to the face-to-face interview with one of the research participants in Washington, DC. Two of the interviewees were contacted twice in order to gain more information.

Most of the interviews took place in the area where crowded Chechen refugees live. Not all of the interviews were taped, since most of the subjects had security concerns. I took copious field notes in those situations. Interviews with seven Russian people in Baku were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim by me. One of the Russian interviewees was my high-school teacher in Baku some twenty years ago who helped me to meet the other Russian subjects except the one whom I interviewed in Winnipeg.

Chechen interviewees verbally consented to participate in this research project. Most of them declined having their narratives recorded, but they did not object to note-taking. Accessing the Chechen community was very difficult in the beginning of the

interviewing stage. However, they all expressed an interest in sharing their perspectives, ideas, and experience after my visit to the Chechen center had built trust.

As this research is based primarily on the experience and knowledge of the participants and their responses and stories, the qualitative chapters of this thesis include excerpts and quotes from the interviews. Almost all of the interviews were conducted in Russian, except for one in Winnipeg in which English was utilized, and four others in which a mixture of English, Russian, and Azerbaijani was used. I translated relevant sections of the interviews quoted in the thesis into English. To ensure accuracy and to maintain the integrity and authenticity of the original source the spoken language is not corrected by me and is presented in its entirety.

In order to ensure the anonymity of the participants in line with the guidelines of the University of Manitoba's Ethics Board for Research with Human Subjects, the original names of the research participants were changed to pseudonyms, which are used throughout the thesis. Only the participants' ethnic background and geographic location are mentioned. In one case, the name of the Russian civil society organization is revealed, since its activities are public.

Storytelling and Narrative Analysis

Narrative analysis/storytelling was also used to collect data for this study and to describe meaning in the stories of individuals. On a number of occasions, a face-to-face interview became a process of storytelling, as the interviewees chose telling their own tragic stories rather than directly answering my questions. In those situations, I decided not to intervene and let the subject speak as he wanted. As a result, I had a large number of

stories narrated by the research subjects providing a way to the source of rich data important for understanding deep problems of the oppressed people (Senehi, 1996, 2000, 2009). Later, this required an analysis and description of the meaning of those stories.

Focus Group Interviews

A focus group interview is an open-ended group discussion guided by the researcher. Robson argues that focus group interviews are a highly efficient technique for qualitative data collection because rich data can be collected from several people at the same time (Robson, 2002). Focus group interviewing was of special importance due to the security concerns of those present. Moreover, many group interview participants would not take a part in the research otherwise.

Three interviews took place within a group context, all of which were unstructured. I guided the open-ended group discussions, each of which lasted for about two hours. The size of the groups varied from one to the other. All three focus group interviews took place in the Chechen cultural center, which was open to all, and created some difficulty in keeping the group's size consistent. Culturally it is well accepted for a newcomer to join a group conversation after greeting all present and without asking for permission to join. Consequently, in all three cases, the number of participants at the beginning of the meeting was different from the number of people at the end of the interviewing sessions.

At the beginning of each interview, I wanted to warn people not to join the discussion after it had begun, but after some reflection, I changed my mind for a number of reasons. First, there was no simple mechanism to bring my concerns to peoples'

attention, since they were attending the Chechen center at various times. Second, asking the participants to move to one of the classrooms was inconvenient after they had said that the main room was preferable. Also, the other rooms were not spacious nor furnished enough for a large number of adult people to sit comfortably. Asking people who were late not to join the discussion group might also have offended them, jeopardizing the success of any further data collection process in the Chechen center. Hence, I kept the group-focused interviewing sessions open to all, including those who joined the group late. All of the participants in the focus group contributed to the discussion in one way or another.

The first focus group interview included nine participants, whereas the second and third included eleven and thirteen persons respectively. One person, the leader of the Chechen community in Baku, participated in the first interview, and joined the second session in the middle of the discussions.

I tried to assist the group to run effectively through generating interest in, and discussion about a particular point, which was close to my academic interest, but I was not always successful at this. The major problem I encountered was that members of the community rarely contradicted each other. In other words, they seemed unwilling to provide checks and balances on each other's opinions, which resulted in free expression and generalization. On one occasion, one of the participants had some confidentiality concerns, and requested an individual meeting. Later, when I interviewed him in person, he related to me a number of stories and shared his own personal tragedy with me.

Although it was difficult to keep the conversation within the framework of the topic, overall the focus group interviews facilitated rich discussions of a number of

important questions providing critical data for this project. In a sense, deviating from the main topic had positive effects on the research in a number of different ways. For example, my initial interest in education-related problems in Chechnya was broadened to general education problems of all Chechen children including those who were refugees and internally displaced people.

Research Instruments

The research instruments were developed after an initial survey of the academic literature. The instrument consists of two sections: (1) a set of open-ended questions, aimed at addressing the research question; and (2) demographic information collected from the participants. However, the questions that were included in the instrument served primarily to generate discussions and were not necessarily asked in a particular order. Each question was followed by a series of probe questions in order to obtain additional information on each person's expressed opinion. A copy of the research instruments is provided in Appendices 4 and 5.

Analysis of Interview Data

Robson (2002) has noted that it is too late to start thinking about analysis after the interviewing is done. Similarly, Bogdan and Biklen (1982) advised that for fast and effective analysis the researcher should start to analyze the qualitative data while the data collecting process is ongoing.

The qualitative data analysis of this research started almost at the same time as the data collecting process. On a daily basis, I looked inductively for emerging patterns and

relationships in the data that provided answers to the research questions. In a number of cases, I decided to expand the scope of this research, since I found rich data that covered a new relevant theme.

Assets and Limitation of the Research

My knowledge of Russian and familiarity with both the Chechen and Russian cultures were key assets to the research project. My close ties with the major research location, Baku, Azerbaijan, were another major asset. The same factor—location—was also a major limitation for the research because most of the Chechen diaspora living there did not feel secure, and this negatively affected their willingness to participate in the research. Another limitation of the research was associated with my inability to travel to Chechnya due to the political situation in the country at that time. Moreover, knowledge of the Chechen language would have been both useful as well as a liability in terms of my interaction with participants in the study.

I only interviewed eight Russians to ascertain their points of view about the Russo-Chechen conflict. This seems compatible with the research plans especially if we consider that the primary intention of the research was to interview the marginalized people and get their perceptions about the conflict. Nevertheless, this imbalance between the interviewees representing Russians and Chechens is another weakness of the thesis that entails further research in the future.

Personal Limitations and Biases

Every researcher who conducts a qualitative study brings in certain biases which may, to some extent, affect his or her research. Thus, these biases and limitations should be realized beforehand, rather than pretending that they do not exist (Rozlívková, 2007).

I have a number of biases associated with myself: (1) political convictions, (2) Muslim identity, (3) human rights perceptions, and (4) educational background.

My political belief in liberalism might have impeded my understanding of the underlying reasons for Russia's authoritarian policy vis-à-vis Chechnya. This, in fact, has been reinforced by my human rights perceptions in general. Although my Muslim identity is not salient, I think at some points it reinforced my humane feelings for the Muslim Chechen people who continue to suffer from the war. Finally, the fact that I am formally trained as a conflict resolver has possibly made me too optimistic about the future, surprising, if not disappointing, many of the research subjects in this study.

Conclusion

Studying the Russo-Chechen conflict requires a multidimensional and multilevel analysis of a plethora of socioeconomic, psychocultural, political, religious, and historical issues that fuel the conflict. The selection of research participants for this study reflects my best efforts to address the existing conflict between the Chechens and Russians. A qualitative methodology based primarily on an authentic expression of my conflict resolution experience proved the most suitable research framework in the search for answers valuable to people living in or influenced from the PACS field.

The primary data collecting methods of this study were individual and focus group interviewing, participant observation, and narrative analysis/storytelling. However, a number of secondary sources, such as content analysis of newspapers and relevant Web sites, were also used to gather additional information about some specific themes. The data was analyzed inductively and a number of themes are discussed in the subsequent chapters.

The following chapter is the first analysis chapter, in which basic human needs and socioeconomic issues are discussed. Based on the data provided by the subjects, it discusses such themes as employment, education, cultural heritage, leadership, refugees, and security.

Postscript

In late December 2010, I visited Baku to participate in a conference. I wanted to use this opportunity to learn about the fate of the Chechens whom I interviewed during the summer of 2009. However, I could not find the phone number of the Chechen community leader given to me a year and a half ago. I then decided to check in with the Chechen community center. I went there in the late afternoon. When I approached the Center's gate, I saw schoolchildren coming out of the unregistered Chechen school. Next to the gate, I approached a young Chechen woman whom I greeted. I then remembered what my only Chechen female interviewee related to me when I greeted her in the same way in Washington DC. In Chechnya, it is not polite to greet women with "salam aleykum". Now I made that mistake, which was too late to correct. However, she returned my greeting. I asked her in Russian whether I could meet Oruj Osman. She asked me to wait

and she disappeared behind the door. An older woman suddenly appeared and asked me what I wanted. I inquired about the whereabouts of Oruj Osman and Abdullah. She asked me to wait and after a short while she returned and said that Abdullah would arrive at the center in about two hours. I thanked her and left. Then, a young man emerged from the Center and asked me what I wanted. I explained to him my request, and he recognized me so he offered me Oruj Osman's phone number.

I called Oruj Osman that afternoon and he expressed his happiness to talk to me. I requested a short meeting with him and some other Chechens. He invited me to the Chechen community center. I met many of my interviewees, and the Imam and Rizvan were among them. They all greeted me warmly but they did not permit me to take their photographs. Oruj Osman was the only exception. He also permitted me to take some pictures of the classrooms. I spent about two hours with these men asking and answering many questions. I learned that only 950 Chechens remained in Baku as the rest had left Azerbaijan for a number of countries. None of them had returned to either Chechnya or Russia. When I stood up to leave they all stood up to say goodbye to me. Oruj Osman accompanied me to the gate. I looked into his eyes and said: "You may find it impolite, but I would like to ask you something. I did not have an appropriate moment to ask Rizvan where he lost his eyes, in Chechnya or in the Nagorno Karabakh". He smiled and replied: "he gave his eyes for Chechnya, and he is happy". I shook his hand and bid him good-bye.

Chapter 6

Basic Human Needs and Socioeconomic Issues

Introduction

This chapter deals with the basic human needs of the Chechen people and socioeconomic issues in Chechnya. Socioeconomic issues are linked to important basic human needs and are contributors to the conflict, and if handled properly would be a key intervention in the Chechen conflict resolution process.

The images and stories of the subjects of this study demonstrate that a number of essential socioeconomic issues in Chechnya are pertinent to this study. Consequently, in this chapter, I discuss the following six socioeconomic and political themes that emerged from the data, namely: (1) employment, (2) education, (3) war and cultural heritage, (4) leadership and government, (5) refugees and internally displaced people, and (6) security. The roles these issues play in the status and well-being of the Chechen community in the Russian Federation are also discussed.

These six themes emerged inductively from the data. As socioeconomic problems contribute to the formation and escalation of ethnic conflicts, armed conflict has multiple, long- and short-term impacts on economic and sociocultural development, and basic human needs. The effects of the Russo-Chechen war are felt at various spatial levels in various life arenas in Chechnya. The long-lasting violent conflict significantly damaged environmental, physical, human, social, economic, and cultural capital in Chechnya, diminishing available opportunities for sustainable development and the fulfillment of people's basic human needs.

In Chechnya, the impacts of conflict on basic human needs have reduced the

quality of life, people's capabilities to live the kind of socioeconomic and cultural lives they value, as well as the real opportunities to build a prosperous future. The conflict has resulted in not only the loss of lives, but also in the violation of human dignity and fundamental human rights and basic needs in Chechnya.

The Russo-Chechen conflict also caused the breakdown of social cohesion and the disruption of local governance systems, which in turn resulted in higher rates of crime, such as the abduction of people for ransom in the region. In addition, the poverty in the republic increased as a result of the growing inability of people to cope with the hardships of the war. The war increased the gap between food production and human need, as well as aggravating poverty and hunger in Chechnya. This loss of formal employment opportunities, the destruction of homes, cultural centers, as well as schools affect not only consumption and nutrition, but also other basic human needs such as social cohesion, human security and development, health and resilience ability, and normal education.

The Russo-Chechen conflict has caused the displacement of people as well as creating a major social and economic disaster. It is known that the majority of the casualties of this armed conflict are civilians. One of the reasons for this outcome was that this conflict has involved the Russian military and Chechen guerrillas rather than regular troops. This scattered the war into a larger area that included civilian settlements. The brutal and anti-humane war policy of the Russians also exacerbated the situation. The civilians have been easy targets in Chechnya simply because they share the same ethnic or cultural identity with the "terrorists."

Employment in Chechnya

One of the most important issues related to the dissatisfaction of the Chechen people in the Soviet Union was unemployment, or having an inferior low-paying job. Traditionally Chechens were farmers, and led a semi-nomadic life, moving from lowland to highland in summer and back to the lowland in fall. Asim Behram said that Chechens were not nomads:

Our fathers were not changing their living spaces randomly. Only those who were keeping sheep and cattle were moving in the springs to specific mountainous areas that belonged to them to use fresh pastures. Then they were coming back when winter was approaching. Is this why some call us nomads? Our people were not nomads.

In the twentieth century, especially during the Soviet era, as opportunities for education and urban employment grew, many people chose to leave farming. During the Soviet era, there were more opportunities for obtaining higher education, and working in industrial centers such as Grozny, where the oil refining industry has developed to now become an important part of Russia's Chechnya's economy. However, the process of urbanization was interrupted by WW II, and especially the 1944 deportation. Asim Behram commented about this issue in the following way:

With the Soviet rule city life became very attractive for our people. Call of socialist ideas to work at plants and factories as well as realistic social and economic life of people were main factors for people's inflow into industrial centers, especially Grozny. But, of course, many remained in their *auls*.

During the years of deportation the Chechen people mostly had agricultural and/or construction jobs. Initially, they worked hard to survive in their everyday life. Later they

worked harder to save money to go back home, as they did not lose their hope of returning. Vaqif Vatan recalled how hard they worked to survive when they found themselves unprotected against the hardships of exile:

Initially, we had to work day and night to survive. It was hard because everything was new; we had nothing at all; and therefore, we had to start from zero. But, as time passed we adjusted to our new life. Later, however, we started to save some money for our trip back home. We never lost our hopes for the better future.

Although there was an insignificant number of Chechens who had prestigious jobs, most of them were bound to the land. The centrally planned economy of the Soviet Union was not suitable for private businesses, but doing minor field cultivation or keeping a few sheep and cattle was allowed.

After returning back to Chechnya in 1957, the Chechen people worked hard to restore their household that had been disorganized by new inhabitants. Ilyas Denilkanov said that this task kept almost everyone busy, even though many were not officially employed:

I started to work in the field when I was a child. My parents always worked for themselves, and never had a government job. They never worked at factories, refineries, or plants. We simply don't like to work for a state. But also we don't have any such traditions. We don't believe that one can live a good life by working in the state-owned facilities. My elder brother always says that one should work for himself, but not for somebody else.

Working in fields or keeping cattle were traditional jobs for Chechens. However, many continued to do those jobs because they were not able to find other jobs. If one found a

good job, one would be more likely to leave one's farm. Alem Ashek had this to say on the topic:

As lifestyle of people changed, and they started to work at cities, those who lived in *auls* were also tempted. Later, living in farms became very difficult because the state collectivized everything. This frustrated people deeply because now they were not their own bosses. Now they had to give up what they had and work for the state.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, the change from a centrally planned to a free-market economy created difficult transition processes for some people, especially for blue-collar workers, who were unable to find new areas of employment. For others, the changes opened up new fields of work such as trade, which became popular, since many Chechens had links with other countries, such as Turkey, Jordan, and Syria, where their relatives lived. For the most part, Chechens have made a smooth transition to new economic conditions. Even some large families were often involved in a single-family business. Mahmood Mamayev said that the new economic conditions brought about opportunities for his family to prosper initially:

Almost all my family members gathered to start a family business. Many goods were scarce in the country. There were very few items to wear, for example. Also, some products were not available. Then we opened a small product store, which became a big supermarket later. Then we lost everything during the war.

As the Chechen economy began to develop, the 1994 war with Russia broke out. Basic transportation and communication structures, as well as oil refineries and pipelines, were destroyed in many parts of Chechnya. Because the borders were closed by the Russian authorities to block the influx of weapons to Chechnya, importing foreign goods became

difficult or almost impossible. Chechnya's economy was totally ruined by the war. The infrastructure of small businesses was devastated. Many of those who were able to save some money tried to leave the country. Also, normal conditions for doing field jobs such as growing potatoes or corn did not exist. In many cases, wheat or cornfields were set on fire by the Russian soldiers. Atakhan related to me that Russian authorities closed the border to break the financial capital of the Chechen separatists:

Closing borders had nothing to do with weapon influx into the Republic, because the Chechen fighters had plenty of them, and they also could buy all kinds of weapons from the very Russian servicemen in the region. By closing the borders the Russian authorities aimed at bending the flourishing trade of Chechens to cut the possible financial sources of the separatists. However, it was the ordinary people who really suffered from this.²⁷

Today, as the situation in the region is relatively stable, Chechnya has one of the highest unemployment rates in Russia. No well-known domestic or foreign investor has opened a business there due to the security issues. Therefore, reducing unemployment in the republic is difficult. Atakhan argued that the Russian government does not want to see Chechnya prosper:

Moscow does not want to see Chechnya and Chechens rich. If we get richer, we may reorganize somehow imposing new threats to Russia. Instead, Russia wants us to be dependent on its economic aid and subsidies. In this way it feels safer. The revenue from our oil industry, the main source of money, however, is in Moscow's monopoly.

Both the first and the second Chechen wars have completely altered the lifestyle of the people of the republic. Since uncertainties are predominant in terms of everyday life and the future, many people are not able to decide what they may be doing even in the near

future. The overall pessimistic mood in the country is positively correlated with unemployment. Many Chechen people rely on the money coming from their relatives who are refugees in Western countries. Mola Ramazanov articulated that Chechens depend on economic support from relatives abroad:

If the Chechens outside of Chechnya did not send money to their family members or relatives in Chechnya, people would starve. It is them outside of Chechnya who hold the Chechens in Chechnya on their feet, but not Russian subsidies. However, of course, not every Chechen family receives money from somebody abroad.

Moreover, in order to feed their families, most of the male population has to engage in a number of types of jobs they have never done before. A former university professor works as a taxi driver, while a high school teacher repairs cars at home or does construction jobs. In other words, the structural unemployment rate in the republic is also high. This kind of rank disequilibrium creates some grievances, if not frustrations, among people. However, most people are ready to do any job to make some money to survive. Abdullah noted that most people work in the underground economy or the black market to survive:

People with university education do “black” works to live. But they really have to if they want to survive. It is not easy find a job. Also, having a job doesn’t mean that one will make enough money to survive. But there are some “kids” who live like kings because they steal our wealth together with Ramzan [Kadyrov].

Tamer also mentioned the difficulties for skilled workers in finding reasonable jobs in the following manner:

A number of historical events, namely, the breakup of the Soviet Union, economic unrest, the separation of Chechnya from Russia, and revolution in Chechnya caused a huge migration of the population. Naturally, a huge mass of skilled workers turned out to be unclaimed, and they were forced to either emigrate or do something that is below their skill level. In fact, people across the entire post-Soviet territory were confronted with this problem. Some tried to outlast the hard times—in the meantime sitting at home or working temporary jobs; others looked for new occupations that would allow them to fulfill themselves with maximum satisfaction.

Another serious problem many Chechens have faced is associated with shelter, since many houses were either partially damaged or totally destroyed by shells and bombings during the war. Many of the residents of Grozny, and other Chechen towns and villages devastated by the war have not received any compensation for their destroyed houses. Ruslan Tapdiqov described how the destruction of his home was never compensated by the authorities:

Our street in Gudermes was wiped off the Earth. Our house was damaged very badly. We would hardly be able to restore our house on 400,000 rubles. Nobody wanted to take responsibility for it. But who did ruin my home? Everybody knows who! However, I could not get from them what was my right.

Today, many people in Chechnya apply for some economic aid in the form of subsidies from the state. However, this creates additional problems, since they must be totally unemployed to receive any state-sponsored financial aid. The problem as articulated by Kurshad Hafez is that state aid is not adequate to live on:

The authorities constantly check the poor people to see whether they receive state subsidies and at the same time work somewhere secretly. They start checking to see if people are working somewhere as soon as they apply for benefits. When one works, he/she makes very little money, which is not enough to live on. If people don't work, they cannot

survive on the subsidies. On the top of the government, many enjoy a right to thieving [corruption]. Also, members of the law enforcement agencies can kidnap and kill people and they won't be held responsible for it, but if a poor person on subsidies tries to prevent his family from starving and getting short of clothes and shoes by working, then he is considered as an offender.

In many cases, corruption is the key problem for people trying to resolve their employment situation. To get into a job one must pay bribes. As Mahmud Mamayev pointed out in his story, bribe taking is very widespread in Chechnya:

The bribe money circulating in the Republic is so great that it would probably be sufficient to buy all Grozny. Everything has its own price. If you want to resolve a minor problem, you will pay a minor amount; if you want to resolve a major problem, you have to pay a big amount. However, you have to pay! If you do not pay, you will always have to live with problems.

Bribery was the subject of an open letter published in the republic's *Vesti* newspaper in 2008 by a group of well-known Chechen scholars and public figures. They warned the authorities of the dangers of ignoring the problem. The authors of the letter stressed that the events of 1991 that led to a change of government in the republic, and ultimately to the outbreak of the first Chechen war, were above all supported by Chechens who were dissatisfied with their standard of living and whose basic needs weren't met. If the same situation happened again, the consequences for the Chechen people would be undesirable.

The Chechen elite indicated in the letter that the people of Chechnya feel relatively deprived, since they believe that they are entitled to a better life. Tommy, a respondent in this study argued that around 400,000 people in Chechnya are registered as unemployed. Each person receives about 720 rubles (about \$24) per month from the

Department of Employment [this sum may have changed by now]. However, this sum is insufficient to deal with a difficult economic situation ruling the country. Hassan also argued that the Chechen Department of Employment genuinely tried various methods to resolve the unemployment problem in the republic. For example, it recently appealed to the authorities of Krasnodarsky Kray to provide jobs for Chechen construction workers at construction sites in the city of Sochi, which will host the Winter Olympics in 2014. However, the reply came from Krasnodar that there were no vacancies at the moment.

Aga Arshadin expressed his frustration with the treatment of Chechen workers:

It is not hard to imagine what should be the consequences of a prolonged and devastating war. Workplaces, factories, plants are ruined, and most of them are not restored yet. Where should people go to work? They should go to other parts of Russia. But they cannot go, because wherever they go they either are not registered, or they are discriminated, or they are arrested by the local authorities as potential or actual terrorists.

The high levels of unemployment in an environment in which there was easy access to weapons formed a volatile situation in the country, especially before the second Chechen war. Young people especially were tempted to be warriors because it was seen as a business tied to patriotic feelings. The fact that most of the educational institutions in the republic were closed also exacerbated the situation. Many young people became criminals after possessing a gun. Aga Arshadin explained this point in the following way:

Don't give the youth any jobs, don't meet their needs, deprive them of schools, don't keep them busy with sports, simply don't help them, and just give them weapons. Then declare to the whole world that they are bandits, they are terrorists. The question of who creates bandits should be asked and answered properly. Who makes them terrorists? Who directs them into weapons? Who is responsible for those people's ending up with becoming criminals? These questions should be answered by the

government in Moscow.

Perhaps these words, better than any other, describe the link between crime and unemployment as well as war and its impact on people, especially the youth, in the Chechen Republic.

Education in Chechnya

Many Chechens believe and say that today the level of education of Chechen schoolchildren is significantly lower than the average of the past seventy years, primarily because during the last fifteen years there were two military campaigns in the republic. The impact of the first and second Chechen wars that occurred in Chechnya are bitterly felt today. The education of Chechen schoolchildren is one basic human need that is badly affected by the military campaigns. Mahmood Mamayev explained that the education problems of the Chechen people are rooted not only in the lack of material facilities but also in psycho-emotional factors.

It is true that many schools are ruined by the war. Also, many teachers died or fled from the country. Maybe books and some other material stuff are scarce too. However, the worst of worst is that our children are estranged to school and books.

Not only educational buildings were damaged in Chechnya. The prolonged and destructive wars had an adverse effect on human psychology. Undoubtedly, the most affected segment of the population was children. Zinaida Ivanovna, a mid-aged Russian educator who participated in this study, said that the war impacted the psychological well-being of the children.

The war and violent conditions have traumatized the children of Chechnya. Hence, lasting psychological rehabilitation work with those traumatized children of Chechnya as an integral part of the education programs is a necessity. Therefore, I think designing education programs in the field of psychological rehabilitation for children is necessary. Among other things, this entails the originating of a pool of well-trained, qualified professionals.

Similarly, while having a discussion with Yuri Ignatevich, a former teacher at one of the Russian schools in Baku, about difficult life conditions adversely affecting children's psychology, he noted how the children are traumatized by the war:

For children living in extremely difficult, stressful, and dangerous conditions an ordinary school program is not sufficient. They also need individual consultations to heal them from war traumas. In some cases, Chechen children witnessed how their parents or siblings were killed. Now, imagine the psychological state of them. Hence, opportunities should be created for the most seriously afflicted children to see a professional psychiatrist for consultations.

However, Zinaida Ivanovna's and Yuri Ignatevich's suggestions may only be a dream for the people who are deprived of even a regular education. Atakhan reflected that Chechen schoolchildren in Chechnya, as well as in the refugee camps, do not receive proper training for many years.

You see, in most cases we don't have elementary schooling opportunities for our children. We can't get even the basics; how can we get psychological help from professionals? It is simply impossible. These kinds of tasks would only be limited to what the international philanthropists would do.

The reality is that many Chechen children do not even have an opportunity to have regular schooling, let alone psychotherapy or other special programs. There is almost no access to medical checkups or preventative care; therefore, arguing that children who

have lived through the wars should be under constant medical observation is senseless.

The Chechen people place a high value on education. Many Chechens that I met in the diaspora explained their presence overseas primarily to provide educational opportunities for their children. Yet many regretted the consequences of their decision to move abroad because of disappointment with their children's lack of education opportunities. For example, Vagit Hasanov said that his children were not allowed to attend school in Baku.

I left my country for two reasons. One was connected with the war; the other with the education of my children, as they ceased going to school in Chechnya. However, in regards to the education, here it appeared to be even worse. In Chechnya, we had a good reason-war. We do not understand what the reasons are here.

The Russo-Chechen wars destroyed the foundations of culture and education in Chechnya impacting the basic human needs of the people. Institutions of secondary and higher education were partially destroyed in the first war. When the war ended in 1996, most of the schools were repaired by the government of the semi-independent Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. However, they were again badly damaged during the second Chechen war. Asim Behram pointed out that for the national government of Ichkeria schools were of a great importance.

In 1996, just after the war, when the state was not strong economically, and people were not rich as well, almost all the schools in the country were repaired. This was a sign of how much the government appreciated national education.

Today, the situation is different. There were 450 general schools, 11 vocational secondary schools, and 3 universities in Chechnya before 1994.² Today, only the schools in the larger villages of the Chechen flatlands are in working order. Mahmood Mamayev pointed out that schools in the smaller villages closed down when the war started in 1994:

The schools in the mountainous regions were damaged worse because lowland regions were relatively stable. However, the schools in the lowland regions have been repaired to some extent, those in the mountainous regions are ignored. The authorities may claim that funds are not available. However, it is apparent that they punish the mountainous people, since they have been active in the both wars.

As some of the subjects in this study testify, almost all of the schools in the mountains, with a few exceptions, were destroyed by bombing and shelling over the course of both wars. Today, restoring all of these schools seems extremely costly and, therefore, unrealistic while there are many other priorities at stake in the country. In addition, the lack of teachers slows down the process significantly. Doha Dumanov noted that in the mountain villages, generations of children have already grown up without an education of any kind:

In the long run, this will be the worst problem for us- for Chechnya. Such people [uneducated people] are both easy victims for extremism against Russia as well as support for the Russian oppressive system. They are vulnerable to the external influence more than anybody is. Russia and others may manipulate them easily.

The war has also been merciless to the schools in Grozny, the nation's capital, where there were more than sixty schools. None was saved. Some, especially those in the center, were destroyed completely; the remainder has been significantly damaged. The

² This information is provided by the research participants.

local government started to restore some of the schools in the early 2000s. All of the schools lack even the most basic equipment. There are not enough desks, tables, and chairs, or more specialized items such as sports or laboratory equipment. In addition, the republic's schools are not supplied with sufficient textbooks. The shortage of books and school supplies is felt everywhere. In many cases, such important subjects as mathematics, physics, chemistry, and foreign languages are not taught due to the lack of teachers, resulting in a sharp decrease in the quality of children's education.

Higher education in Chechnya practically ceased to exist in 1994 when the first Chechen war started. Only in 2000, four years after the war ended, did students begin to be registered at such institutions as Grozny State University, the Pedagogical Institute, and the Oil Industry Institute. Due to continuing armed hostilities, entrance was not particularly competitive, unavoidably affecting the overall level of education in Chechen institutions of higher education. Asim Yousef, for example, said that parents were afraid to send their children to study in Grozny because of continuing military action and mop-up operations, during which young people disappeared without a trace:

Artur Ahmatkhanov, whose parents I knew, was a student in Grozny. When he was detained by the Russian forces in 2003, he was only 21 or 22. He vanished, and nobody has seen him since then. His parents and relatives did everything what they could to find him, but failed. Finally, we all have lost our hopes to find him. Today, nobody has any news about him. Where did he go? The relevant state organs claim that they do not have any information about him either. I think he has disappeared forever.

It is also no secret that the teaching quality in the existing schools of Chechnya has sharply diminished because of the persistent difficult living conditions over many years and the lack of necessary materials. Moreover, the teachers live in difficult conditions,

since they are not paid regularly. Despite all the hardships and significant physical risk, many teachers and professors returned to Grozny in the early 2000s. In fact, it was the teachers and professors who prepared the buildings for the new school year, clearing obstructions, removing trash, and making repairs, so that the children could sit at their desks on the first day of a new school year. Arpa Aybin, a former Chechen teacher, pointed out that the teachers and higher education professors were only paid one month's or at best two months' salary, although they are owed years in back wages:

Chechen teachers are altruists; they are sacrificing with their lives; they deserve all kinds of respect. We see this, and appreciate this. However, they are not paid well. Their salary is not enough to survive. They were left without jobs for many years. Whose fault was that? They were not fired officially. Only there was nowhere to teach. Nevertheless, they were not paid for those years. This is a sad situation because living in war conditions with no income is a human tragedy.

The education of younger children in Chechnya was also interrupted. Out of the several hundreds of day-care establishments that existed in Chechnya in the early 1990s, slightly more than ten remained at the end of the first war. Until recently, not a single day-care was in operation, since bombing and shelling destroyed many of the buildings, and those that remained undamaged were looted. Arpa Aybin explained the situation as follows:

In the Soviet times, we had an established day care/pre-school system. Maybe it was not perfect, but it worked. Today, the infrastructure of those facilities is destroyed. So, even the youngest children are affected by the war. Moreover, this affects parents. As a rule, parents who must work leave their young children in the care of older siblings are mostly are not able to take care of them properly. As a result, this often ends up in tragedy.

The consequences of the military actions of 1999–2000 have been no less devastating than those of the 1994–96 war during which almost the entire foundation of education in the republic was destroyed. The effects were even worse because the war ruined whatever hopes the people still had. Every school destroyed today ruined parents' and children's hopes for tomorrow. Arpa Aybin's comments on this issue are as follows:

The worst is that people started to lose their hopes. Parents lost their hopes for the future of their children when Chechnya was left in darkness without schools. The psychological effect of this situation must have been known by those who ruined the schools in Chechnya. They had their own plans.

The education system in Chechnya is not the only factor that has affected Chechen youth. Chechen children and young people have been affected by: (1) the educational infrastructure to educate them, (2) education policies, and (3) the willingness or lack thereof of countries where they are refugees. In neighboring Ingushetia the existing infrastructure was not sufficient to meet the needs of the Chechen refugee children. In Azerbaijan, the education policy creates a number of difficulties for the Chechen children attending school. In many cases, the refugee children developed psychological problems that prevented them from attending classes. Many simply lost their interests in education, while others lacked the opportunity to be educated.

Lack of education opportunities is closely associated with parents' frustration and anxiety. The distortion of the Chechen education system for a prolonged period has exacerbated the violent conditions children have witnessed in their everyday life. Many parents fled the republic into neighboring countries to keep their children away from the scenes of war and to enable them to continue their education. Natik Nuha, a Chechen

refugee in Baku, Azerbaijan articulated that in these new places, life conditions were even worse, albeit they were safer:

We just fled Chechnya for Azerbaijan. Here, at first, our children started to go to school. After a few days, I think it was a special day here, a number of war jets appeared in the sky for a show. Seeing them, our children feared and screamed. The local children laughed at them.

The Chechen children unconsciously displayed their psychological state that was formed by the Russian war jets that bombarded Chechen settlements during the wars. Their desperate parents took them out of Chechnya to heal them from the trauma of the violence. In Azerbaijan, for example, it is not certain whether an official decision was actually made by the Azerbaijani Ministry of Education to accept Chechen children into local schools and universities. For various reasons, some schools refused to enroll them. However, it is also obvious that the Chechens have a number of subjective reasons for not sending their children to school. Abdulla Suleiman explained that the Chechen children also had some adaptation problems in the Azerbaijani schools:

Most of our children speak neither Azerbaijani, nor Russian, and this created an overwhelming problem for them in following the classes. Later on, some of them learnt either or both languages. Those who did not attend the schools at the Chechen centers, or declined education completely.

Others pointed out that there were also problems with finance, although public schools in Azerbaijan are free. Atakhan said that the embedded school expenses per child exceeded his/her overall monthly expenses:

It is true that public schools in Azerbaijan are free. However, the schools do not receive any funds from the government for maintenance,

celebrating special days, etc. This leads to forming special school funds based on a mandatory parental contribution. Most Chechens in Baku are not able to contribute to those funds, and therefore withdraw their children from schools.

The local authorities also decided to shut down the school for refugee children that had been opened in Baku with the assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The Ministry of Education also decided to expel Chechen students from the Aviation Academy of Azerbaijan. Atakhan commented that this question is connected to a strategic issue:

Aviation Academy is not an ordinary school. Especially after the infamous events of September 11, 2001, aviation schools appeared to be of a special importance. Then, I guess, if the official Moscow had any information about the Chechen students attending an aviation school in Baku, it would warn the authorities here.

In fact, I witnessed a number of Chechen children attending local schools in Baku. However, I never did receive a satisfactory response as to why some children were kept away from school while others were granted that privilege. It is especially odd because none of the children, including those attending school, have registration permits or Azerbaijani citizenship. The only clue to this question is the possibility that the Chechen families possess different sources of revenue that opens different opportunities for their children in a republic with a high corruption reputation.

In Chechnya, the infrastructure of the schools ruined by the war has not been entirely restored yet. Despite the severe winters in Chechnya, there are few heating systems in most schools. For several years, the schools in the republic were heated by small gas stoves because of the destruction of the central heating system because of the

military operations. In 2006, Ramzan Kadyrov demanded that gas stoves should be removed from the schools and proper central heating installed.³ Alim Imranov, who recently left Grozny to join his family back in Baku, said that before the school year began it was announced that repairs had been carried out in all the schools in the country, but when the winter came, people realized that it was not true.

Lessons are supposed to last 45 minutes, but last winter one lesson lasted less than that. Most of the classes lasted only about 15 minutes. It was because the classrooms were extremely cold, and the children simply could not stand it more than 15-20 minutes. Apparently, no normal education could there be under these conditions. Our children were not really getting any teaching at all.

Finally, the education factor is extremely important in Chechnya not only with regards to the schoolchildren, but also for the adults who need to be trained to deal with violent conflicts. Peace education at all levels needs to be taught in Chechen schools to prepare people to handle their conflicts constructively.

War and Cultural Heritage in Chechnya: A Basic Human Need

The Chechens are bound tightly to their culture and traditions. Perhaps under dangerous living conditions people generally would not care much about anything besides human lives. Natik Aslanov stressed that as time passes, the pain of losing cultural values and monuments becomes acute:

When people face an imminent and fatal danger for their own lives, they don't care about their cultural heritage being destroyed. However, when some time passes, it becomes very painful to see what has happened to the cultural wealth of a nation. The wars on the Chechen lands have been

³ This information is provided by the research participants.

very destructive to our culture and architecture. In many cases, the destroyed historical monuments are non-restorable.

This is not limited to the destruction of historical architecture. During the great years of deportation, the new settlers in the Chechen villages inflicted incurable damage on Chechen moral values. Mola Ramazanov expressed a view on this point in the following way:

When our people came back to their lands in 1957, they found out that many cultural monuments were either destroyed or maltreated by the Russian settlers. Perhaps you know we- Chechens- respect our late people. We go to cemeteries with respect and prayers in our mouths in a regular time as well as on special days. In the deportation years, the Russians ruined even our cemeteries. It is unbelievable, but they turned over everywhere hoping to find buried treasures.

Both the first and second Russo-Chechen wars destroyed many cultural foundations within Chechnya. The wars have been merciless on both the Muslim and Christian places of worship as well as on the historical architecture of Chechnya. Musa Manarov explained that during the first war, the Orthodox Church in the center of Grozny, the mosque in the village Alkhan-Kala, and several mosques in Chechnya's mountainous regions were destroyed:

They did not differentiate between the Muslim and Christian temples either because they did not care about it or because to avoid accusations of targeting Muslims deliberately. But, for us it is all the same, because we accept destruction of churches equally painful.

The second war added more religious institutions to the list of destroyed or damaged architectural buildings. Mosques were destroyed in Komsomolskoe and Kalinina as well as in a number of mountain villages. In addition, many examples of architecture

representative of the culture were destroyed in Grozny and in a number of villages on the plains. Traditional Chechen towers dating back to the Middle Ages were also damaged in the course of the war. The ancient tower in Ushkaloi, and the tower on the way into Shatoi were shot at by tanks. Many towers that date to the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries were used by Russian soldiers as barracks. Showing me pictures of a number of towers in mountainous areas that were hung on the wall, Jabir Raduin described the destruction of the ancient towers in the following manner:

These pictures were taken before these towers were destroyed or damaged. Now, they don't stand as they appear in these pictures. Some of them can probably be restored. Others can hardly be saved. However, I doubt that any of them will be saved, because they require immediate restoration that seems impossible at this point.

Vagit Hasanov also commented on how Russian soldiers disrespect these historical artifacts:

The Russians either ruined our historical towers or converted them into *kazarmas*. This is the way how they treat us; this is the way how they respect us. Don't think that they do all this out of necessity. No, they do all this deliberately to strike us psychologically. This is a part of their Chechnya policy.

A number of other important cultural buildings were also damaged or destroyed in Chechnya. In Grozny, the theater and concert hall, and the Chechen Dramatic Theater were seriously damaged. Later, the Kadyrov government restored those buildings in Grozny with federal aid. Other cultural heritage buildings damaged by the war outside of Grozny, however, have been neglected. Hatay Karim said that the Russian military had destroyed Chechen culture and history in Grozny:

It was almost the Soviet times when I last time went to theater. Well, we had theater and concert centers when we were independent, but the war ruined them too. The Soviets oppressed us, but at least they were respectful for our culture; we could have schools and libraries. Yeltsin and Putin destroyed everything.

In the early 1990s, there were 360 state-run libraries, dozens of clubs, two dramatic theaters, a puppet theater, and a state folk dance ensemble, and the folk troupes that performed in different regions of Chechnya.⁴ In 2000, however, in mountainous regions such as Shatoi, Sharoi, and Itum-Kalin not a single cultural institution remained. In Grozny, about six libraries remain out of thirty and none of the eleven art or music schools for children still exist. In addition, Jabir Raduin stated that not a single republic-level cultural institution has survived the wars:

The second war has been even worse on our cultural heritage. I believe that the Russian soldiers were ordered to ruin our cultural wealth deliberately. Libraries, theatres, concert halls, schools... everything was a target. The Russians did not mercy any precious building in Grozny. Everything is destroyed or seriously damaged.

Before the war, the National Library of the Chechen Republic had a collection of over 2.5 million books. It was one of the largest libraries in the Northern Caucasus. However, shortly after the start of the second Chechen war, only a few thousands books survived the air bombardments of the Russian air force. Jabir Raduin said that almost all of the workers had to leave their jobs because either they fled the city or they lost their hopes for peace and prosperity. Only a few members of staff were left behind:

We also lost our specialists. They fled from the country, and many of them never came back. Today, rebuilding and reorganizing everything in

⁴ This information is provided by the research participants.

Chechnya requires experts who are in scarce or absent. This is also a strike on our heritage.

The state archives rich with historical documents were also targeted by the Russian military. The archives were shot up and destroyed during the course of the first war as well. Jabir Raduin pointed out that the archives were damaged so badly that it was impossible to recover most documents that were kept there for decades:

Our history was also targeted. In our archives, there were thousands of valuable materials waiting to be studied. There were documents from the tsarist times as well as Soviet times. They were kept with care. The Russians ruined them by bombing and shelling the archives. I believe they did it deliberately to destroy our history, and the history of their own atrocities to our people.

The wartime conditions were so severe that many Chechen cultural groups, ensembles, and theaters had to cease their functioning or they tried to survive in exile. The *Vainakh* dance ensemble, the Chechen Dramatic Theater, and the *Pokhcho* children's ensemble stopped their operations altogether. Later they tried to resurrect themselves beyond the borders of the republic. The fate of the Chechen State Dramatic Theater and the *Vainakh* dance troupe were especially very dramatic.²⁸ The interviewees argued that the consequences of the military actions of the second Chechen war have been no less devastating than those of the first Chechen war when almost the entire cultural foundation of the republic was destroyed. The worst part is that the cultural demise also negatively affects the moral values and basic human needs of the Chechen people. Even though the theater and library buildings in Grozny have been recently restored, it is impossible to heal people's psychologies and broken identities so fast.

Government in Chechnya

The institution of government is one of the three key components of statehood; the other two are territory and population. An effective government able to enter international transactions plays a decisive role in the state's formation. In this sense, Chechen independence has been valued by the capacity of its government to exercise effective control over its territory and subjects, among other things. For example, the Russian authorities always stressed the Chechen authorities' inability to take and hold effective control over Chechnya's territory as well as the illegal armed formations in the country. However, control is not established by force alone, the consent of the subjects is also necessary. In Chechnya, this has been a tough question because of competing political and military rivalries in addition to the hardships that emerged out of the war condition that impacted people's basic human needs.

One of the complexities of the Russo-Chechen predicament is related to the key actors involved in the conflict. The most important actors in this conflict are civilians, closely followed by the Russian military, Chechen fighters, and the Chechen government (Hammerli, Gattiker, & Weyermann, 2006). However, I would argue that civilians are not key actors in this conflict for two reasons. First, although civilians have suffered more than any other groups in this war, they were not as active in political and military processes as the other actors were. Pasha Massood, who was active in the military campaign in Chechnya, noted that civilians did not act in an organized or planned manner with regards to military operations or post-battle situations:

The civilians suffered from the both wars more than anybody did. However, I think they are not who is in position to change the situation.

If they were, Ramzan Kadyrov would not be a President now, and Chechnya would be independent.

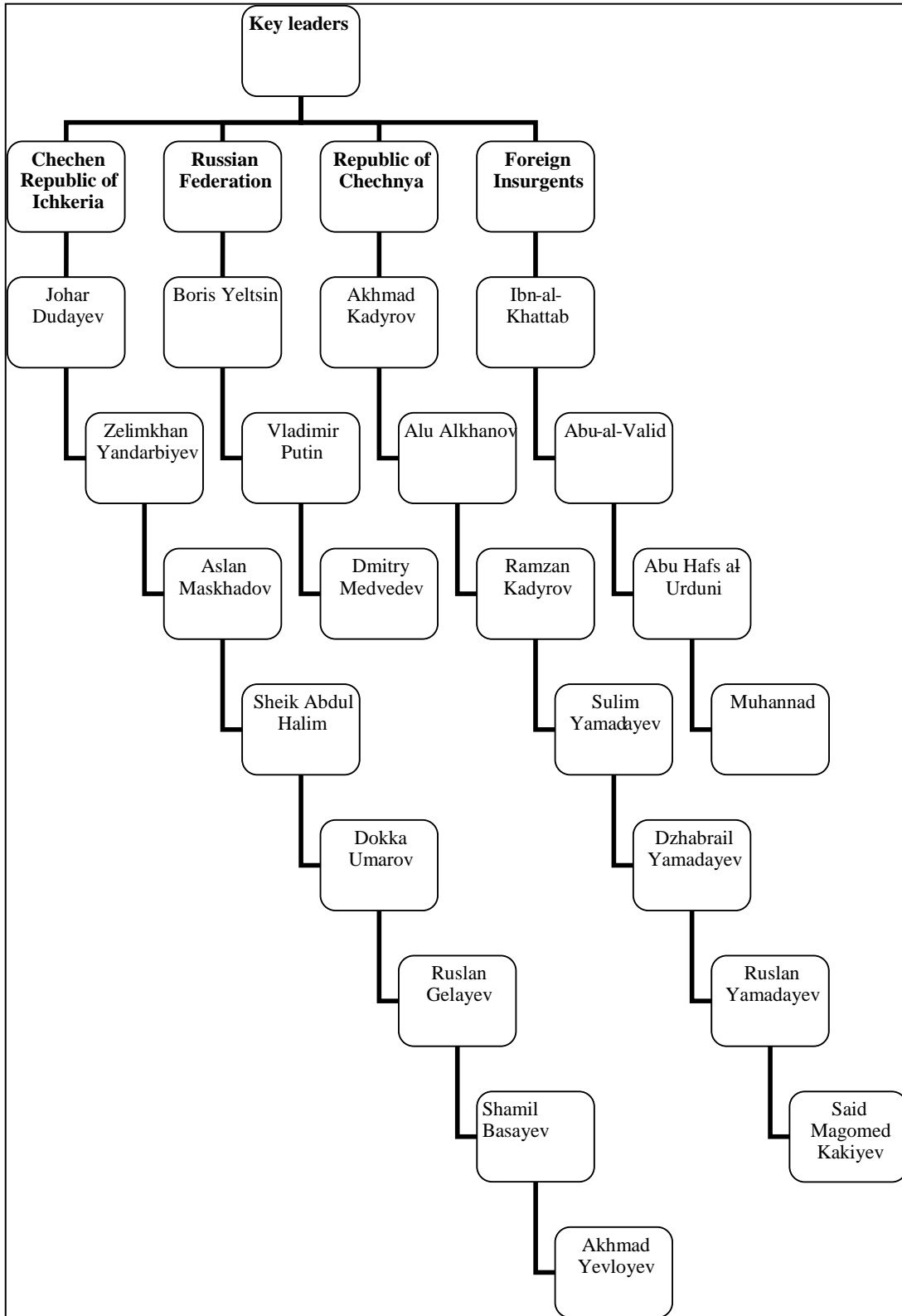
Obviously, Pasha Massood meant that the civilians in Chechnya are not in a position to bring about any political change through democratic means such as elections or by applying brute force to change the military or political situation in the country.

In general, there are four groups of key actors/leaders in Chechnya: (1) those representing the independent Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, who may also be called nationalists fighting and dying for Chechnya's independence; (2) those representing the Russian Federation; (3) those who see Chechnya's future within Russia, who may also be called "unionists" or "Kadyrovtsy"; and (4) those who infiltrated into the region from abroad (Figure 1).

It must be noted that at some point in time the Kadyrovtsy were also freedom fighters, who changed their positions after many years fighting against the Russians. Father Kadyrov, the informants argued, was the person who provoked Dudayev to challenge Moscow's authority in Chechnya in the early 1990s, and his son Ramzan Kadyrov fought against Russian servicemen at a very young age. However, Father Kadyrov, once the chief Mufti of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, started to advocate union with Russia and became the pro-Russian president of Chechnya in the fall of 2003. In May 2004, he was assassinated, but since then his followers have been called Kadyrovtsy. The Chechen nationalists and the unionists consider each other to be deadly enemies.

The Russian presidents are also directly involved in the Chechen predicament because of their policies and critical decisions that have influenced the fate of the country

Figure 1: Key leaders in the Russo-Chechen conflict



and hundreds of thousands of people's lives. Medvedev, the current president of the Russian Federation, is perceived by the interviewees as less important than Yeltsin and Putin, the previous presidents of Russia. Yeltsin is the man who launched both the first and the second Chechen wars, which is why the Chechens hold him, more than anyone else, responsible for the catastrophic wars in Chechnya. Vladimir Putin, the current prime minister of Russia, is considered by the Chechens as the most important Russian actor in Chechen affairs. The Russian leaders not only deployed troops in Chechnya, but also have effectively used the state as well as a number of non-state institutions against the Chechens during the war. A number of influential Russian newspapers have actively supported the state's position thus influencing Russian public opinion.

The Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, which never was recognized by any state (Taliban-led Afghanistan is an exception), emerged in 1991 and existed until December 2007, when its last president, Dokka Umarov, declared a new state—the Caucasus Emirate (Table 2). By Umarov's decree, the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria was converted into Vilayat Nohchiycho (Ichkeria) of the Caucasus Emirate (Kavkazcenter, 2007).

Umarov's dramatic policy shift is not equally welcomed by all Chechens. Some think that the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria was a legitimate state not only in the eyes of Chechens, but also in the eyes of many foreign countries, which was a big asset for Chechens. Hence, abolishing a legitimate state that has been invaded by Russia would not bring any benefits to the movement itself. The Caucasus Emirate, on the other hand, does imply a much larger territory than that of Chechnya, and therefore raises the question of legitimacy, not only among those outsiders who have been in solidarity with Chechens,

but also among the people of the Caucasus. Said Sulimov said that it might not be strategic to spread the conflict from Chechnya to the rest of Caucasus:

This means a shift in goals and strategies. Now, the Chechens would try to scatter the conflict into the whole Northern Caucasus. However, people of the Northern Caucasus are not ready for such a struggle. We tried it before, and it did not work. In addition, our initial right position may lose its strength and legitimacy. We had a legitimate state, and we have terminated it voluntarily. This is good for Moscow only. Whatever the Caucasus Emirate were, it cannot replace the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. The first may seem to people as utopia; however, the latter was a reality. Abandoning reality is not reasonable. We struggled for Ichkeria's freedom for many years; we did not lose the war, nor did we win the war. Enlarging the conflict in this way may simply backfire.

However, many others did not share this approach. Ata Bayramov argued that such a shift in policy benefits Chechnya and Chechens. He commented on the issue in the following way:

Now, Chechnya is not the only target of Moscow. This is a great benefit for Chechnya. Moscow is confused with its policy, as it does not know whom to fight. Now, the Chechen question is embedded in the whole without losing its initial meaning.

Table 2: Presidents of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria

#	Name	Took Office	Left Office	Party
1	Johar Dudaev	November 9, 1991	April 21, 1996 (assassinated while in office)	All-National Congress of the Chechen People
2	Zelimkhan	April 21,	February 12, 1997	Vainakh Democratic

	Yandarbiyev	1996	(assassinated after leaving the office)	Party
3	Aslan Maskhadov	February 1997	March 8, 2005 (assassinated while in office)	Vainakh Democratic Party
4	Sheikh Abdul Halim (Sadulayev)	March 8, 2005	June 17, 2006 (assassinated while in office)	no party
5	Dokka Umarov	June 17, 2006	October 31, 2007	no party

One of the major reasons for the difficulty in building a strong government in Chechnya was the struggle among the different paramilitary and political groups. As discussed in Chapter 3, there was no concrete solidarity even among the key leaders of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. The two most important leaders were the freedom fighters, Maskhadov and Basayev, who became serious rivals after Dudayev's death in 1996. Moreover, some leaders changed their political position as the conflict escalated or de-escalated. Akhmad Kadyrov, once a *mufti* of the nationalists (as noted above), later became a pro-Russian president of Chechnya. Shir Khan Musayev put it in this way:

Basayev and Maskhadov wanted the same: freedom and independence. However, they believed in different strategies. Unlike both of them, Akhmad Kadyrov changed his position. He betrayed the Chechens by joining the Russians, and paid for it with his own life.

In addition to the Russian and Chechen actors, there are some foreign elements also involved in the conflict. Foreign insurgents were active in Chechnya and the North

Caucasus as a whole during the first Chechen war. They became especially active during the second Chechen war. The most important leader of the foreign insurgents in Chechnya was Ibn-al-Khattab.

In any case, the actors in the Russo-Chechen war have tried to justify their changing policies in one way or another; however, it is clear that the major driving factor has been their desire for power, since all rival groups have striven for power in the Chechen Republic. The weaker, Kadyrovtsy, who had little chance of gaining power, forged an alliance with Russia.

The Russian authorities and the leaders of the Republic of Chechnya are in coalition against the leaders of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria and the foreign insurgents in Chechnya. Thus, it is possible to say that there are two main actors operating in Chechnya: (1) freedom fighters; and (2) unionists. The unionists receive strong federal support for their struggle with the former, who receive popular support from the people of Chechnya. The freedom fighters have failed to forge a strong unity among themselves.

The unionists and freedom fighters hate each other deeply. One of the most important strategies that the unionists and the freedom fighters use is the elimination of each other's leaders. Mola Ramazanov expressed his views on this issue in the following manner:

They kill our leaders, our people, and innocent civilians both abroad and in Chechnya. All we do is to protect our people and ourselves. Also, sometimes we punish them. Our target is not to deal with individuals, except in some individual cases. Our goal is to get our country back. Our goal is just and legitimate.

The unionist and Russia's secret services have been working in collaboration. However, the Russian secret service started this strategy first, whose first clear sign was the assassination of the foreign volunteers' leader in the North Caucasus, Emir Khattab, in March 2002, although the freedom fighters claim that he died a natural death. Jabir Raduin expressed his views in this regards in the following way:

I am sure that Khattab died a natural death. It would be a great honor for each of us, including Khattab, to be a martyr- to be killed in a war field. However, there is no need to exemplify Russia's terror by using Khattab's death.

One of the remarkable assassinations was that of the former Chechen President Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, in Qatar, in February 2004. Jabir Raduin commented on the issue in this regards as well:

Zelimkhan Yandarbin [Yandarbiyev] was killed by the Russian secret service in Qatar. He was a former president of Chechnya, and a great ideologue of the Chechen independence. His ideas were very important to Chechens fighting for Chechnya's independence. His assassination unconcealed Russia's terror against Chechens.

Realization of this new strategy allowed the Kremlin to considerably undermine the positions of the separatist movement in Chechnya. On the side of the freedom fighters, the most important leaders have been (1) Dudayev, (2) Yandarbiyev, (3) Maskhadov, (4) Sheik Abdul Halim, (5) Basayev, and (6) Umarov. Only Umarov survives, as the other leaders were assassinated by the Russian secret service. After Dudayev's death in 1996, the freedom fighters faced a serious leadership problem, even though they have had many charismatic leaders. Aga Arshadin stressed that Dudayev's death created some leadership problems:

After Dudayev, we faced a leadership problem not because we had no people with leadership qualities. Rather, it was hard to replace him, because he was a unifying national leader. He was the person identified with Chechnya's independence, thus accepted as a national leader by all true Chechens. The truth is that we were not ready to have him replaced by somebody.

In January 1997, Basayev came forward as a candidate in the presidential elections (Zurcher, 2007). He was particularly popular among young people and among the most radical group who participated in the first military campaign. As a result, Basayev received about 24 percent of the votes, coming in second after the eventual winner, the moderate candidate Maskhadov who won with 59.3 percent of the votes (Zurcher, 2007).²⁹

Basayev was appointed by Maskhadov to his inner cabinet and the solidarity between Basayev and Maskhadov was still very high after the elections (Gall & Waal, 1998). However, despite his temporary membership in the new government, Basayev became one of the key leaders of the radical anti-Maskhadov opposition. Thus, he stepped forward in support of the anti-Russian forces of Islamic orientation in other republics of the North Caucasus. Oruj Osman said that Basayev and Maskhadov had very different convictions about how to fight for a better result:

We should not compare and contrast these two national leaders with each other. We should not say that one was good, another was bad, or one was doing right, another was doing wrong. They simply had different beliefs about reaching the goal. After all, we all know that Basayev believed that one could get his legitimate rights by fighting. He was not feeling comfortable with Moscow's promises.

In August 1999, Basayev headed the military campaign of the Chechen opposition's armed groups to neighboring Dagestan, with the aim of rendering military aid to the opponents of the secular pro-Russian authority. It is believed that this process assisted in the appointment of Vladimir Putin to the post of Russian prime minister in August 1999, and afterwards allowed the Kremlin to start its second military campaign in Chechnya (September-November, 1999), which put an end to the separatist regime in the republic (Gilligan, 2010).

Shortly after Maskhadov's death on March 8, 2005, the Chechen rebel council announced that Abdul Halim Sadulayev, a Muslim cleric, had assumed Maskhadov's position (Wood, 2007). Sadulayev called for creating a United Caucasus Front through expanding the Chechen conflict into Muslim-dominated adjoining regions such as Dagestan, Ingushetia, and Kabardino-Balkaria (Gilligan, 2010). Sadulayev's intention was to relieve Chechnya from Russia's pressure by diverting its sole attention from Chechnya (Woods, 2007). As Jabir Raduin commented, he also strongly condemned hostage-taking and any terrorist activities. He stressed that after the war the new president should be chosen by democratic elections:

Sheikh Halim prohibited hostage-taking and harsh activities against civilians. He was saying that our just war should not be contaminated by impurities. Sheikh always said that we should not resemble our enemies, and fighting for just rights, we should use just methods only. However, he was a strong and unmerciful leader. He would never accept any kind of Russian rule over Chechnya.

After Sadulayev's death in June 2006, Basayev had actually concentrated both the military and the political leadership of the movement in Chechnya in his hands. Aga

Arshadin commented that Basayev was in an extremely strong position after Sheik Halim's death:

When Sheikh Halim died, Basayev became stronger. First, Sheikh Halim was against the fighting methods Basayev liked. Now after him, Basayev was free from this opposition. Second, people saw a strong leadership in Basayev's personality.

Moreover, Basayev personally had planned and commanded most of the large military operations of the underground that have been carried out during the last ten years. Said Sulimov mentioned that Basayev had exceptional military skills that always put him in the position of a person that everybody would respect:

Whether or not one liked Basayev, one respected him. He had skills and abilities that nobody possessed. His opponents in Chechnya or his enemies in Russia, does not matter, all knew that he was able to do what others could not. This made his position strong. All the Chechen leaders wanted to get along with him well. But, nobody could control him.

However, he was never appointed or elected as the nation's leader. When Basayev was killed by Russian soldiers in July 2006, only about a month after Sadulayev's death, his closest companion and like-minded associate, Dokka Umarov, was appointed as leader of the Chechens. Shirkhan Musayev pointed out that the elimination of Basayev was a significant achievement for the Russian secret service; however, in the near future it would hardly bring about the pacification of the region:

At least because the freedom fighters will mainly operate in their native environment where they can count on the support of the local population. At essence, it does not really matter as much who leads the struggle as the meaning and nature of the struggle itself. One should agree that movements prepare their own leaders. One leader may be killed, but another will fill his position.

Perhaps, one of the most important Chechen leaders was Akhmad Kadyrov, who following the Chechen declaration of independence, became a supporter of President Dudayev. Kadyrov fought prominently in the first Chechen war on the Chechen side as a militia commander. In 1995, he was appointed Chief Mufti of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. He became famous when he declared that Russians outnumbered Chechens many times over, and thus every Chechen would have to kill 150 Russians. Aga Arshadin believes that Akhmad Kadyrov's populism earned him fame:

He was a populist person, and played the game well. First, he inspired people to fight for Chechnya by displaying heroism and endurance 100 times of those of the Russians. This not only made him important in the eyes of Chechens, but also made Moscow believe that he was an important person. How, otherwise, the Kremlin would chose him?

At the outbreak of the second Chechen war, Kadyrov switched sides, offering his service to the Russian government, and became the president of the Chechen Republic on October 5, 2003. As the Russian forces seized control over Chechnya in July 2000, Kadyrov was appointed as acting head of the administration. In May 2004, he was assassinated in Grozny by a bomb blast during a World War II memorial victory parade.

Atakhan commented on this point as follows:

Akhmad Kadyrov paid for selling the Chechen people off. He should have known that his treason would not be forgiven by Chechens. One day, his son will pay for his treason in the same way. I am shy to confess in front of a couple of people that I love my wife. However, Ramzan Kadyrov declares in front of millions that he loves Putin.

Ramzan Kadyrov, who led his father's militia became one of his successors, and was appointed by Russia's president as the President of the Chechen Republic in March 2007.

It is regrettable to say that I was not able to meet a zealous supporter of Kadyrov to listen to his point of view. However, Zaur Abbasov made some positive comments about the father and son Kadyrovs:

At some point of the war, Akhmad Kadyrov understood that somebody should stop the Russians to eradicate all Chechens in Chechnya. I am not trying to justify Akhmad Kadyrov's policies, but we should accept that he slowed down the Russian military operations in Chechnya. He, at least, saved many civilian lives.

Akhmad Kadyrov, as the chief Mufti, was critical toward radical Islamism or Wahhabism, as it is called, to which allegedly many of the foreign fighters in the region adhere. Akhmad Kadyrov was immediately fired by Maskhadov from the position of Chief Mufti when the former offered his support to Russian federal forces in the second Chechen war. Although Maskhadov's decree was never accepted by Kadyrov, he renounced his own position of Mufti a few months later. Kadyrov's decision to change his political position may have been motivated partly by his personal desire for power and partly by a concern about the hopeless condition of the Chechen population (Hughes, 2007). It was also driven by a fear of the growing sectarian Wahhabi influence on the insurgents. Interestingly, the subjects of this study such as Ramazanov, Sulimov, and Albayov held Akhmad Kadyrov responsible for the launch of the first Chechen war in 1994, blaming him for his provocative position with regards to Chechnya's relations with Russia. Therefore, his support for Russian policy in 1999 held a special meaning for

them. Mola Ramazanov noted that Kadyrov was responsible for the launch of the first Chechen war because:

He publically provoked Dudayev for it. In a rally in Grozny, Kadyrov threatened Dudayev to be announced as a traitor, when the latter was advocating the path of Tatarstan. Dudayev then sharply changed his position leading Chechnya into war.

Some of the subjects of this study provided new data about today's Chechnya and its leader. Roza Gantemirova, who had recently visited Chechnya, praised Ramzan Kadyrov for the positive changes in Grozny.

Grozny has changed noticeably. Ramzan Kadyrov has done a lot. Before, I was strongly opposing him. However, I must admit that my views have changed considerably after seeing Grozny in May 2010. Unfortunately, not much has changed outside of Grozny. But, at least this is also a positive development. Also, people started to live better both in terms of security and economy.

President Putin had Ramzan Kadyrov replaced Alu Alkhanov shortly after he turned thirty, which is the minimum age for the post of president in Chechnya. Today, Kadyrov enjoys the strong support of President Medvedev and Prime Minister Putin. He was awarded the Hero of Russia medal, the highest honorary title in Russia. Said Sulimov commented about this situation with irony in his voice in the following way:

Ramzan awarded the Hero of Russia Medal. What medal Putin will grant him tomorrow? It would be better to go up gradually starting from the bottom.

Ramzan Kadyrov was engaged in violent power struggles with fellow Chechen government warlords Sulim Yamadayev and Said-Magomed Kakiev for overall military

authority and with Alu Alkhanov for political authority. This political behavior indicates that there is a strong rivalry among the pro-Russian Chechen leaders as well. Zaur Abbasov noted that there was a power struggle among the Chechens supporting Moscow:

Ramzan Kadyrov, Yamadayev, Kakiev, and others fought each other for political and military power. They fought each other for money as well. While they were fighting, the Kremlin observed to select the strongest. It appeared that Ramzan is the strongest.

Ramzan Kadyrov is accused of being a brutal, ruthless, and anti-democratic person guilty of the torture and murder of many Chechens. Said Sulimov, Mola Ramazanov, and others argued that a number of Chechens assassinated abroad are those who were opposed to Kadyrov. Sulimov articulated his thoughts as follows:

He is the person who should be dealt with for all these deaths of the Chechens. Ramzan Kadyrov is not only the enemy of Chechen patriots, but also he is a foe to his own people. No one of his comrades and colleagues may feel safe and comfortable ever.

Some Chechens express hatred towards Ramzan Kadyrov by comparing him to the historical enemies of Chechens. Mardan Albayov, identified Ramzan Kadyrov as “a degenerate Cossack” who is a traitor to his people:

No, he is not even a Cossack; even Cossacks have some honor and courage. He is a liar and coward. He is bloodless. Nobody knows who he exactly is. However, he is not a Chechen. He is a traitor. He may only kill in this way as he uses. Face to face, he cannot meet any *mujahedeen*. He will pay for all what he has done.

Nevertheless, the views of some of the Chechen subjects of this study about Ramzan Kadyrov have changed within a year. For example, during my short meeting with Said

Sulimov in June 2010, he said that Ramzan's extreme power in Chechnya would backfire against Moscow:

Ramzan is accumulating all the power in his hands, and becoming a sole authority in Chechnya while being very loyal to Moscow. The time will come when he will rise and demand more independence from the Kremlin. Then Moscow will not be able to resist.

In addition, it is quite apparent that many who opposed Ramzan Kadyrov's policies started to work for the Kadyrov's government. Timur Aliyev, one of the symbols of the free-press in Chechnya, is just one of them. When asked if this could be interpreted as a sign of the changing attitude of the Chechens to Ramzan Kadyrov, Said Sulimov responded that:

I know that guy [Timur Aliyev], and I don't think that he did right. This has nothing to do with the respect of people to Ramzan Kadyrov. By joining Ramzan's team, Timur just disgraced himself.

Apparently, the motives of the first and second Chechen wars are significantly different having varying effect on the governments in Chechnya. While the first war was mainly fought for freedom, after the *de facto* independence of Chechnya in 1996, much of the Chechen forces were comprised of foreign insurgents, such as the Arab *mujahedeen*. However, Chechen leaders reacted to the developments in Chechnya quite differently, and this brought about a complex net of relationships creating a fertile ground among them for rivalry over political and military power in Chechnya.

Refugees and Internally Displaced People

The first and second Chechen wars have forced hundreds of thousands of Chechen people to flee Chechnya. Many Chechens fled their homes for the second time, as they had returned to them after fleeing during the first wave of violence between 1994 and 1996. More than 600,000 people were displaced between 1999 and 2000. Significant numbers of the refugees found temporary shelter in neighbouring countries such as Azerbaijan (12,000), Georgia (4,000), and Russia's Autonomous Republic of Ingushetia (325,000), and other miscellaneous parts of Russia (140,000). About three thousand Chechen refugees entered Turkey, and the same number arrived in the United Arab Emirates. Some minor numbers of Chechen refugees left Chechnya for Ukraine and Iran, and some significant numbers were displaced to European countries. Approximately 100,000 Chechens remain as internally displaced people within Chechnya.³⁰

On many occasions the people of Chechnya were forced to flee, but after a few hours of walking were compelled by Russian forces to turn back. In many cases, the Russian air force has bombed the refugee convoys, killing civilians. Aga Arshadin made a point about this in the following way:

Our people were not even allowed to become refugees. They were threatened, targeted, killed, driven out of their homes and villages, however, not allow abandoning their "hell". This is a psychological torture of them.

On October 29, 1999, the convoy heading to Ingushetia forced to return to Grozny was attacked by two Su-25 planes. During the air strike about twenty-five civilians were killed. The case was taken to the European Court of Human Rights by three Chechen

women who suffered as a result of the attacks, one of whom lost two children and a daughter-in-law (Gilligan, 2010).

Displacements of people are more likely to impact neighboring countries, as refugees flee across internal and international boundaries. Moreover, the refugee flow into any country may have multiple socio-economic effects on that country. In some cases, the burden placed on local infrastructures such as schools and hospitals may be considerable and difficult to bear. Musa Manarov noted that the Chechen refugees living especially in Ingushetia, survived under difficult conditions that prepared the ground for new conflicts:

Many settled in tents, discarded buses and carriages... Most people fled from their homes in panic, and were not able to take much with them. Initially, humanitarian aid was not organized well. Many were starving. Water was scarce, not to mention health care. Deprivations were ruling. Gradually, some people were deviating from their moral values. Some minor theft and prostitution cases appeared.

The aforementioned numbers have changed quickly as the refugees moved further on, receiving refugee status in other countries, especially in Europe. According to Khavazh Bisayev, the vice-president of the European-Chechen Society, the largest Chechen diaspora is in Austria, numbering about 16,000 refugees (Bisayev, 2007). About 10,000 Chechens live in Belgium, 10,000 in France, and 10,000 in Germany (Vatchagaev, 2008). Large numbers of Chechen refugees also live in Denmark, Poland, Spain, Norway, Sweden, Finland, as well as in the United Kingdom (Vatchagaev, 2008). Small Chechen communities exist in Canada and the United States as well. As many Chechens moved back home in the mid-2000s, or to Europe and America, their numbers sharply diminished in neighbouring countries. When I conducted this research in the summer of

2009, only 1,250 out of 12,000 Chechen refugees remained in Azerbaijan. According to a Chechen community leader living in Baku, by June 2009 the last Chechen (himself) would leave the Republic of Azerbaijan. However, when I visited Baku in December of 2010 I discovered that 950 Chechens still remained in the country.

Chechen refugees and internally displaced people face many difficulties in different countries. Baba Vizir stressed that the Chechen asylum seekers have faced a number of legal difficulties even in the European countries, especially those of Eastern Europe:

It is very frustrating to wait for years with hope and anxiety. That's a mixed feeling. That is a tunnel that you don't see the end; it might bring you to an open space, it might bring you to a final impasse as well. But going back to Chechnya is not an option for many of us; personally it is not an option for me, and my family.

Thousands of Chechen refugees fled to Ingushetia, since ethnic Ingushs and Chechens are blood brothers and speak the same language. Most of the refugees in Ingushetia, who numbered about 250,000, lived in tent camps, abandoned farms, factories, hangars, and unused trains (Gilligan, 2010). They were pressured to return to Chechnya by the Russian military in late 1999, when the border with Ingushetia was closed down by the Russian military and a refugee convoy was bombed after being turned away (Gilligan, 2010). The outflow of Chechen people out of Chechnya was so high that the refugee camps in Ingushetia were forcibly closed after 2001 by the new Chechen government of President Akhmad Kadyrov and the new Ingush government of President Murat Ziazikov (Gilligan 2010). Kadyrov's and Ziazikov's harsh refugee policies forced thousands of Chechen refugees in Ingushetia to head to Europe. By the late 2000s, less than 20,000 Chechens

remained in Ingushetia and many were expected to integrate locally rather than return to Chechnya.⁵ Zaur Abbasov pointed out that Ziazikov's harsh Chechen policy caused considerable tensions for him:

Once he survived an assassination attempt. Then his close relatives were kidnapped. He was not able to deal with the Chechens, and eventually he had to resign.

Many Chechen refugees in Europe have found themselves in a legal confinement while different countries decide what to do about their applications for protection (Gilligan, 2010). Some Chechens left Poland because they found themselves without legal protection or status. Similarly, asylum seekers from Chechnya who move from the Czech Republic to Austria could also find themselves in this position. It should be mentioned that many Chechen refugees with protection needs have used illegal channels to reach the European Union (Gilligan, 2010).

The Chechen refugees have faced not only human rights problems but also serious health problems, especially in non-European countries. The large number of refugees living in Ingushetia in extremely poor conditions have resulted in tuberculosis epidemics. Oruj Osman identified tuberculosis as a "national disease of Chechens":

Tuberculosis is our "national" disease. Before I lived in Kazakhstan; they [Kazakhs] don't suffer from it. But here, in Azerbaijan, people are just like the Chechens. In the last ten years, the rate of tuberculosis among Chechens increased dramatically due to the extremely poor living conditions. In Ingushetia, this number doubled, tripled.

Chechen refugees have also faced basic human needs problems ranging from lack of access to education to security. These problems Chechens face vary from country to

⁵ This information is provided by the participants of this research.

country. The fact that over 50 percent of all the population of Chechnya has become a refugee or internally displaced people (IDP) at least once helps to estimate the scale of their associated socio-economic and psychocultural human needs.

Most of the Chechens I contacted in Azerbaijan, Canada, and the United States were former refugees from somewhere else. Many fled from Ingushetia to a third country. Chechen refugees in Canada and the United States have few social problems. Once the largest refugee community was in Azerbaijan. Some of the refugees' human needs issues in Azerbaijan are related to status, security, education, living conditions, and healthcare. Some Chechens living in Azerbaijan have been extradited by the Azerbaijani authorities to Russia. Hence, the fear of being returned to Russia is prevalent among Chechens living in Azerbaijan.

The key problem most Chechens living in Azerbaijan face is lack of refugee status. Thus they are exempt from receiving international aid as well as the right to apply for asylum in other foreign countries. Moreover, they are not allowed to use certain services in the host country, such as possessing a driver's license or getting a birth certificate for a newborn child. However, I can attest to the fact that some refugees in Baku were driving, and others confessed that their newborn children possessed a birth certificate from the local government. This example, nonetheless, reflected the corrupt nature of the local governance, rather than the privilege enjoyed by the Chechen refugees.

The fact that the Chechen refugees are allowed to live only in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, but not outside of it, is another problem for these refugees, noted Oruj Osman, the leader of the Chechen community in Baku:

We are not allowed to live outside of Baku; we are not permitted to work; we are not permitted to educate our children properly. Imagine, even we are not allowed to live in a village in the suburb of Baku. We could cultivate land to make some food. Even we are not allowed to work on the land. A German organization came to us some time ago; they wanted to build a village for us just on the suburb of Baku to gather all of us- Chechens in Baku- there. They would build a school, a hospital, and sport facilities in the village. They would bring all kinds of machinery and equipment to cultivate the land to produce something. The Azerbaijani authorities did not permit. We said, when we leave Azerbaijan, we will leave everything to you [Azerbaijani government], but they did not allow it. They did not even let us work on a piece of land. See, what our fate is here.

Nevertheless, the most important concern of all Chechen refugees residing in Azerbaijan is related to their security. They do not feel secure in Azerbaijan. After Abdurrahmanov's assassination in Baku just after I left there in late September 2009, the security concerns of Chechens in Azerbaijan dramatically increased. I learned about this human need from the statements of the people I had interviewed in the local media.

Some Russian scholars such as Tishkov (2004) are critical of the application of basic human needs theory to the Chechen question, arguing that its conclusion that people would do whatever is necessary to have their needs met is provocative. However, Oruj Osman noted that trying to meet material needs alone by any [illegal] means resulted in imprisonment of seventeen Chechens in Azerbaijan:

Forty-seven of our children are imprisoned. A few of them deserve to be punished. Others are innocent. They did very minor breaches of the rules to meet their needs when they lacked other means to generate some income. We, and our human rights defending friends from the local people, try to defend their rights.

Trying to investigate the motives of the crimes committed by the imprisoned Chechens was beyond the scope of this research. However, the leader of the Chechen community

said that most of these young people were arrested for minor crimes such as stealing to survive. If in real life people deviate from the social norms to meet their fundamental basic human needs, then one could argue that the motives are hardly provocative. However, if one tries to justify a crime using the human needs argument, then it could be considered as provocative. The rich data in the Chechen case supports my argument that the war in Chechnya and its consequences have violated the basic needs of people extending beyond the borders of this country.

Chechen women and children refugees and/or IDP's in the Russo-Chechen wars have faced enormous challenges. Many people in this study raised awareness of the problems that women refugees face specific to their gender. Khazar Salamov's story focused primarily on (1) women's struggle to provide basic needs for themselves and their families; (2) rape by Russian soldiers; and (3) prostitution by some women to survive:

The consequences of the war on the Chechen family are terrible. The Chechen family has been the major target of the Russians. They tried to ruin our family values in order to ruin the nation. Thousands of women are left widows. They faced all kinds of deprivations, they worked hard to feed their children, and even they got raped...

It takes many years for people to recover from the material and non-material damages of being a refugee. The Chechen people, even those outside of Chechnya, are still suffering from the harshness of the war. The problems brought about by the conflict, therefore, are growing daily. Emptying Chechnya of its people does not mean that fewer problems exist in the country. Perhaps the current Chechen government aware of this point has opened a number of Chechen representative offices in Europe to convince the refugees to come

home to Chechnya. However, few refugees will return to Chechnya as long as they fear state terror in the republic as well as the reach of the government abroad.

State Terrorism as a Threat to Human Security

One of the basic human needs is a need to security. Almost all the Chechens I talked to stated that they did not feel secure because they have witnessed many Chechen assassinations in Chechnya and abroad. State terrorism that includes internal repression in Chechnya as well as external acts of terror violates and confines the basic rights and needs of Chechens. Russia has tried hard to suppress the truth about Chechnya. It has tried to justify its armed operations in Chechnya as a fight against terrorism. Even the Russian political authorities claimed that Russia's war on Chechen terrorism was part of the war on global terrorism (Gilligan, 2010). This claim was not welcomed by the world public or the Western democracies. Does state terrorism exist in Chechnya and against Chechens living elsewhere? All the informants of this study unanimously perceive that Russia and the pro-Russian Chechen government kill and terrorize Chechens wherever possible. Russian armed forces have applied state terror as a means to control the people of the region.

Musa is a Chechen refugee residing in Baku waiting for an opportunity to immigrate to a third country where he can build a new life. He was an eyewitness of many scenes of war and violence in Chechnya. Musa's story outlines how Russian soldiers massacred civilians in a village:

I was hiding in the mountainous place just behind our village watching the Russian officers who took an old man and a young person with beard. They locked them into an empty house, and then started to shoot

that house. First, in horror, I did not understand anything. But then I understood that they were making a film. The soldiers suddenly turned to their own people and shot two of them to death as well. Then they left all the dead people behind and drove away. They were using these kinds of films for the propaganda or terror purposes.

Musa also pointed out that the Russian servicemen were merciless against anyone involved in helping the Chechen separatists:

My neighbors were somehow helping our fighters. The Russian soldiers learnt about this. They came over during the night and burnt that house with 9 people inside. All of the people inside the house were killed by the fire. But the real tragedy was that they [the Russian servicemen] were brutal against the innocent people too, if they had a minor suspicions.

Nevertheless, not all of the Chechen men fought against the Russians. Hassan said to me in Baku that there was no need to mobilize more people, especially during the second Chechen war:

We have enough fighters; there is no need to mobilize more, even though we can. Had we have more, we would lose more. Why should we? But it doesn't matter for the Russians; anyway they consider even young Chechen boys as their enemies.

In different times, a number of Chechen leaders were murdered allegedly with Kadyrov's involvement outside of Chechnya including Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, Movladi Baisarov, Ruslan Yamadaev, and Sulim Yamadaev (in Dubai); Gazhi Edilsutanov, Islam Dzahnibekov, and Ali Osaev (in Istanbul); Umar Israilov (in Vienna); Gaziyeu, Abdurrakhmanov (in Baku); as well as Natalya Estemirova (in Grozny), a human rights activist and board member of the Russian human rights organization Memorial; and

Zarema Sadulayeva and her husband Alik Dzhabrailov (in Grozny), who were children's rights activists.

The federal government and the pro-Russian Chechen government have employed state terror to eliminate the most important leaders of the Chechen movement beyond Russian territories. Apparently, they perceive that this strategy will eventually weaken both the movement and the resistance significantly. However, Chechens find this strategy to be quite futile, as they believe that leaders are born out of the movement, and they will emerge as long as they are needed.

Due to all of the assassinations that have happened so far, threats from Russian secret service agents and Kadyrov's assassination team are felt by Chechens everywhere. Mola Ramazanov informed me about those Chechens who are imprisoned who fear assassination:

Maybe it is good for them to be there. Because in there they are safer than we are here. Ramzan threatens our lives here any minute, but his hands can't reach there. Our only concern is that this government may hand them over to the Russian authorities. However, luckily there is not any such precedent.

Akhmad Janibekov told me a story about how the Russian air force used chemical weapons a number of times in Chechnya. He claimed that similar war crimes against civilians were well known in the region, but not equally known abroad. This is what he had to say on the issue:

In many cases, the Russians used chemical weapons against the civilians in Chechnya. Unfortunately, the world does not know much about it. One event took place in February 4, 2000, when Russian aircraft attacked the village of Katyr Yurt. Normally, it was unexpected by the Chechen civilians. The aircraft carried special chemical bombs. Those

bombs release chemicals that when inhaled draw a man's inside out. On that day, the Russian pilots bombed a convoy of civilians that were fleeing their villages and murdered almost 400 men, women and children. It was one of countless, little-known acts of terrorism in Chechnya perpetrated by the Russian state, whose main leader is Putin.

In Chechnya, over the last fifteen years, many men were detained, beaten, released for ransom, or disappeared altogether. Women have been raped in front of their male relatives. There were large-scale *zachistki*—"mop-up" operations that ceased in 2003, but the abductions did not. Akhmad Janibekov commented on this issue in the following way:

Normally, they come to take people from their homes in the middle of the night because this has a devastating psychological effect on victims and their relatives. Some of the victims are fortunate to return home after several days of cruel beating and torture. As a rule, they are ransomed by their relatives. However, not always the family of the abducted person can gather the necessary ransom money. Then, a dead body of the victim is often found some time later or simply the victim may disappear for good.

State terror and intimidation are perceived by the Chechen people as a way to crush the people and force them to make an artificial choice between democracy and stability. Tahir Tumanli argued that the Kremlin is satisfied with the current suppression in Chechnya of any attempts to act and think independently, since the Chechen authorities do what Moscow wants:

What Putin and Ramzan want to do is to make our people understand that stability is important for a normal life, and therefore Putin and Ramzan are doing well because they are trying to bring stability to Chechnya. However, everybody sees that their stability does not even bring security to the people. Who does need this kind of stability? People need freedom; they need democracy; they need prosperity, and they also

need security. Who needs this stability if every day somebody is abducted, raped, or killed?

State terror is also used against those non-Chechens who have tried to find out the truth about what is happening in Chechnya. It targeted human rights activists such as Estemirova and Sadulayeva, and journalists like Politkovskaya as well as Chechen guerrilla fighters such as Basayev and Umarov. It might seem like a coincidence, but even one of the subjects of my study, Abdurrahmanov, was killed in Baku a few weeks after I interviewed him.

Russia's state terror knows no border. The most prominent leaders of the Chechen movement have been killed in a variety of foreign countries such as the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Belgium, Azerbaijan, and Austria. Russia claims that the Chechens have some internal problems among themselves that they resolve by killing one another. However, this argument does not reflect reality. Investigations made by the state organs of the targeted countries disprove Russian arguments. Idris Ismayil commented on this point as follows:

They say that we [the separatists] kill each other. They blame us for dealing with each other because of internal finance-related problems. This is absurd. Who of us would kill Zelimkhan Yandarbin [Yandarbiyev]? Who of us would kill Osayev, Gaziyeu, or Politkovskaya? They blame us but nobody believes them, nobody!

The pro-Russian Chechen government under President Ramzan Kadyrov successfully established his oppressive regime in Chechnya, where his dictatorship is backed by Russian authorities. Idris Ismayil commented that Kadyrov was granted a medal of the Hero of Russia, the highest award in the Federation:

If he [Ramzan Kadyrov] had even very little honor, he would refuse that medal. Nevertheless, he became a hero of Russia for killing “his own” people. Then, either he is not a Chechen or he is a traitor, which is even worse.

Recently, on Police Day in Russia, the Russian President Medvedev promoted Kadyrov to the rank of police general. Kadyrov enjoys unlimited power in Chechnya where he keeps people under continuous terror. Hence, many Chechens think of him as more dangerous than the Russian authorities in Moscow or Russian servicemen operating in Chechnya.

It is also claimed that the Russian special forces have tried to kidnap relatives of the Chechen leaders for the purposes of manipulation. Sadulayev’s wife was kidnapped in 2003 by Russian *spetsnaz* forces, and killed by the Federal Security Service (FSB) when attempts to buy her back failed. However, Sadulayev as a leader of the Chechens worked to eliminate terrorist violence and urged Basayev and other warlords to direct military attacks on legitimate targets such as federal troops and local civil servants and their offices.⁶ He stressed that attacks on such targets would avoid injuring civilians. Oruj Osman pointed out that Sadulayev succeeded in convincing Basayev that not attacking civilian targets would help spread the insurgency across the North Caucasus:

Sadulayev was extremely sensitive to civilians’ lives. He was against any kind of terror. He was saying that our targets were well-known and our goals were legitimate. It was legitimate to get them only through legitimate ways. However, what the Russians did against him? First, they kidnapped his wife. This was crime. They then tried to trade with her. This also was crime. Finally they killed her. Rather than doing all this, they could have used this person [Sadulayev] to build peace. He was strong, unforgiving, but very constructive and bright person. The Russian authorities preferred to kill him too. Obviously, they wanted a new

⁶ A number of research participants made this argument.

Chechen leader with deeper hatred of Russians. Also, they needed somebody to do terror because the Kremlin wants terror. It is easier for Moscow to justify its ethnic cleansing policy in Chechnya, when some Russian civilians are killed by Chechens.

The legacy of the state terror perpetrated by the federal forces as well as pro-Russian Chechen forces against the Chechen population will impact the future, as the overwhelming majority of those interviewed were explicit in their wishes for revenge so that the Chechen movement itself and all other national goals unite.

Kadyrov, the Russian-backed Chechen president, applies the same ruthless means to his former colleagues who fell out with him. He had Sulim Yamadayev, a Chechen and a Hero of Russia, killed in Dubai in March 2009.⁷ Umar Israilov, an ethnic Chechen, and Kadyrov's former bodyguard who accused him of torture and kidnapping, was shot dead on a street in Vienna in January 2009. Moreover, on Kadyrov's order a former deputy mayor of Grozny was shot dead in Moscow in February 2009. Oruj Osman commented that Kadyrov's henchmen systematically remove any opposition to his absolute rule:

The Russians and their supporters in Chechnya blame us for killing each other. However, as you see, we do not kill each other; rather they do kill each other. The pro-Russian Chechens cannot share power and dirty money they steal from our people. This money is not enough for them; they also steal millions from each other. They steal the nation's wealth. They steal bribe money, and ransoms. Then they blame us. They are shameless.

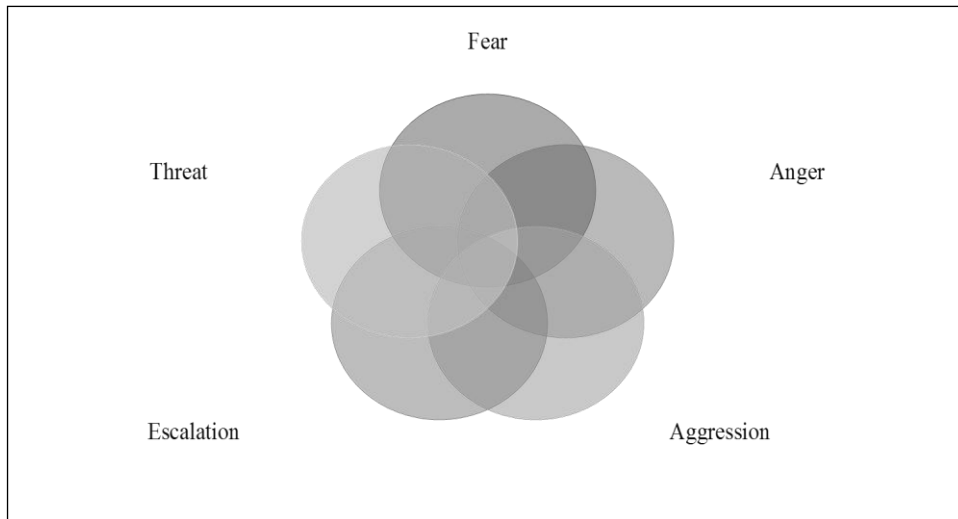
Using terror against the Chechens may bring about more violence in the future and perpetuate the conflict giving rise to the dynamics of fear, aggression and anger. At least a part of the Chechen laypeople are angry with the Russian and pro-Russian Chechen

⁷ This claim is made by the study participants of this research, however no legal or police investigative evidence is known today to support these claims.

authorities. This anger is associated with a perceived unfairness or injustice directed against them by the Russians. Their anger is also a source of empowerment to those people who become energized and motivated. The emotion of fear, in turn, brings about aggressive responses from the people that escalate the conflict (Figure 2).

State terror, just like regular terror, has no legitimacy. No state can justify its illegal activities against its people with the excuse of preserving its own survival. Many Chechens discern the aggressive policies and activities of the Russian and pro-Russian Chechen government as a sign of their weakness.

Figure 2: Threat-fear-anger-aggression-escalation interconnection



Discussions and Conclusions

In this chapter, I have discussed the following key human needs issues in the Russo-Chechen conflict since the early 1990s that emerged from the data: (1) employment; (2) education; (3) war and cultural heritage; (4) leadership and government; (5) refugees and

internally displaced people; and (6) state terror as a threat to human security. These themes raised by the research participants are connected to their images of their basic human needs.

The Russo-Chechen wars of 1994–96 and 1999–present have influenced the lives of the people of Chechnya in a number of ways. In this chapter, I have outlined six major basic human needs patterns stemming from the conversations with the informants of this research. All these patterns are perceived by the informants as important, since they all have either impacted the lives of people or they are about the people themselves.

First, unemployment is one of the major problems for people in Chechnya. The unemployment rate in the republic is high, mainly due to the war conditions. Tens of thousands are unable to find any kind of employment in Chechnya. Many people with university degrees do low-paying and/or undesirable jobs. Status disequilibrium among the people is high, which prepares conditions for the escalation of social conflict. In addition, it is a rich source for conflicts in peoples' everyday life because their basic human needs are not met; therefore, this problem requires urgent and close attention from the authorities. However, the social and economic reforms that are needed to stabilize the problem in the republic are insufficient. Law-breaking cases in the country related to meeting one's basic needs are high. Unemployment in the republic is at critical levels, and may bring about the risk of social disruption.

Chechen people would like to do their traditional jobs where and when they can. Overall, they do not like working for the state, however, the unfavorable economic conditions in the republic have people willing to do any job. The conditions in the country for doing traditional jobs are not favorable. The people of Chechnya cannot

cultivate the land as freely as they did before the war because of the ubiquity of the war and its consequences in Chechnya.

The informants of this study pointed out that labor remittances are very important for the people of Chechnya so that they can meet their basic human needs and survive. Money coming from the Chechen diaspora in Russia and in Western countries constitutes a considerable amount of the revenue of Chechnya's population. However, not every Chechen family has a relative in the diaspora, and not every Chechen in the diaspora is able to send money to his/her family in Chechnya on a regular basis.

When Chechnya declared its independence from the Russian Federation in 1991, the new market conditions were very fertile for trade opportunities with foreign countries. There are many Chechens living in Middle Eastern countries, whose fathers and grandfathers left Chechnya in the 1920s and 1930s, who ensured that trade flourished in the republic during the early 1990s. However, Russia's security concerns imposed limitations on Chechnya's trade with foreign countries. Today, foreign trade in Chechnya is insignificant.

In Chechnya, unemployed people receive some state support but it is not sufficient to live on. Many people secretly perform some minor jobs at home in the black economy, such as carpentry or they work unregistered jobs, such as washing dishes at cafés. Difficult life conditions are the primary reason for doing these kinds of jobs secretly. If they are caught then they are penalized and disqualified from receiving state subsidies.

People's dissatisfaction is also high because they have not received any/or adequate compensation for their damaged homes during the wars. Many feel that they are

relatively deprived, which they use to justify receiving state support while working in the black market. Moreover, the dissatisfaction of people as a result of their low living standards may bring about a new wave of conflict. Young people especially may join the military forces against the government, as well as criminal groups in the region not only because of their attractiveness, but also because they present opportunities for making money to meet their human needs.

Second, the lack of a proper education for Chechen children both inside and outside of Chechnya directly affects the lives of the Chechens, especially the young people. During the wars, the educational facilities in Chechnya were seriously damaged or destroyed. The instructors and students fled their homes temporarily or permanently, interrupting the learning process in the country for a long time. Recovering the educational system is extremely slow and costly; therefore, many mountainous villages are simply ignored by the government. More importantly, a significant portion of young refugees has ceased their education due to a lack of opportunities in the host countries.

Both the first and second Chechen wars influenced the lives of entire generations, who are growing up illiterate because of the wars. The education problem in the republic is so serious and broad that it even impacts day care facilities and so has had an adverse effect on younger children. Higher education in Chechnya was also interrupted for about six years. Higher education institutions in Grozny were seriously damaged or destroyed by the shelling and bombardments. The lives of faculty and staff in education facilities became extremely difficult because they lost their jobs so that many had to leave their positions. Nevertheless, many returned to their institutions as soon as it became possible, and took part in repairing the education facilities to restore them into operable conditions.

The education problems of Chechen children are not limited to Chechnya alone. Those living in IDP camps in Ingushetia also experience the hardships of not having a normal education system. Most Chechen refugee children in Azerbaijan are also deprived of a normal education either because of unofficial rules in the education facilities or as a result of the structural policies of the republic. The Chechen refugees in Baku I interviewed claim that one of the root causes of such an inhumane policy is the invisible Russian pressure on the republic's political leadership.

Third, the military operations in Chechnya damaged cultural and historical heritage sites and their architecture, and stage performances as well as other elements of the cultural heritage of the Chechen people. Chechens value their cultural heritage very much. The destruction of historic buildings, castles, cultural centers, and libraries both saddened and frustrated the Chechens. They are equally angry about the destruction of Christian churches in their country. The Chechens I talked with either believe that Russian servicemen targeted Chechnya's cultural heritage intentionally or that it was a natural result of war.

The Chechen people suffered from both wars in many ways. The destruction of their cultural heritage, however, is one of the worst outcomes of the wars. Even though many destroyed cultural centers, historical buildings, and libraries are now restored, and the activities of dance troupes and different ensembles resumed in the 2000s the moral damage resulting from the carnage is incurable. Since the Chechen people are strongly bound to their cultural heritage, the damage of their historic monuments has strongly impacted many who are grieving their loss, while others express anger with the Russian authorities.

The war affected not only Islamic architecture, but also Christian architecture in Chechnya. Thus, the deliberate Russian targeting of Muslim and Christian heritage by assaults on cultural monuments impacted the psyche of the nation. Restoring buildings and towers, reviving the activities of ensembles and troupes by the pro-Russian Chechen government, nowadays is interpreted by most of the informants in this study as Moscow's attempt to win back the Chechen peoples' approval. However, almost all of the informants think that this is impossible.

Fourth, the Chechen wars helped people to figure out that the Chechen people have some problems related to leadership, especially after the 1996 death of Dudayev, the first president of Chechnya. Since his death, it appeared impossible to build a single government in Chechnya capable of keeping absolute order in the country, and this constituted a pretext for the Russian authorities to launch a new war against Chechnya in 1999 by violating the rules of the Khasavyurd and Moscow peace treaties.

The leadership issue in Chechnya is one of the most important impediments toward creating a constructive conflict resolution process. Surprisingly, the current pro-Moscow government of Chechnya under Ramzan Kadyrov may be considered the most effective and strongest government since 1990. The political and economic support of the Kremlin for Kadyrov, as well as the weakened position of the freedom fighters in Chechnya, is the main reason for the strength of Kadyrov's power. However, most Chechens see the current government as neither Chechen nor legitimate.

Ramzan Kadyrov is considered by his opposition in Chechnya and abroad to be the main enemy, thus he is the main target of the freedom fighters and the Chechen diasporas. For two main reasons many Chechens believe that he will not stay in power for

long. First, the Chechen people do not like him and consider him to be a betrayer of the Chechen nation. Second, if he survives physically and politically, Moscow will withdraw its support and give it to another person closer to both the people of Chechnya and the Kremlin.

The recent history of Chechnya confirms the arguments that unity is elusive not only among the freedom fighters, but also among Kadyrovtsy. Ramzan Kadyrov, for example, tried to physically eliminate rival pro-Russian Chechens. This is also a sign of his authoritarian policy in Chechnya where he does not tolerate any democratic values. Moscow not only closes its eyes to Kadyrov's authoritarianism, but also rewards him on every occasion. Recently, Medvedev, the president of the Russian Federation, awarded Kadyrov the rank of police general.

Many of my interviewees stressed that the more complex internal politics of Chechnya enables Russia to control the republic more easily. The Kremlin manipulates internal rivalry in Chechnya, trying to keep rivals busy with each other. When necessary, Moscow creates new Chechen "leaders" in order to implement its own policies.

Fifth, the Chechen refugee problem is very grave, since more than half of the population of Chechnya has experienced the fate of a refugee at least once in their lives. Many fled their home during the first Chechen war, returned after the war, but became refugees once again after the second war commenced. This phenomenon brought about many deprivations to Chechens, leaving a negative impact on their children's cultural and intellectual development. To see the seriousness of the problem, note that Chechen refugees and IDPs number about 600,000 out of the entire population of Chechnya's one million people. In other words, during both wars 60 percent of the total population of

Chechnya became either refugees or IDPs. Most Chechen refugees or IDPs in Ingushetia and some other parts of the Russian Federation were forced back to their homes. However, those outside Russia do not intend to return. Now they are scattered almost all over Europe and North America, as well as some parts of the Middle East. This may bring some extra complexities to the conflict in the future, especially where large Chechen diasporas exist.

The Chechen refugees have not had their basic needs met as they face human rights problems such as malnutrition, unsanitary conditions, and lack of security in their temporary homes. For those who try to immigrate to foreign countries, however, the process of getting political status is long and complex. The refugees in the former Soviet republics face a worse situation. They have faced many problems related to their political status, education, healthcare and employment opportunities. To resolve problems with regards to acquiring passports and registration, Chechen refugees have to bribe local officials. Many refugees have become angry with their temporary host countries. Azerbaijan is one example. Once Azerbaijan was regarded as one of the friendliest nations to Chechens, now, however, those who have lived there seem to have changed their minds on this point.

As one of the subjects in this study mentioned, most Chechens will work hard and support the liberation movement even from abroad. The current pro-Moscow Chechen government foresees the consequences of the growing Chechen diaspora communities, trying to entice people to return to the country as soon as possible. However, without substantial political reforms in Chechnya hardly anybody would willingly return home.

Although more than half of the population of Chechnya has become refugees, only those who are stationed in Ingushetia were forced to return back to the country.

The growing Chechen diaspora in European countries promises to create a more complex political situation in the republic in the future. The refugee waves out of Chechnya may contribute to political as well as psychocultural problems in the new host country, which is likely to affect the resolution process negatively. Undoubtedly, in time the Chechen diasporas in the developed countries will be well-organized and affluent, thus having influence in the domestic affairs of Chechnya. The ability of the Armenian diasporas in the United States and France to influence Armenian national policies is a good example.

Sixth, for many years, the Russian government has announced its struggles with Chechen terror, equating the freedom fighters with those criminals who use instability in the country as a fertile ground for illegal business. However, it is obvious that the Russian state also uses terror as a method of eliminating Chechen political and military leaders, in addition to keeping the entire population of Chechnya in a state of fear. Russia's efforts to restore constitutional order are perceived as legitimate. However, Russia's use of illegitimate means to protect its legitimate rights has drawn criticism by human rights groups both in Russia and abroad.

The use of state terror may bring some security-related benefits to Russia in the short run. However, in the long run, state terrorism damages peacebuilding efforts in Chechnya. In other words, short-term gains may appear to be long-term losses. Russian state terror only adds to the problem. Today state terrorism may help eliminate some separatist leaders yet tomorrow it may backfire. As a result Chechen people are focused

on immediate revenge, and children are raised in this atmosphere. The state's use of indiscriminate violence incites insurgent attacks in a tit-for-tat spat. State violence is highly counterproductive because it creates new grievances by curbing security needs while forcing victims to seek security in rebel arms.

Moreover, the current pro-Russian Chechen president's involvement in the terror activities makes the situation even worse. State terror does not differentiate between men and women, military personnel and civilian, rightist and journalist or Russian and Chechen. Whoever criticizes Putin or Kadyrov, or questions human rights abuses in Chechnya is in trouble. The laypeople of Chechnya are so afraid that they remain silent. This dormancy in the conflict may erupt on the first suitable occasion.

The Chechen people are a peaceful people, which can be understood by the way they lead their lives. However, they also become warlike when the question of their freedom needs arises. When the Chechens think that they are fighting for justice, they do not hide their pride in being warlike. They remind their oppressors of their warlike skills and bravery.

One of the major differences between the unionists and freedom fighters is their opposing beliefs about foreign jihadists fighting in Chechnya. While the unionists perceive them as elements of disorder, the freedom fighters regard them as assisting in the struggle. Most of the informants of this study stressed that freedom fighters are not traitors like Akhmad Kadyrov and his son Ramzan.

Everybody who speaks out in support of human, civil, or children's rights in Chechnya is a potential target of terror. Many human rights activists and journalists defending the Chechen people's rights and basic human needs have lost their lives both

inside and outside of Chechnya. State terrorism has killed peace workers such as Politkovskaya, Estemirova, and Sadulayeva. Thus, it is apparent that in the Russo-Chechen conflict state terror and regular terrorism coexist. It means that the state and some illegal paramilitary factions use the same means to weaken or destroy each other. However, not all Chechen paramilitaries employ terror against the state.

In many cases, state terrorism ignited or enhanced counterterrorist activities by some insurgents. Most Chechens are impatient for revenge; perceiving Ramzan Kadyrov as a person who should pay with his life for what he has done to the Chechen people. As a result, the Chechen question has gained a new impetus, and its character and nature have changed from a war of national liberation to a war on terror and state terror.

State terrorism increases the fear of the Chechen refugees to return home. The refugees develop more and more mistrust in the pro-Russian Chechen government and the federal government, as they witness Chechen people being killed one by one abroad.

Apparently, the federal government assists the puppet pro-Russian Chechen government in its terrorist activities. Consequently, all the terror activities initiated against the Chechens and their defenders either belong directly to the Russian state or are sponsored by it. Interestingly, the Russia-backed Chechen President Kadyrov removes his former colleagues too if he perceives any threat to his own power in Chechnya.

Conclusion

In all the cases described and discussed in this chapter, the negative impact of war and violence on basic human needs and human rights severely felt by my respondents enhances the problems of the Chechen people. Chechen refugees and IDPs suffer

disproportionate level of needs violation in the realms of education, employment, and security. In addition to the poor economic conditions in the country, state-sponsored violence also contributes to the conflict in Chechnya the nature of which is exacerbated by a corrupt system in the country. In the following chapter, the contribution of psychocultural issues to the Russo-Chechen conflict will be discussed through a framework, in which the Chechen phenomenon may be analyzed, explained, and understood more thoughtfully.

Chapter 7

The Role of the Psychocultural Dimension

Introduction

In this chapter, I address a number of psychocultural issues and their contributions to the quality of the Russo-Chechen conflict. A *Psychocultural* section of Chapter 3 helps to draw a framework that assists in understanding ethnic conflict behavior, and the attitude of the actors to each other, as well as key opportunities that emerge for its transformation. Moreover, *The Social Identity, Gender, and Violence* sections of Chapter 4 are also instrumental for the analysis and comments presented in this chapter. The purpose of this chapter is not to argue that the Russo-Chechen conflict is a clash of cultures. Rather, I discuss how psychocultural issues frame interests and order priorities, and define enemies and allies. The role of culture in offering meaning to masses under stress and uncertainty are also discussed.

The psychocultural themes that emerged inductively from the data this chapter deals with are: (1) cultural identity, (2) gender and conflict, (3) cultural diversity and issues dividing the parties, (4) war and new identity formation, (5) the Chechen language, (6) the notions of the state and war in Russian culture, and (7) cultural discrimination and structural violence. All these themes are discussed from the perspectives of relevant social theories and of the research participants' experiences. The psychocultural dimension evolved inductively from the data analysis. In addition to the arguments of the existing literature on the subject, the research participants noted that psychocultural issues are essential in defining the Russo-Chechen conflict. These issues have contributed to the deterioration of the relations between both groups. At the same time, they also

provide a rich resource for conflict transformation, with the potential of increasing a positive attitude in the Russian and Chechen societies.

Once I asked a middle-aged, well-educated Chechen man, who worked as a translator for Dudayev and Maskhadov, the first and third presidents of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria respectively, whom Chechens consider as their worst enemy ever. I anticipated hearing the names of Putin as one of the men currently on duty, or Yeltsin as the man responsible for launching both wars in Chechnya in 1994 and 1999, or indeed Stalin, who was the head of the Soviet state when the Chechens were sent into exile in 1944. To my surprise and without any hesitation, he named Yermolov, a Russian general discussed in Chapter 2:

People of Chechnya and Dagestan do not forget Yermolov, who did the worst in the North Caucasus ever. He respected neither people, nor religion, was merciless, inexorable, bloodthirsty, and inhumane. By his atrocities, he plowed hatred among the mountaineers against the Russians.

Tsarist General Yermolov was in the Caucasus for the last time in 1827, one hundred and eighty-three years ago, yet the Chechens still have him in their “collective memory” in a “time collapse” (Volkan, 1997) as if they all see him in the recent past. The Soviet authorities honored Yermolov by erecting a statue of him in Grozny, Chechnya’s capital. The Chechens blew it up several times in the 1970s and 1980s (Gall & Waal, 1998; Lieven, 1998).³¹

Similarly, Imam Shamil’s image is still alive in Russia. Especially in the early 1990s, the Russian media highlighted his name on every occasion to reintroduce the heroic and stubborn Chechen resistance to Russia with a mixture of myth and truth over

two hundred years ago. Shamil's image is alive in Chechnya as well. Oral stories passed from generation to generation about Imam Shamil encouraged Chechen fighters to resist the Russian troops in the 1990s. However, some Chechens have a negative image of Shamil as well as discussed in the *Historical Context* chapter of this thesis.

Valery Tishkov, an ethnographer and former head of the State Committee of Nationalities of Russia, wrote that:

Another feature of the Chechen society in conflict is the habit of turning to the abused past for arguments applicable to the present. The argument for the Chechen militants rested on a dramatic representation of the past of the nineteenth century's Caucasian war and the deportation trauma suffered under Stalin. The search for a lost ideal (which never existed) is still the driving force of intellectual debate in Chechnya (Tishkov, 2004:15).

It is not, however, easy to ignore the past, at least because past events feed the present. According to the arguments of *transgenerational externalization*, the present is influenced by the past if not built on it (Volkan, 2001).

Culture refers to "the shared system of meaning that people use to make sense of the world" (Ross, 2007:2), and it can be examined through the narratives of people to explain actions, institutions, and practices found in a society. Further, Ross explained that culture is expressed in formal symbolic forms (religious and national rituals, etc.) and informal (language, clothing, food, games, etc.) symbolic forms, as well as in physical forms that define the symbolic landscape such as monuments, murals, holy places, and battleground memorials, etc. Members of an ethnic group use symbols, rituals, and stories to make sense of the world. This is the key to understanding how culture shapes people's lives and their collective behaviors. Cultural expressions are also reflectors of ethnic

groups' worldviews that help us understand the groups' deepest hopes and fears, as well as their understanding of an opponent's actions and motives. Also, cultural expressions play a causal role in conflict because they have the ability of directing collective understandings of the motives, interests, and behaviors of self and other. Culture and cultural identities may be both barriers to and opportunities for the resolution of ethnic conflict (Avruch, 1998). Culture enhances our responsibilities by taking us beyond formal agreements to recognize ritual and symbol as critical to the implementation of agreements for peace building and peace making (Senehi, 2002, 2008). Often, there is a need for parties to demonstrate to their opponent that they redefined older rituals to be less threatening and exclusive in order to successfully renegotiate their incompatible interests (Lederach, 1995, 2005).

The competing narratives offer different accounts to outsiders about the same historical events. Parties to a conflict selectively emphasize and judge events, people, and motivations. For example, Chechens stress their return to their ancient homeland after years of exile. Russians, however, emphasize their victimhood from Chechen terrorism.

Cultural Identity

As people are socialized, they learn how to honor and respect the values of their own culture. This is almost spontaneous and naturally tacit based on a number of social actualities such as language, honor, customs and traditions, race, ethnicity, religion, and geography that evoke feelings and emotions. All of these elements create and strengthen social connections among people that are a powerful emotional force constituting a ground for the formation of a cultural identity (Kimmel, 2006).

In many respects and quite naturally, Chechens and Russians have different cultural identities. All the social actualities listed above differ in salience from Russians to Chechens. Chechens, for example, are bonded to the geography in which they live with strong emotional ties that can hardly be observed in the Russian case. This human need may be explained by people's main historical occupations, the size of their lands, and the number of people living on the lands. The major occupations of Chechens have historically been connected to the soil that strongly bound the people to the land. Khan Rafik recalled how Chechens were happy when they returned back to Chechnya in 1957:

We finally arrived in Grozny; it was like a dream. We were in tears kissing the land. Our hands were so up to the sky giving thanks to God, so down to the land embracing it. Finally, finally we were back home. All the pains were now behind. We waited this day for a long time. It was the great day, for which our elderly did not die in order to see it.

Likewise, the customs and traditions of Chechens differ from those of Russians that shape the values and perceptions of both peoples. Osman Durmush also stressed that the Russian people were nice, good and generous; still the Chechens did not wish to be like them:

Russians are nice and good people. However, we do not want our youth; our daughters to grow like the Russian youth. What may happen to a young girl who constantly sees and encounters other girls around in mini skirts with a cigarette at hand? Eventually, she will become like them. We do not want this. We want to raise our children according to our own customs. We respect other cultures but we want to preserve our own. What we want is our right and preference.

Religion also evokes stronger feelings for Chechens than for Russians, even though it is impossible as well as unnecessary to rate the degree of their religious beliefs. Chechens

are motivated by religion, and some fight in the name of religion, whereas Russians do not. Chechens are tied to their customs and traditions more tightly. Chechen children respect their elders differently than their Russian counterparts. For example, a young person will offer his/her help to an elderly person on the street coming from the bazaar and carrying a bag of fruit. Similarly, on public transportation, as a social rule younger Chechens offer their seats to older people or women. Chechen hospitality also means something totally different than Russian hospitality. For example, a Chechen family will offer a room to a guest to overnight, and even become insistent if refused. Aydemir Sultan told a story about his neighbor's hospitality to a Russian family in 1995, when the first Chechen war was in progress:

A Russian couple in their sixties came to our village, which is quite close to Grozny. They were looking for a place to stay a few days. Otherwise, they had to find a hotel. But where? There were no hotels left undamaged. They were busy with the search of their son who was a missing soldier of the Russian Army. Our people respected those Russians as their guests helping them with everything they needed.

The relatively small population of Chechens is one of the reasons for their strong attachment to the culture they inherited from their ancestors. The attachment to Chechen culture is also positively correlated with collectivism. Araz Ata, a Chechen refugee residing in Baku, described how Chechens help each other as follows:

We help each other in any respect: in fields to collect the yield, in yards to build a fence, in streets to fight a stranger. Even the last two Chechens would stand for each other. We have a strong sense of unity and cooperation.

In addition, Yahya Gagan, a Chechen man now who lives in Winnipeg, discussed how he assisted a single Chechen refugee woman living in the same city:

She calls me when she needs something that she cannot handle by herself. I go there to fix the problem, if I can. If it is something that I cannot do myself, then I find somebody to have the problem fixed, and pay for it myself. Before leaving, I ask her repeatedly not to hesitate calling me immediately if and when she needs my help again.

Moreover, the Chechen honor system is different compared to the Russian honor system. In many respects, what Russians perceive as normal is a matter of honor for Chechens. Imran Kamran recalled a memory from the old days when he was a soldier in the Soviet Army:

I and a guy from Kazakhstan would fight man to man. He was a professional sportsman and seemed stronger than me. All the other *deds* (*slang*. older soldiers) surrounded us watching. I could surrender without fighting and go unhurt; however, I did not surrender because it was a matter of my honor. I lost the fight, but saved my honor. Unlike Russians, this is very common for Chechens.

I am not evaluating Russian and Chechen values as good or bad, the point is, their cultural differences influence their perceptions and reasoning. A female dress seen as beautiful by Russians may be disdained by Chechens. Likewise, Russian women would hardly wear conservative Chechen female attire.

Wealth and geography are also associated with the formation of cultural identity. Historically, Chechens have not been as wealthy as Russians. Their traditional economy was based on husbandry, unlike the Russian economy, which included industry and commerce, in addition to agriculture. The harsh geography and climate of Chechnya are

natural factors that force its inhabitants to collaborate with each other to survive. Qashqay Asimov explained this issue in the following way:

Our ancestors did not have many options; they planted wheat and corn as much as the land and climate allowed. They kept cattle as long as they had pastures. Although rich and generous, the geography is small. Especially usable lands are not vast due to the mountains and forests.

Statehood is also important in shaping cultural identity. For centuries the mountainous Chechen people have lived in different clans—*teips*. A *teip* membership ties a person to a large and extended family. Traditionally, *teip* members supported the weak and poor people. However, the Chechens lacked statehood as the term is understood in the West. Chechens learned how to live in harmony with each other in *teips* and developed their own system of rules to govern people. Before Russian rule in Chechnya, land didn't belong to any one individual, since it was owned collectively and administered under local and Islamic law. Each family in a *teip* was given a piece of land for cultivation according to its needs. This system in which the peasants were free and independent continued until the Russians became influential in the region. Afterwards, the peasants were not able to cultivate their lands as freely as before. In Russia, however, peasants were the subjects of a landlord, and they only became free after 1861. Said Sulimov explained how the *teip* system kept the people together:

We formed as a nation during the exile years in the 1940s and 1950s. Today, nobody talks about it, but over there we all were on the same boat. All the *teip*-based differences among our people disappeared in the exile. There were no mountains to defend the highlanders from the enemy. In exile, the Chechens learned how they needed each other even from different *teips*.

Besides the *teips*, another distinction among Chechens was based on the region in which they were living. Those Chechens living in the mountains were more independent than those living on the plains, who learned how to live side by side with Russians and Cossacks. The cultural rules of those both groups of Chechens have also differed from each other to some extent. The highlanders were always more brutal in their interactions with others using harsher methods to resolve their problems. In contrast, the Chechens living on the plains were more peaceful and more conciliatory in their methods to resolve differences among themselves as well as with others. My interviewees, however, were reluctant to comment on this point much, apparently because the group that was the primary research target of this study contained people from both regions of Chechnya. Nevertheless, Ali Bashir noted that the nationalist leader of Chechnya, Johar Dudayev, was from the mountains, whereas the first Chechen communist leader of Chechens, Doku Zavgayev, was from the plains. Ramin Aslanov, on the other hand, argued that the comparison of Chechens from different regions of Chechnya was senseless:

I am from Novoe Aldy, and it is on the plains, next to Grozny. Basayev was also from the plains. I know tens of hundreds of brave Chechens from different parts of the plains. It is absurd to claim that Chechens differ from each other according to the geographies they come from.

Others noted that dividing Chechens into different categories based on their geographical origin is not a new phenomenon, as it was always the case when their enemies needed to gain from Chechens' disunity.

Culture and Behavior

Culture plays an important role in the way one thinks, acts, makes comments and decisions during peaceful times as well as in tense situations (Lederach, 1995). Moreover, culture is influential in providing actors with a framework for interpreting the actions and motives of others. The motives link cognition to behavior, and it plays an explanatory role, giving rise to interpretative cultural theories. Unlike interests that are related to a cost-benefit mode, motives are perceived through empirical analysis of particular cultural contexts. While interests may be universal as well as local, motivations are always culture-based.

In the Russo-Chechen conflict, the Chechen people, are culturally motivated, whereas the Russian state seeks its socio-political, economic, and security interests. It is important to note that the Russian side is represented by the state actor in this conflict. The cultural motives of the Chechen people are positively correlated with their behavior. While Chechen behavior is informed by its culture, Russian behavior is informed by its interests.⁸ However, this does not necessarily mean a pure culture-based or a pure interest-based behavior for either party. Behavior fed by culture-based motivations is stronger than behavior maintained by interest. In this sense, Chechen motivations are stronger than Russian motivations. Aslan Aslanov makes the point that Chechen behavior is more goal-oriented than that of their Russian counterparts:

We, Chechens, fight for our values, for our honors, for our mothers and sisters as well as for our motherland. The Russian state, however, fights to control, oppress, and colonize for economic gains. The poor Russian soldiers, mostly, do not know what they are fighting for. If it were the Russian people, but not the Russian state they would be more successful than the state. However, they do not want to fight; rather the state forces

⁸ Therefore, this section deals more with the Chechen rather than the Russian culture.

them to fight against us. Of course, there are some Russian chauvinists too, who are truly fighting to eliminate us. In addition, there are some Russian soldiers who are brainwashed by special programs who committed numerous massacres in Chechnya.

One key factor is the rules the actors take on in this conflict. The Chechens are a group of people whose individual members are tied to each other by shared values such as language, fate, and religion, whereas the Russian state tries to maximize its benefits by employing people through policies, rules, and doctrines. When these two actors are compared, we witness both of these distinct categories. The Chechens perceive the Russians through an existing framework of interactions that is created through centuries-long contact. The Russian state formulates its policies on reactive daily-changing mundane conditions. For example, Oruj Osman pointed out the ties of the Chechen people to their culture, and how Russians are alienated from their past.

Chechens think even for their forefathers as well as unborn grandchildren. We sustain the struggle of the first, even taking their revenge at the same time fighting for the future of the latter, our grandchildren. However, the Russians care neither about the past, nor about the future. If they did, they would act differently. They care about their today only.

Mola Ramazanov also mentioned that some twenty years ago he lived in a Russian village where he witnessed the ordinary life of the Russian laypeople. This is what he had to say on the issue:

The Russian people are optimistic. Although they think about their tomorrow, they don't care about it much. They like to live daily. I will tell you a conversation of one of the couples in the village where I lived some time ago. The woman said to her husband that they had nothing to eat and to drink. Then the *mujik* replied, "Don't worry, wife, we will drink the wine we kept for the holiday, and kill the pig that we still

have”. This is something that can generally be applied to the Russians I have encountered in my life. Many workers were receiving their salary; gone within a couple of days! Then they were barely surviving until the next salary. We, Chechens, think about our tomorrow not in days, not in months, but in years from now.

Not all the Chechen people think identically. Each member of Chechen society perceives the Russian state, its people, and policies differently. However, evidence of this research shows that the Chechen people who have been affected by contact with the Russian state are inclined to think in a similar way. The effect, form, and intensity of the physical contact helps to shape the cultural framework to explain the behavior of the other. However, it is not culture *per se* that determines how to perceive the actions of the other and how to react; rather it is also the impact of the other’s behavior on the formation of the culture. Aslan Aslanov noted that:

Read our history, you will see that the Russians’ attitude and behavior toward our people made Chechens and other mountaineers to fight them. The harsher the Russians were, the harsher our people’s resistance became. Our strategies and tactics were shaped by their policies and attitude to us.

It would be unrealistic to argue that the character of the Chechen struggle today is solely formed by the nature of the historical course of the Russo-Chechen conflict. However, denying or underestimating its role in the formation of Chechen behavior toward the Russians would also be unreasonable.

Individualism versus Collectivism

In an individualist culture, the individual’s interest prevails over the group interests. In a collectivist culture in which people are integrated into a strong in-group, the group

interest prevails over the individual interest. For Chechens living in a collectivist culture, group interests are a priority in keeping them together even in times of extremity. This does not mean that there might not be oppositional political subgroups. Chechen culture is tightly integrated even in the face of major disagreements among different groups within the Chechen community. Russian culture is loosely integrated, and this is better understood especially when compared to the Chechen culture. Said Sulimov also defined the Chechen culture as collectivist. This is what he had to say on the issue:

Our people like to live collectively. We have a strong sense of collective work. Also, we have a strong need for collective life. We like to gather and make decisions collectively. We ask about the opinions of other members of the community, if we want to do something serious. We like to eat together, and it is the reason that almost every night we have some guests. We help the person in disaster altogether. If somebody has a serious problem, it may become a problem of the entire community.

Indeed, individualism-collectivism constructs are important with regards to the analysis and resolution of the Russo-Chechen conflict. Chechen culture contains such attributes as family integrity, behavior regulated by in-group norms, hierarchy and harmony within the group, and a strong in-group/out-group distinction. Russian culture, on the other hand, is characterized by the attributes of emotional detachments from in-group, personal goals that have primacy over group goals, behavior regulated by cost-benefit calculations, and possible confrontation. At the very least, in the case of Chechnya, those Russians who are directly involved in the war are kept together by means of the state institution. Mola Ramazanov stated that it is the state machine and political power that motivates and keeps most of the Russian servicemen in Chechnya, whereas Chechen fighters are

zealous volunteers who wish to fight and die in the name of their homeland and co-nationals.

Can you find a single Chechen fighter kept in the Chechen units by force? Can you find a single Chechen fighter fighting for money? However, I bet you, let the Russian soldiers act on their free will, 90 if not 99 percent of them will leave Chechnya, and even the Russian Army immediately. What is that that keeps us so tight? We live for one another, and we fight for one another.

The collectivist nature of the Chechen culture helped them to survive the hard conditions of their exile. Manar Matayev informed me that the Chechen people in exile demonstrated a strong sense of solidarity among themselves as well as assisting each other overcome the many difficulties they faced:

I remember we had nowhere to live. My father bought or somehow found some hay to make a shelter to protect us from the cold. All other Chechen families were like us. But soon all the Chechens all together, like one, built houses for each family. When the local people saw that we were hard working people, they also helped us.

The nature of Chechen collectivism is also reflected in Chechens' everyday lives. As I observed in the Chechen community center in Baku people tended to perform their duties collectively where possible rather than individually. Most waited long enough for the others to come and join the group before they started to pray collectively even though they could do it individually. They also prefer to rent apartments close to each other in the same neighborhood. When I asked Rizvan why this was so, he explained this to me in terms of their need and desire to live closer to each other:

It is good to live close to each other. We may need each other's help, and

it is not boring. We also like to sit at *chaykhanas* (tea house- Azeri) together, and chat.

To my question whether it was a need because they were living in a foreign country

Rizvan replied:

No, it is the way we live. It is a necessity for us to be in continuous contact with one another. It might be here or there, or back to Chechnya, it doesn't matter. What really matters is not the space, but a time. We used to be much better in this sense. Time has changed things a bit to a worse direction.

Group welfare is also important for the Chechens. The Chechen community center in Baku itself is a product of the interdependent relationships among the Chechen people to satisfy the group's needs for a place to gather as well as to promote group solidarity. Gathering together is a strong necessity for the Chechens, which in turn, is a sign of their collectivistic culture.

Unlike Russians, Chechen people have a high-context communication style. It is well reflected in how Hayati Dadaev explains the necessity to gather together for Grozny's defense what worked well in the Chechen case.

We were not mobilized by the Ministry of Defense, by the President or National Security Committee. Neither were newspapers, TVs, and radios were involved in recruiting us. Rather, when somebody out of us mentioned that our capital was in need to be defended, thousands came ready to fight for it.

Likewise, when one of the Chechens avered that one of their co-nationals was hungry and had no money to buy food at the other end of the city, all those listening to him understood the necessity of helping that person without any additional explanation.³²

Each type of context necessitates a different reaction in situations involving language, time, personal space, and interpersonal relationship. The dimensions of high- and low-context cultures refer to how people define themselves and their relationships with others. In this sense, Chechen people are highly social and cooperative while a social problem gathers Chechens together as a cohesive unit.

In a high-context culture, since nonverbal communication becomes significant many things are left unexpressed. Words and word choice also become important in higher cultural-context communication because a few words can communicate tangled information very effectively to in-group members. In contrast, in a lower-context community, the communicator needs to be much more explicit and the value of a single cultural word is not as important as it is in a high-context society.

Gender and Conflict

The war in Chechnya can also be viewed as a war between the militarized Russian leadership and aggressive Chechen masculinity (Eichler, 2006). The notion of “patriotic Russian masculinity” was promoted by the Russian leadership, especially during the first Chechen war. During the second Chechen war, however, the roles were reversed as modern Russian masculinity fought against the “terrorist” Chechen masculinity.³³

The experience and meaning of conflict may differ from male to female (Cohn & Enloe, 2003). Analyzing the role and impact of gender in the Russo-Chechen conflict is important because it pervades all aspects and levels of this conflict. The gender dimension links social context to specific conflicts, and influences conflict processes directly. The impact of war on the gender factor in Chechnya is remarkable. The gender-

related issues of the Russo-Chechen wars, in fact, are even much more important, as well as more complex than I discuss here.

During the Russo-Chechen wars women have suffered more than other segments of the Chechen society. At the beginning of the wars, a number of Chechen women left their homes, and took up arms with the male fighters. Daniyar Dadashev discussed this reality as follows:

Our women are very patriotic. They fought with us, and they are still fighting with us. Nobody asked them to take up arms when the war started. But, they chose this option voluntarily because they love their country and people. They sacrificed with their families, with their personal happiness and future.

Today only a few of these women combatants are left—the rest have either been killed or have returned home. There were many rapes of Chechen women by Russian soldiers during both wars, but it was hard to determine the exact number because women were too ashamed to report the perpetrators to the police. In many cases, the informants of this study claim that the women were attacked by their rapists in front of their close relatives. In this regard, the words of Didar Aslanbekov are poignant:

Chechen women have always faced hardships. They know how to live on move, how to bear a child on the run, and how to raise them in motion. This is an ability they obtained from their historical experience. However, this war was a challenge for them too. This war was exceptionally harsh to them. This war devastated the core of Chechen families, left thousands of women widows, and children orphans. The family concept of Chechens has shifted significantly because of the war.

Barat Afiz, also argued that the Russian authorities behaved with a clear intentionality in their attitudes toward the Chechen women. He said that the parallels between the Serbian

government's rape warfare and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and the Russian military strategy in Chechnya are uncanny:

The Russians are working on making our women prostitutes. One hundred thirty seven Chechen women became sex slaves during the past two years. This is a pre-planned policy of the Russians. They deliberately ruin our sacred values in order to enslave us forever.

Mubarak Hacıyev, also, noted the objectification and enslavement of young Chechen women by Russian authorities:

In my village alone, 12 girls got lost in 2003, and they are not found yet. It is very likely that they were kidnapped and forced into sex slaves.

Mola Ramazanov also claimed that the Russian military has a deliberate strategy of "rape warfare" to destroy Chechen culture by destroying Chechen women:

In 2001, in the filtration camps, about 8,000 Chechen women were raped. This is the number that is known. We believe that the unknown number is much higher.

In numerous cases, women left behind as single parents due to the war, work about twenty hours a day to feed their children. Women's lives have been especially hard in refugee camps where they are solely dependent on random humanitarian aid from outside. The war in Chechnya can also be described as a form of psychological warfare on women.

The war in Chechnya also resulted in young women becoming terrorists. Said Sulimov commented on the "Black Widow" group of women who became suicide bombers:

They are those who are raped by the Russian soldiers, and those who lost their fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, or children. What else could force them to death otherwise? They simply take revenge!

In Chechnya, today women's rights are seriously violated. The Kremlin-backed Chechen President Kadyrov also oppresses women rights by advocating Islamic values and law against women in the republic—the authenticity of which is also seriously questioned by the informants of my study. Arzu Samedov argued that Kadyrov advocates polygamy and encourages men to take more than one wife. Although the Constitution of the Russian Federation guarantees equal rights to both men and women and outlaws polygamy, Kadyrov is the sole authority to decide because he is Kremlin-backed and untouchable.

This is a simple way of justifying the killings of Chechen males who are in opposition. The rest is offered a reward of polygamy. Ramzan also tries to suppress the possibility of having a social problem arising out of single-parent families. He is doing a cultural genocide in Chechnya.

Moscow sees him as an effective leader to quell the rebel insurgency in the republic, thus closing its eyes to Kadyrov's autocracy. So far, Kadyrov has been effective in applying his own rules in Chechnya that violates human rights, especially those of women. Dada Emirov commented on this topic as follows:

The Russians blame us that we are Wahhabis, extremists, terrorists, or at least radical Islamists. Don't they see what Ramzan does do to the women in Chechnya? What Ramzan is doing is not compatible with Islam, but by closing its eyes to Ramzan's affairs in Chechnya the Russian leadership pretends as if it respects our culture and religion. Rather together with Ramzan Russia itself tortures our people.

During the second Chechen war, Russian military forces and the officers of security agencies engaged in mass killings. In one particular incident, the Staropromyslovski massacre, fifty innocent civilians were slaughtered.³⁴ Mubarek Hacıyev commented that many of the Staropromyslovski victims were women.

If you are asking for an example of a massacre of women, one happened in Staropromyslovski. Chechen women among others were killed by the Russian soldiers without any mercy.

Women are also used as pawns in military campaigns as many men kidnap, rape, and threaten their lives to gain advantage over their enemy. Much of this terrible conduct was committed by Russian armed forces as they kidnapped female relatives of prominent Chechen officials and rebel leaders. Mola Ramazanov discussed with me how women are disposable assets in this conflict in the following way:

They kill our women; they rape our women; they also kidnap our women to fight us. They trade with our women like slaves. This is the worst form of mistreatment. Then they call us bandits and terrorists. You tell me who is a bandit: them or us?

Nowadays, similar behavior toward women persists in Chechnya. Mubarek Hacıyev said that in today's Chechnya, the situation is mostly the same if not worse, and in most cases, the crimes are not even investigated.

Women are kidnapped on a regular basis, some are found alive and others are found dead. Some disappearances are never investigated and such investigations usually yield no results. In the relatively stable Chechen milieu of the past twenty years, these kinds of crime occur frequently. Since law enforcement is lacking in most rural villages kidnappers mostly go unpunished, which gives them the ability to constantly carry out their criminal activities with impunity. Women are

also kidnapped to extract intelligence information about rebel plans and potential attacks.

Chechen society has been transformed by the war into an environment in which changes include, but are not limited to, a dramatic gender imbalance in which women far outnumber men. Anar Habibi said that gender violence is adopted as a “way of life” that is also a result of patriarchy and lateral violence as well as the legacy of war since the extended period of war and violence have affected people’s psychologies and behavior:

The war made people tough and uncompassionate. Today, the consequences of violence and bloodshed of the wars manifest themselves in violent family affairs. Couples, but especially men have no tolerance. A Chechen man was much different before the war. A Chechen man always respected his wife. Today, the situation is a bit different.

The manifestations of Kadyrov style *shariat* and *adat* in Chechnya reflect some fundamental changes in Chechen life over the last fifteen years. However, these changes are more the product of the turbulence produced by both Chechen wars that empowered Kadyrov rather than the result of true Islamic law, which respects and protects women’s rights. Women in Chechnya live in a state of fear. Indeed, the Kremlin’s uppermost priority is security in Chechnya; human rights, especially women’s rights, are secondary.

The Russo-Chechen wars not only brought disaster to the women of Chechnya as well as Russia, but they also appeared to be an opportunity for women to demonstrate their importance as skillful activists, advocates, combatants and conflict resolvers. Not surprisingly, the first and most effective wave of civil society protests against Russian military operations in Chechnya was initiated by the women of Russia. The soldiers’ mothers initiated a strong anti-military non-violent social movement in Russia that

undoubtedly influenced the Kremlin's ongoing as well as future Chechen policies alongside public opinion in Russia.

In addition, many female human rights advocates and journalists were renowned for their activities during the Chechen wars. Many of them such as Estemirova, Sadulayeva, and Politkovskaya, sacrificed their lives in order to bring peace and human rights to the people of Chechnya.

Cultural Diversity and Issues Dividing Both Parties

In Chapter 3, I discussed the causes of disunity among the Chechens in the light of some theories. Nonetheless, it is necessary to address other key aspects of this issue. When considering the issues dividing the parties the first question to address is who are the actual parties. Do the parties comprise the Chechen people and the Russian authorities, the Chechen guerrillas and the Russian people, the Chechen people and the Russian people, or some Chechens and some Russians? Obviously, there might be a number of possible combinations, and therefore a number of blurred boundaries of hostilities forming a complex picture.

In the previous chapter, I discussed the key leaders of the parties to the Russo-Chechen conflict. It is also important to determine who are the core parties to the Russo-Chechen war. To do so the issues and objectives dividing the people should be defined first. Above all, parties can be individuals, groups, organizations, societies, and states. In the case of the Russo-Chechen conflict, there are a number of parties. Since we are discussing a protracted ethnic conflict, the corresponding level is an intergroup one and the relevant units are groups or societies (Figure 3). When I asked a question about who

are the primary parties in the Russo-Chechen war, I received slightly different answers, but the most frequent answer was, “It is us and the Russian state.” When I asked the research participants what they meant by “us,” they reported that all Chechens were against the Russia state. Ramzan Kadyrov and his supporters were regarded by this study’s informants as part of the Russian state.

Obviously, there are some internal subgroups, but the core parties are the Russian government and the Chechen nationalists. The core parties can be distinguished according to a number of factors such as their positions, interests, and needs. The material or quantitative power of the parties is highly asymmetric. Oruj said that the Russian state machine is far more powerful than the Chechen freedom fighters, which makes the latter choose a guerrilla-style fighting strategy.

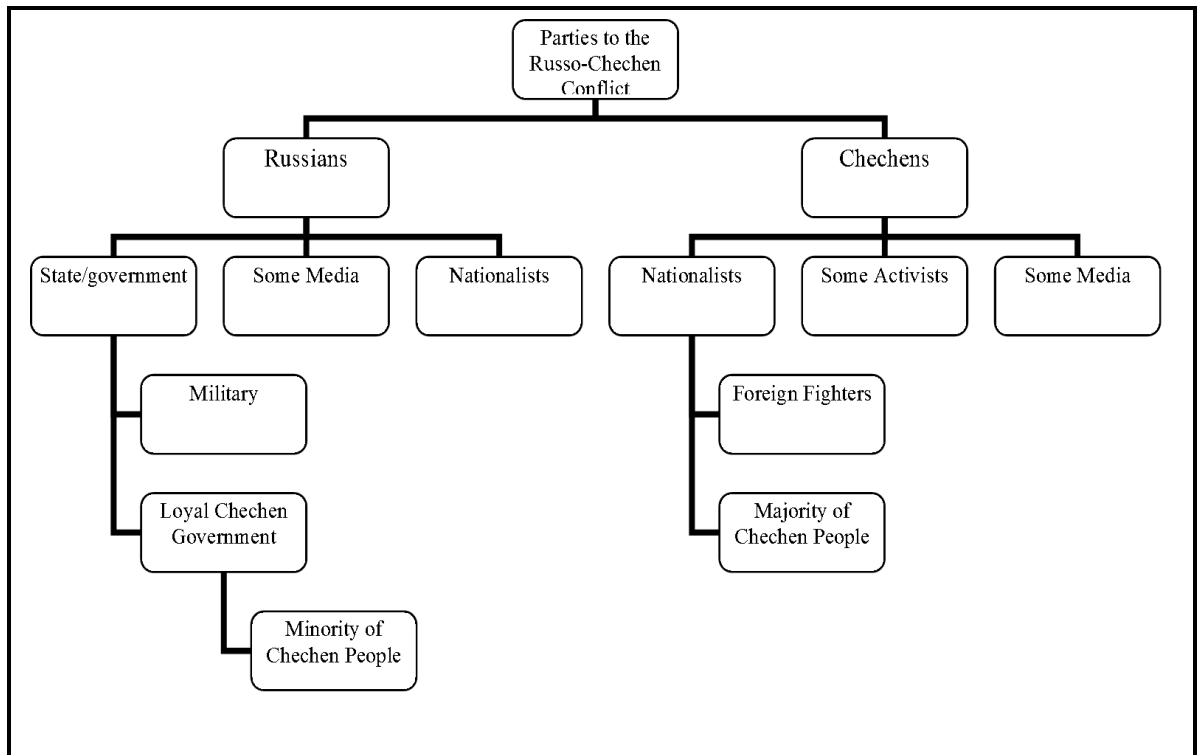
Our strategy is to bring us the best results. This is the goal. War means strategy and tactics. We don’t fight for a show; we fight to get a result. To lose minimum, to gain maximum- this is the objective. Unlike the Russians, we don’t have jets, rockets, and helicopters. However, when they can’t get us, they choose to get the civilians.

Sovereignty issues are related to the reasons parties claim they are waging war with each other. Mola Ramazanov noted that Chechens have defined the major issue as independence or freedom.

For us, the most important issue is our independence. Chechnya should be free and independent. This is what we need, what we want, and what we fight for and die for. This is our right, and everybody knows and acknowledges this except for Russia. Independence is our truth; all the rest is nuances. We will fight until we reach our goal.

Russians perceive the issue as the necessity to preserve the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation. Both parties see their goal as legitimate. Apparently, those goals are incompatible with each other bringing about the protracted nature of the conflict.

Figure 3: Parties to conflict



As the study's informants pointed out there are two major groups in Chechnya: (1) the freedom fighters; and (2) the Kadyrovtsy—the unionists. Azru Samedov said that the unionists have no goal incompatibility with the Russians, rather they cooperate with the Russian state.

Kadyrov and his people do everything what Moscow wants. They are Moscow's servants. We do not see anything that Kadyrov does for the

people of Chechnya. Absolutely nothing good! He has ruined our country. The Russians ruined us physically, but he ruined us both physically and morally. In order to consolidate his power he is more pro-Russian than the Russians themselves are.

On the Russian part of this conflict, the major party is the state although there are also a number of different groups whose goals may not overlap. Thus, the parties in conflict primarily are the Russian state and the Chechen freedom fighters.

The objectives of the parties in conflict involve clashes between contradictory interests within the Russian Federation, for self-determination on the part of the freedom fighters and for territorial integrity on the part of the Russian state. The Chechen group struggles for changing the political status quo in the Federation. The Russian party, however, works to maintain the political status quo in the country.

While the Russian state enjoys all the available elements of a mighty state machinery Chechen nationalists empower themselves via foreign support. In this sense, the issue of foreign fighters in Chechnya was especially delicate towards the end of the first Chechen war and afterwards. Perhaps, the best-known foreign insurgent in Chechnya was Khattab, who commanded the Arab Mujahedeen. There was his own army, along with a group of Arabs and other foreign fighters who came to participate in the war. In an informal conversation with a student of English from Saudi Arabia at the University of Manitoba who taught History back home, I discovered that Khattab was known well even in Saudi Arabia. To my cautious question whether Khattab was a Wahhabi, Feisal answered as follows:

No. He was not. Wahhabism is an artificial term created by those who

dislike Islam. Neither Khattab, nor others are Wahhabis. Simply, there are people with different understandings.⁹

Undoubtedly, Khattab's actions rather than his perceptions created his fame among the Chechens. Khattab's units were credited with several devastating ambushes on Russian military columns in the mountains of Chechnya. In 1998, Khattab and Basayev created the Islamic International Peacekeeping Brigade, also known as the Islamic Peacekeeping Army, which they led the following year to Dagestan, a neighboring Autonomous Republic of Russia populated by Muslims, causing the deaths of at least several hundred people, and contributing to the commencement of the second Chechen war in 1999.³⁵ Dada Emirov commented that the Islamic International Peacekeeping Brigade was mostly composed of non-Chechens.

The fighters were mostly non-Chechens. Many of them were from Dagestan. Others were from different parts of the world. There were many Arabs and Turks in the unit as well.

My attempts to learn about who the most important leader in that unit were fruitless. Nonetheless, the crucial point relates to the role of culture in forming and influencing the issues as well as framing interests and priorities, which is of vital importance for both conflict analysis and resolution. The Chechen freedom fighters can hardly be viewed as being strategic game players or utility maximizers. Rather, they are actors with a simple non-material goal and clear objective—*independence and freedom*. The study subjects made this point clear on every occasion. Below are some phrases quoted from different subjects:

⁹ There are different opinions about Wahhabism among Muslims themselves. However, my intention is not to discuss this issue here in detail.

“We are not fighting for gold, but we are fighting for independence” (Asim Behramov). “Our primary goal is our freedom, not oil” (Oruj Osman). “We are dying for values, not for wealth” (Sadat Seyidov). “Let them take money, leave us honor” (Mola Ramazanov).

The source of their strength is neither a strong economy nor heavy armament, rather it is the people of Chechnya; otherwise the freedom fighters could hardly survive. In this sense, the cultural values of the Chechen people are pivotal in maintaining their struggle with the Russians. Said Sulimov stressed that being a Chechen means being free:

Chechens were good fighters in the past, and they are good fighters now. While comparing the deadly Circassian attacks to those of the Chechens even Yermolov said that the former was like the bite of mosquitoes in comparison with the latter. However, Chechens are especially good fighters when they are fighting for their freedom.

The strong emotional bonds of the freedom fighters to the local population of Chechnya and Ingushetia, as well as the support they receive from other nationalities of the Northern Caucasus make it almost impossible for Russian soldiers to eliminate the Chechen resistance entirely. Said Sulimov noted that the cultural environment in the Northern Caucasus is not in favor of Russia:

Who wants Russia in the region? I do not talk about the regional regimes created by Moscow; rather I am talking about the people of the Caucasus. All the people living in Chechnya’s neighborhood dislike Russians. They support Chechens in their struggle with Russia. At the very least, they support us because they dislike Russia. There might be a couple of exceptions to who need Russia in the region to check their neighbors. However, I doubt that anybody prefers Russia to Chechnya.

A number of values are salient for the Chechen people and include: (1) religion; (2)

nationalism/patriotism; and (3) fatalism. The rise of nationalism in Chechnya will be discussed as a separate theme in Chapter 8.

Religion historically has played a significant role in organizing the defense of the region against the Russians. *Nakhshibandi* and *Gadiriyya tarigats* were the most important binding religious streams that kept the mountain peoples together and inspired them to fight. Today, those streams are not as strong in Chechnya as a century ago, however, an overall religious revival in the country is so significant that many compared it to that of the nineteenth century. People believe in the holiness of fighting for their motherland in the name of God. The power of this belief is overwhelming. The interviewees stressed that they are not *Wahhabis*, rather they are simple Muslims fighting for their rights and honor, and if they die while defending their motherland, this will be the major reward for them.

Almost all the Chechens believe in their own fate, which keeps them acquiescent and silent. They believe that protesting God in any way is unacceptable. Rizvan, a former Chechen fighter, lost his eyes and his right hand in the battle and moves with the help of his friends, but he is a happy and healthy person. Ramzan says that this is a gift to him from God. Rizvan agrees with Ramzan and adds:

If we eventually die, then we may die anywhere, in the war field, at home, or while sleeping. Why not to chose an honorable life and a noble death.

As these people display no fear of death avoiding the pains and pleasures of life because of their cultural values, setting dangerous goals and fighting for those goals is likely to be easy.

War and Identity Formation/Identity Change

War is a force that drives a dynamic social process. Since identities are dynamic, i.e., they can change, form, and reform, the war in Chechnya has created new identities or new attributes of identity. On the one hand, culture and identity play a role in sustaining the Chechen struggle with the Russians. On the other hand, the war plays an important role in reviving, generating, and sustaining new cultural attributes. All the accounts of the war in Chechnya are not simply mythic, involving a warlike people that fights and defeats an enormous enemy. Rather, this is an historical process involving the political, socio-economic, and psychocultural life of a people. As this is a social process, identity regeneration is inevitable.

The Chechen subjects of this study have highlighted the identity problems they experienced during the tsarist, Soviet, and post-Soviet eras. Their overall opinion is that Chechens have been forced to deliberately change their identity by the Russian authorities. During the entire Soviet period there was no single Chechen school in Chechnya. In addition, the alphabet of the Chechen people has changed three times. Chechens have managed to preserve the core of their identity through such mechanisms as ethnocentrism and Sufi Islam.

The needs for identity should be met in order to avoid any undesirable consequences. Identity needs contain a number of elements: (1) needs for similar roots, belonging, support, esteem, and association with similar humans; (2) needs for understanding social forces; (3) needs for social transparency; (4) needs for a sense of purpose; (5) needs for realizing potentials; and (6) needs for self-expression and the like. According to Johan Galtung (1990), there are also some need satisfiers like political

activity, religion, ideology, jobs, and leisure, among others that are necessary in evaluating if the identity needs are met. The members of a group that has nationalist feelings and aspirations believe that a national government would provide a better means of satisfying all those needs (Galtung, 1990).

The Russo-Chechen wars have influenced both Chechen and Russian identities to varying degrees. The Chechen identity has been influenced at least in three ways: (a) national identity; (b) ethnic identity; and (c) religious identity. The Russian national identity has also been affected by the war in some way since the Russian society questioned the existing structure of the Russian Federation.

National identity

The Chechen *national identity* has been influenced by three major trends in the republic: (1) separatism; (2) radical Islamism; and (3) pro-Russian unionism. Mola Ramazanov argued that Chechnya's identity as a free nation emerged from the first Russo-Chechen war. Chechnya became de facto independent when the Khasavyurd Agreement was signed by the parties in 1996:

For the first time in the past two hundred years Chechnya became so independent. Never before have we succeeded so much to get rid of Russians and their rule. Never before, did we so much to see that we can live by ourselves and without an outside influence. We finally regained our identity as an independent nation.

When the Chechen separatists declared a new, sovereign, and free national identity-citizenship of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria in 1991, they also changed the name of their republic from the Chechen Autonomous Republic to the Chechen Republic of

Ichkeria. This cultural identity carries an enormous force of pride so that many Chechens still identify themselves with that republic. The Chechens started to use many national words, such as “Nokhchi,” “Vaniakh,” etc. in their everyday language. Rizvan pointed that the national spirit became very elated in the country:

Having your own national state gives you pride, confidence, and self-esteem, as well as responsibility to preserve it. To protect it is such a feeling that you cannot resist it. When you understand that you are needed, you don't hesitate a minute.

Second, a significantly large group of radical Islamists emerged in the country. The role of the foreign insurgents was significant in the process of creating radical Islamists in Chechnya. Young people especially were influenced easily by the ideas that arrived in the country with the foreigners. Moreover, Russia's harsh policies against the people of Chechnya made that process faster and easier. In Chechnya, there was no need to point at the enemy, who was apparent to everyone. Hence, the radical Islamists' efforts to manipulate peoples' belief against the invaders was not difficult.

Third, a pro-Russian unionism emerged as a response to those who declared Chechnya independent. This is a peculiar identity to those who are ethnic Chechens with Russian citizenship. In fact, throughout Soviet rule, there were always Chechen communist leaders who cooperated with Moscow. History displays that the Kremlin can always find people in Chechnya to cooperate with and represent the national power. However, the loyalty of that Chechen group to Russia is not deemed sufficient. The additional condition is the ability of that group to effectively control the territory and people of the country for the maintenance of stability. Although Russia supported many pro-Russian persons in Chechnya in order to bring the administration of the republic

under its control, it finally insisted on supporting Kadyrov, who has been successful in exercising his power in Chechnya.

Ethnic Identity

Understanding conflict dynamics requires the knowledge of identity formation and re-formation as well as its shift in salience (Kriesberg, 1998:60). Ethnic identity, which serves as a basis for the mobilization and organization of people in Chechnya whether perceived as primordial or socially constructed, has played a key role in the Russo-Chechen conflict. It is a symbol unifying the individual and common interests of the Chechens. The shared cultural identity of the Chechen people who belong to this particular social category have a particular land, Chechnya, in common. Mola Ramazanov pointed out that homogeneity increases ties among the Chechens, which become bonded in the case of an external threat to the group, while the ease of communication makes those ties even stronger.

Being a Chechen is important to me, and it is not because I am superior to others, but because I am born as Chechen. This means that I am together with the people like me sharing the same motherland, speaking the same language, respecting the same customs, and helping each other.

The Chechen *ethnic identity* acquired a salient meaning with the start of the war. Rizvan said that nationalism arose throughout the republic to such an extent that almost all of the people of Chechnya demanded independence.

We are different from the Russians in all respects. Why should Russia rule us? Why should somebody else rule us? We can rule ourselves, and resolve our own problems. We are capable of being successful in any sense.

Moreover, Said Sulimov pointed out that the salience of ethnic identity increased Chechens' aspirations for self-rule, therefore, they no longer wanted to be part of Russia.

We, Chechens have no ethno-cultural similarities with Russians. No linguistic ties something like between Byelorussians and Russians doesn't exist as well. There is nothing available in common to keep us together with Russians.

The common ethnic bonds of the people of Chechnya enhanced their understanding of the self, and subsequently the other as well. This insight gave the leadership of Chechnya a powerful political potency. Cultural ideologies of ethnicity also developed in the country as a response to a potential threat by Russia. However, the salience of ethnic identity started to diminish with the end of the first Chechen war in 1996 when the Russian physical presence in Chechnya disappeared.

Religious Identity

The Chechens have been Muslims for centuries. Religion was the primary social value in the region before Soviet rule. With the arrival of the Soviets its salience started to diminish gradually. Sadat Seyidov spoke to me about the role of religion in the Russo-Chechen conflict:

Probably you know that our fathers were religious. They were living in harmony before the Russians came to our region. When the Russians appeared in our lands religion became the main instrument to unify people into a single struggle to resist the Russians. People elected Imams to organize the struggle and lead them. Later, especially during the Soviet times, most mosques in Chechnya were demolished. An atheistic ideology forbade traditional religion.

Religious identity became salient in Chechnya during the first Chechen war, and has become ever more powerful since that time. Religious rituals became more common in the republic and Islamic knowledge among the Chechen people rose significantly with the first Chechen war. In fact, Sadat Seyidov said that before the war the number of people following religious prescriptions among the Chechens was considerable:

Although many Chechens believed in God, just a few were following the rules. All boys were circumcised, for example, but in most cases people were celebrating this by drinking vodka. The old people were fasting, but younger people were not. In many regards, people were not aware of true Islam.

Moreover, Mazen Osman claimed that the religious knowledge of those who lived according to the rules of Islam was not enough in the early 1990s, primarily due to Soviet communist ideology:

My parents fled Chechnya in the 1930s, and they came to Jordan. I was born in Jordan. When Chechnya became independent [in 1991], I came to Grozny where I found my relatives. I stayed with them and after a short while, I established my own business. I found people around me quite religious: they were doing five prayers a day, giving their *zakat*, fasting...But I observed that most of them did not know even the elementary rules of Islam. For example, they were not taking showers when necessary. Rather they were taking showers when they felt they were dirty. Many of them did not know what *gusl* meant. When I explained to one of them that a man should take a shower after a sexual relationship with his wife, and this was an Islamic rule, he became very surprised. Then, he almost became crazy, because he never did that...

As the religiosity among the people rose in Chechnya, they felt more of a need to learn about Islam. The people started to learn different types of Islam that conflicted with one another. Many started to learn Islam from the radicals. This in part gave rise to the number of radical Islamists in the republic. Religion acquired prominence especially

during the second Chechen war when the foreign insurgency became intense in the region. The foreign insurgents flowed into the region either for the adventure of being in the war or because of their religious fervor. Amid Gusarin, one of the foreign fighters in Chechnya told his story to me as follows:

I was a student in Syria. However, I am not from Syria. I studied Islam there, and learnt Arabic. One day, I read about Chechnya, and Russia's atrocities there. It was very hard for me to agree with what the Russians were doing there. I decided to go to Chechnya to fight the Russians. First, I came to Azerbaijan, from where it was easy to reach Chechnya. I passed to Dagestan and then to Chechnya. I spent more than a day in the forest hoping to find some mujahedeen. I then was stopped by some of them. They took me to their leader. He asked me whether I was a Russian spy. Then I recited to him some verses from the Koran that I learned in Damascus, and mentioned that calling a *mu'min* infidel is forbidden in Islam. He hugged me and cried. Next day, the Russians attacked us. They were shooting hard. We started to retire up to the mountains in the woods. I was scared to death and lost my consciousness. One of them [as I learnt later] put me on his shoulders and ran. I was there a few more days but couldn't contribute to them. Then the leader talked to me in privacy. He said that I was a good Muslim, but it was too early for me to fight, and he asked me to return back home. I agreed.

In addition, a question arises about whether Russia has a new national identity, or it has preserved an imperial one. The Chechen wars, especially the first, showed that the Russian soldiers were quite unwilling to fight in Chechnya. Nor did their parents want them to be in this country. The last time Russia invaded a foreign nation was in 1920 after the October Revolution.¹⁰ From 1924 to 1991, a number of military invasions took place in the Baltic countries (1940) and Poland (1939), and also Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968), but the legal entity committing those acts was the USSR. When

¹⁰For example, Russia invaded Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia in 1920.

Russia marched into Chechnya in 1994, it was an independent state many of whose citizens were not even sure about the USSR's demise.

Theoretically, the secessionist Chechens and nationalist Russians—even Russia's authorities—must have the same national identity since they all are citizens of the Russian Federation. This sounds odd yet the secessionist Chechens do not accept this labeling. The Russian authorities, however, have another formula: declaring those who do not want to live within Russia to be terrorists.

Revival of the Chechen Language

The revival of the Chechen language is one of the strongest signs of the national character of the Chechen movement. The conflict has influenced the development of the Chechen language significantly, which undoubtedly is also of political significance for the parties. Alibek Hajiyeu pointed out that during the Soviet era the Chechens did not have any national schools using their mother tongue, rather Chechen children attended schools with Russian as the language of instruction.

We never had schools in Chechen. We did not study in our native language. Rather, we always studied in Russian schools. In Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan or Siberia, does not matter, it was all the same. We had our own literature in Chechen published with the Russian script, as well as our own newspaper, but a school.

The choice of the Chechen alphabet is especially crucial for both Chechnya and Russia because it defines the cultural distance between the parties to the conflict. Before the Russian conquest, most writing in Chechnya consisted of Islamic texts and clan histories, usually written in Arabic but sometimes also in Chechen, using the Arabic script. The

Latin alphabet began to be used instead of Arabic and Chechen in the mid-1920s. In 1938, the Cyrillic alphabet was imposed on Chechens by the USSR, in order to tie the Chechen people closer to Russia. The two reforms of the Soviet alphabet were successful repression mechanisms: in each case, all books printed in the old script were destroyed, impairing the cultural heritage of the people. Alibek Hajiyev noted that every time a new alphabet was adopted, the people became illiterate until they learned the new one:

Making an entire nation illiterate overnight by changing the alphabet was the very anti-Chechen Soviet policy. It was part of the repressive policies against the Chechens that started with physical killing and ended up with the cultural strangulation of Chechens. The Cyrillic alphabet was imposed on us shortly after when tens of thousands of our compatriots got shot by the Soviet security forces. All these events completed a single whole.

In 1991, the Latin alphabet gained a new importance for the Chechens as a result of Chechnya's unilateral declaration of independence. It was mostly thought of as a means to alienate the Chechens from Russia, who insisted on the use of the Cyrillic alphabet in Chechnya even though the Chechens preferred using the Latin alphabet. The revival of the Chechen alphabet, and its adoption would mean the weakening of Russia's cultural influence in Chechnya. Hence, Chechen nationalist leaders pushed hard to change the alphabet. However, the process of transition from one alphabet to another requires a considerable amount of time in which to educate people as well as funds to publish new books and newspapers. It was practically impossible for the Chechen government to carry out alphabet-related reforms immediately. Denilkhan Saidin said that when Kadyrov came to power in Chechnya those trends ceased:

It [alphabet change] is a costly procedure. Imagine an entire heritage is

published in Cyrillic. Libraries are full of those books. It's impossible to replace all of them with the books with the Latin alphabet within a short time. Time and funds are needed to do so. The transition must be slow and gradual, so that people adjust themselves to that change.

Mola Ramazanov commented that the Chechen people used Chechen as a medium of communication throughout the Soviet era to preserve it from disappearing:

We preserved our language, because we do not speak Russian, if we do not have to. At home, we always speak Chechen. In the Soviet times, our children went to school where they studied in Russian, but when they came back home they left Russian at school. Therefore, it is impossible to find a single Chechen who does not speak the mother tongue.

However, the Chechen language was not used officially or was it supported by special programs so that it could preserve itself. There was no school in the Chechen language in the Soviet Union as Chechen children attended Russian schools. This was part of the Russification and assimilation policy of Moscow against the Chechens to tie them directly to Russia and Russian culture. Hassan Diab argued that the use of Russian, at least at school, and Cyrillic as the alphabet kept the Chechens apart from the other Muslims, especially Arabs and Turks:

In order not to be able to read Arabic means and not to be able to read the Qur'an our alphabet was changed. There were other reasons as well; however, the primary goal of Moscow's alphabet policy was to deprive us of our ability to read the Qur'an. Moreover, it is intended to alienate the Chechens from other Muslims of the world. Although we had now a common alphabet with the other Muslims of the Soviet Union, it did not mean much because they were also oppressed.

Nevertheless, the Russo-Chechen wars have positively influenced the development of the Chechen language, particularly concerning grammar and textbooks. Mazen Osman (a

fictitious name) wrote and published a grammar of the Chechen language in New Mexico, in the United States. A textbook in Chechen for elementary school children was also written and published in Tbilisi, Georgia. I witnessed in Baku that unofficially, the Chechen children are taught in their mother tongue at the Chechen school. All of these factors refer to positive developments in terms of the revival of the written form of the Chechen language.

However, the recent official language-related developments in the Caucasus demonstrated that the Chechen language is not at the center of separatists' policy any more. According to Kavkazcenter.com (November 11, 2010), the choice of an official language of the Caucasus Emirate will be made between two languages-- Ottoman Turkish and Arabic. While the former is easier to learn because of its historical proximity to the Caucasus, the latter is the language of the Koran.

The Notions of State and War in Russian Culture¹¹

Perhaps those who were raised in the Soviet Union with the drill of Soviet ideology remember how the importance of the state and its army was taught to schoolchildren. Special "military preparedness" classes were designed to teach children at high schools how and why to fight. The notion that the state was superior to human values, and to preserve it at any cost was implicit in the Soviet tradition. In fact, it was the Russian tradition, rather than the Soviet one, since the Soviet Union was a newer and more modern form of the Tsarist Russia, and its army was the continuation of Imperial Russia's army. My intention here is not to prove these arguments or to write my

¹¹ In this section of the thesis, I do not intend to write about the popular culture of Russians since it is beyond the goals of this thesis.

memoires of the Soviet army, in which I was a mandatory soldier towards the end of the 1980s. However, I must note that once in different places of the Soviet Union or its sphere of influence-- Ukraine, Mongolia, Chita Oblast, Azerbaijan, and Georgia-- I observed the dramatically different attitudes of Russian and non-Russian Soviet soldiers to the Soviet state and its army. Arguably, the notion of state and the institution of war to be used as a means to preserve the former or make it stronger are deeply embedded in Russian culture and mentality. In this sense, this section's theme is discussed within the framework of psychoculture.

The Russian mentality of statehood—*gosudarstvennost*—is crucial to comprehend in order to determine the centrality of the state, Russian anti-Westernism, political ideology, intellectual tradition as well as Euroasianism. All of these elements are embedded in this concept. For centuries, this notion has become the core of the state's policy. Millions of lives were sacrificed in the name of the Soviet *gosudarstvennost*. Millions of civilians were exiled from their historic homelands when they were perceived as a threat to *gosudarstvennost* (Williams, 2002). The Chechen interviewees in this study expressed their belief that Russia's imperial ambitions did not subside even during the Soviet era. Said Sulimov commented that the Russian empire is preserved at the expense of other cultures:

You are asking about the Russian state and mentality of war. I think they are interlinked. Russian state means Russian empire. Russians created their empire centuries ago and the mentality is to preserve it. But they preserve it at the expense of others like us. When somebody like us is found to resist them, they try hard to eliminate the danger immediately. The whole system is built on this.

Denilkan Saidin also argued that all of the books that were regarded as dangerous in

challenging the mentality of the Soviet people were forbidden. Instead, those schoolbooks praising the greatness of Russians and their role as saviors were praised:

Even the history books that we read and studied in the Soviet schools praised the Tsarist army and officers. Fighting against the French, they were great; fighting against the Turks, they were great; fighting against the Swedish, they were great; fighting against the Mongolians, Uzbeks, Iranians, as well as against us, they were great. What is this about? Suvorov was great, Kutuzov was great, Nakhimov was great, Yermolov was great, as well as the Soviet commissars, and generals, Kalinin, Voroshilov, Kirov, etc. were great saviors. Moreover, all those non-Russian Tsarist and Soviet generals who fought for the Russian state or somehow served it were great. Isn't all this about the Russian imperial mentality?

However, despite the teachings of the history books, it was problematic for the Soviet state to induce a war culture mentality in the Soviet youth from different cultures with equal success. Said Sulimov said that the official ideology of creating a single Soviet culture was not entirely possible at least in part because of some strong local cultural influences:

Many Russians were resettled in the region to assimilate the local people, at least their neighbors. Ironically, over decades many of them got assimilated by the local culture. Clearly, local cultures, would it be Chechen, Georgian, or Azerbaijani, were more dominant.

In fact, military-related institutions such as military secondary schools, military TV programs, and newspapers, as well as universal mandatory military service, were instrumental in shaping or strengthening a patriotic mentality in the Soviet youth. As a former Soviet citizen, I remember *politizaniyatiya*—political classes held daily in the Soviet Army. Mandatory military service was embellished with teachings of faithful patriotism to the Soviet *gosudarstvennost*, a supranational notion. The inner military

mentality of Russian youth manifested itself every time that discussions of foreign capitalist ideology were taking place. According to this mentality, the Red Army was unarguably a savior that liberated many nations and integrated them in the Soviet Union, thus serving the state was a sacred duty.

Most Chechens I interviewed in Baku believe that at different points of history, some people among the Russian intelligentsia did not endorse Russia's imperialistic ideals. For example, Oruj Osman named Alexander Solzhenitsyn and his *Gulag Archipelago* in which Solzhenitsyn also discusses Chechens:

When Solzhenitsyn was a political prisoner in Kazakhstan, he encountered Chechens who were in exile. Then he wrote that there was one nation, which would not give in and would not acquire the mental habits of submission- and not just individual rebels among them, but the whole nation to a man. These were the Chechens.

With the outbreak of the Chechen war in the early 1990s, however, the "holiness" of the Red Army diminished to some extent. Mola Ramazanov shared his thoughts about the Russian political elites' mentality and Russian state's policy about the war in this way:

The factor of statehood is so sacred to Russia's political elite that they are ready to sacrifice millions for it, as they did many times in the history of Russia and the Soviet Union. They did kill millions in the 1930s throughout the Soviet Union, as well as after the war. Also, this love of the statehood in Russia suppresses all other democratic institutions as well as democratic ideas in Russia.

Russia is a multinational and multicultural country. Although a Russian national identity for all Russian people —*Rossianin*—is theoretically the same, their ethnic and religious identities are different. Ethnic Russians frequently express their unhappiness with the way ethnic identity is displayed in Russia. Sulim Salimov argued that all minorities in

Russia are called by their own names except ethnic Russians who are simply *Rossianin*—people of Russia—but not *Russkiy*—Russian:

The Russians themselves are unhappy with the situation. They, at least the nationalist Russians, argue that they are not *Rossianins*, rather they are *Russians*. However, the state cannot openly display its pan-Slavism by calling all the people of Russia as Russians. Therefore, it is more reasonable to identify everybody as *Rossianin*. But then as if the picture is anti-Russian.

Atakhan mentioned that at a rally against the Moscow communist putsch, Boris Yeltsin addressed the autonomous republics, saying that they should take as much independence as they can and put it into their pockets:

Yeltsin himself asked people of the autonomous republics of the Russian Federation to take as much sovereignty as possible, and we did what he said. He then came to us to take it back from us forcefully.

When Yeltsin became the president of the Russian Federation in 1991, he did his best to struggle with those ethno-cultural groups who wanted independence. As a democrat of the Russian political elite who preserved the Soviet state from the communist coup of Yanayev, Vice President of the Soviet Union, in August 1991, he did not or was not able to invent a political solution to the Chechen question in the 1990s. At that point, the historic moment for Russia was not very favorable, because it had a number of problems such as economic collapse, corruption, as well as political and social hardships, all of which influenced state policies in Russia. However, a historical truth is that Russia has been in continuous wars since the seventeenth century, which may have affected the socialization of the Russian peoples' mentality about war.

Not only the Chechen people but also other former Soviet people expect Russia's sudden attack on Chechnya or other former Soviet republics. They do not trust Russia's peaceful policy toward its neighbors, especially those whom Russia sees in its own backyard.¹² Russia's historical record of aggression against adjacent neighbors is well known. Moreover, unlike other imperial powers, Russia almost never sent its troops far away; rather, it preferred to expand outward from its center. Imperial Russia's expansionism towards the east and north was smooth and met almost no resistance from the local peoples. However, its advance towards the south and west was both difficult and costly.

Musa Manafov discussed Russia's wars with the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, probably because historically he believed that Chechnya's destiny was associated with the Ottoman victory over Tsarist Russia. He then stressed that history witnessed that Russia has been antagonistic and aggressive in its relationships with her neighbors:

Russians call us terrorists. Others call us belligerent people. But, all what we do is defend our country. Maybe we are a warlike people; maybe this is true. But, aren't we also peaceful? We become warlike only when somebody threatens our freedom, or somebody wants to invade our lands. Whom did we invade? Whose freedom did we threaten? No, not a single case! Now, look at the Russians. They started to invade others centuries ago. They invaded Kazan, Astrakhan, Central Asia, Kazakhstan, the peoples of Siberia, Sakha, peoples of the Far East, Caucasus, Ukraine... They are still invading. Didn't they invade Georgia last year? Don't they threaten the sovereignty of the former Soviet nations? They are the real aggressors, not us. Aggression, invasion, and brutality are the Russian mentality.

¹² Perhaps the Russian war versus Georgia in 2008 is a good example of this point.

The Chechens accuse the Russian state of an expansionism policy that has not changed for centuries, and argue that this has influenced the mentalities of Russian people, particularly as this policy has been praised by famous Russian literary people. Russian writers portrayed the mountain people, especially the Chechens, as a contemptible pedigree. There was no unanimity among the subjects of this study on the literary works of the Russian classics such as Pushkin and Lermontov, who lived in the first half of the nineteenth century. We-- the Soviet schoolchildren-- were taught that they were the greatest of the greatest. Undoubtedly, an average Chechen is well-familiar with Russian classical literature. Lermontov's poem, *Evil Chechen* or *Vicious Chechen*, was allotted first place. In his poem, Lermontov gave Russian readers sensational images of Chechens and the Caucasus that may have had a key impression on the cultural imagination of the peoples of his time in the first half of the 1800s. Hudayat Baysan argued that the influence of the poem on new readers might also be significant:

If somebody does not know whom Chechens truly are, and reads that poem, imagine its effect on the thoughts of that person. That is why the poem will have a negative influence on readers' minds forever. Nobody should say that it is just a simple literary work.

Arguably, Aleksandr Sergeyevich Pushkin's words "bow your snowy head down, Caucasus! Yermolov is coming" had a similar effect on readers in the early nineteenth century. The Russian people were influenced by the literary works of their contemporary writers especially when the communication process was slow. This was a key source of legitimacy for the tsarist policy of expansionism, as the people were influenced by the literary works of people who were quite famous especially in St. Petersburg, then Russia's capital.

The literary works were used to justify Russia's Great Power status and a greater role for it in the region. This process has been so long and smooth that the people of Russia almost never questioned the state's policy of waging wars. Russia has also lacked democratic institutions due to its peculiar path of development. Perhaps the first serious exception to publicly questioning Moscow's war policy is the Chechen wars, when the rising number of civil society organizations started to challenge Russian state policy. This simultaneously marked the beginning of the collapse of the superpower as many Russian subjects did not go to Chechnya to fight. Either their free will played a pivotal role, or their parents' influence was great. In some cases, other Muslim citizens of Russia objected to be sent to Chechnya on Russia's behalf.

Discrimination and Cultural and Structural Violence

Perhaps, the worse form of violence is embedded in cultures and structures, since preventing or eliminating it entails significant social and institutional change. Hence, discussing discrimination as well as cultural and structural violence within the framework of *Psychocultural Dimensions* is important.

Stereotypes also evolve out of the dominant group's fear of persons from minority groups. When people judge other groups based on their prejudices and stereotypes and treat them differently, they are engaging in discrimination. This discrimination can take many forms. There may be subtle or overt pressures that will discourage persons of certain minority groups from living in a neighborhood.

The sources of human rights abuses in Russia are not only directed at some individuals or groups but also certain institutions. The Chechen subjects of this study had

many stories about discrimination against their co-nationals in the Russian cities, especially in Moscow. Nabil Tagiyev points out how Chechens living in Moscow are detained on suspicion of trafficking arms and drugs:

On paper, we are also Russian citizens. We can go to Moscow as well as to any other city of the Federation to live or to work. However, in reality it is dangerous, and even sometimes impossible. Finding a small portion of drugs or armaments such as grenade, smoke box, or bullets in the pockets of Chechens detained in the police stations has a mass character. The reason is simple: the officers put them into the pockets of the poor detainees. If we have equal rights with the other citizens [of the Russian Federation], why then we are so mistreated? As a rule, detentions are conducted by the departments for fighting organized crimes under administrative districts of Moscow. Victims of police officers' arbitrariness, as a rule, do not apply to higher instances in fear of further persecution.

Obviously, there is an intentional abuse of Russia's Chechen citizens in the Russian cities. The Russian officers' involvement in the human rights abuses changes the character of the situation, making it more institutional than individual. Harram Diab, for example, told me a story of how Russian police arrested the brother of his friend who was ill:

Alkhan, a Chechen and resident of Chechnya, who was under treatment at the Moscow hospital decided to spend a weekend with his relatives. When he arrived to his brother's house, another car stopped nearby. Police officers in uniforms came out of it and said that it was necessary to check the documents. They went up to the apartment, checked documents, and then Alkhan and his relative were taken to the police department where they were put into different cells. Police employees took away and threw away all the medicines that Alkhan had to use. One of them said: "You, bandit, go back to Chechnya and have your treatment there!" Then Alkhan was handcuffed and his hands were put up to the bars. One of the police officers started to beat Alkhan into the chest with his knee, and another one - with a stick along his back. Later, in the hospital, Alkhan received treatment for his broken ribs, but no certificate on the injuries was given. The doctor said that they did not

give such certificates to those who were not officially registered in Moscow.

As can be observed from the story above, the hospitals in Moscow may also be part of the institutional abuse of the rights of the Chechens since they ignore facts of violence directed against Chechens due to the institutional rules. Ironically, it was not only the Russian cities that discriminated against the Chechens. Oleg Orlov, a Russian human rights defender had the following to say when asked “where do the mountain villagers flee to?” (Lagnado, 2003):

To the plains: to the Gudermes, Grozny, Selsky and Shalinsky regions. Naturally, they all want to get to the northernmost parts of Chechnya- the Sholkovsky, Naursky and Nadterechny regions, where it is most peaceful. However, we know that the local authorities there are not willing to take them in. They tell them straight: we will not register you here.

The local Chechen authorities probably tried to protect their immediate subordinates from getting involved in the war by blocking the emotional influence of the local people for the incoming refugees. However, it was also possible that the authorities ordered them to do so.

The Chechen subjects of this study expressed their sincere doubts about the Russian officers’ arbitrary behavior in their treatment of the Chechen citizens of Russia alone. Rather, they believe that occasional police officers’ arbitrariness is enhanced by the institutional rules and a publically hidden and covert state policy of Russia. For example, Tozun Bacheli noted that the Russian police believe that a good Chechen is a dead Chechen:

Irina, an ethnic Russian, the wife of the detained Honar, an ethnic Chechen, spent the whole day searching for her missing husband. Finally, she found him at one of the police stations. She demanded some information about her husband. Then Irina was sent to one of the rooms where a man in civil cloths was sitting. Irina said, "I am looking for my husband, Honar. He is lost. Do you have any information about him?" The police officer answered, "Probably he is in jail. How? Why? He is a Chechen, probably smoked heroin, and made injections. All Chechens are like that, aren't they?" Irina replied half-angrily, half-scared, "How can you say such things?" The police officer answered, "And how is it possible to explode houses where people live?" Irina said, "If somebody does that it does not mean that the entire Chechen people have to be blamed". Then he said: "A good Chechen is a dead Chechen. All Chechens have to be killed". Upon hearing these words, Irina broke into tears and said, "No, you are not right". The police officer yelled to her, "Go away, otherwise we can discuss this forever. Come later". Next day, at the police department the officer let Irina know that her husband was detained in the street and drugs were found in his pockets, that is why a case was started against him in line with the relevant article of the criminal code. In reality, Honar was detained early in the morning at his home, when Irina was out of the town for business. He was taken out of the bed, and taken to the police station by the police, where he was searched thoroughly. Nothing was found on him.

Mazen Osman also spoke about the state institutions and officers who have discriminated not only against Chechen males, but also against Chechen females and Chechen children:

Khadija with three children was registered at the apartment rented on Chistova Street in Moscow. Her husband, Ilias, was many times refused to be registered as a resident of Moscow, and one day Khadija was also refused re-registration. From the moment of moving into Chistova Street, the family was under the supervision of the inspector of the police department. The inspector visited the Chechen family a few times a day to oust them out of the city. He threatened Khadija with the expressions such as, "I will arrest you all and put you into the punishment cell", "I will shoot you, if you do not leave Moscow", "I will shoot you all, if any single house is exploded again in the city". One day late at night, the employees of the criminal investigation took Khadija to the police department where she was forced to sign papers the content of which she did not know. She was kept in the police department for a long time, and then released after being fined.

Similar stories are plentiful. Although it is practically impossible to test their authenticity, they are in conformity with the well-known truths revealed by human rights defenders in Russia, and by some objective Russian newspapers. Moreover, large-scale police operations directed against people from the Caucasus are actively supported by some mass media that are fostering xenophobia, Islamophobia, Caucasophobia, and Chechenophobia. However, as Aga Arshadin noted, Chechnophobia is at the center of all phobias:

Chechnophobia is at the center of racism and enmity in Russian cities. Chechens are the primary target in degradation, abuse, and attacks in Russia. If a person from the Caucasus is detained, the first thing will be checked is whether he is a Chechen or not. If a person identifies himself as Muslim, he will still be asked whether he is a Chechen Muslim or non-Chechen Muslim.

Caucasophobia is intimately linked to Chechenophobia, which in turn, is linked to Islamophobia. When some started to use Islam in Russia for political purposes, the negative attitude toward Islam grew in Russia. Khan Rafik noted that in reality it affects Chechens more than other Muslims with various ethnic origins:

Once Islam became an instrument of politics in Russia, Chechens started to suffer more. Unfortunately, Islam means something bad for many. Therefore, if somebody is Muslim, he is also Chechen.

The Russian mass media's role in fostering stereotypes of Islam was significant. Islam was equated with fundamentalism, and Chechens with Wahhabism. The official Russian policy was to create a climate of public opinion in which Islamic terrorism and Chechen separatism would be equated. Nabil Tagiyev noted that in Russia within the framework of the political conjecture "Islamic terror", it also means "Chechen terror":

Chechens are not the only Muslim population of Russia. There are bigger Muslim communities in Russia such as Tatars and Bashkirs. However, Moscow has managed to alienate Chechens from the rest by labeling them as “Islamic terrorists” or Wahhabis. The Russian authorities put so much effort in this that even a Russian child would say that Chechens are terrorists and Wahhabis.

Victims of racist attacks in Russia frequently complain that law enforcement officials are reluctant to register attacks as racist or fail to understand the serious implications of racially motivated violence. Police often advise the victims to report the attack as hooliganism. Mazen Osman noted that he encountered a situation in which he was a victim, and when he reported attack to the police, he was told that it was one of the countless acts of daily hooliganism:

I was beaten badly and insulted in front of the other people. The offenders used many bad and racist words to belittle me. Naively, I decided to report to police. However, my complaint was not taken seriously. I was told that I should ignore minor hooliganism. When I insisted on my position the police officers got angry, and I understood that I had to leave the police department quietly.

Therefore, when Chechens are beaten by racists, the victims almost never contact the police because they fear the police would rather take the side of the skinheads who are Russian than protect Chechens whom they consider as undesirable aliens. The Russian Ministry of Interior violates the rights of victims by its unwillingness to contain racism against its own subjects from Chechnya. Hudayat Baysan pointed out that people from the Caucasus, especially Chechens have lost their trust in the Russian police:

After being mistreated many times by the police upon victims’ reports of being attacked, people understood that it was better not to complicate the issue by contacting the law enforcement institutions. The victims told

their stories of how they were treated by the police to others warning them about the consequences. Thus, people are discouraged to ask legal help from the Russian police.

Perhaps this is the reason why the Chechen people in Moscow fear officials as much as they fear racist attacks. Police and other law enforcement officials routinely subject racial and ethnic minorities to harassment and intimidation and often respond with indifference to racist attacks. Victims of racist attacks frequently complain that law enforcement officials are reluctant to register attacks as racist or fail to understand the serious implications of racially motivated violence. Police often advise the victims to report the attack as “hooliganism”. In many cases, the detained people were beaten, tortured, and insulted at the police stations. It is quite common that during so called police “checks” valuable items and money disappear from flats and offices.

Starting in August 1999, which coincided with the period of military activity in Dagestan, and especially after the explosions of residential houses in Moscow on August 9 and 13, a mass violation of the human rights of citizens took place in Moscow and adjoining suburbs under the pretext of searching for terrorists and preventing new explosions. Mazen Osman commented that in most cases the Russian police did not differentiate between the criminals and civilians:

As if it was a norm to punish civilians from our region following any serious crime in Moscow. It was the easiest way for the police to keep themselves busy. “Well, if you cannot catch the terrorists, no worries, there are others from the same region. What is the difference?”

These actions have a systemic and centralized character and cannot boil down to single violations on behalf of political executives. They are meant to be an oppressive violation

of existing legislation and they are openly discriminatory, that is, they are aimed at persons of a certain racial and ethnic group. According to their character and trend, measures taken by Moscow's authorities do not bring about order, safety, and finding criminals. On the contrary, they contribute to the growth of tension, causing ethnic hostilities. Hudayat Baysan commented that the state is reluctant to protect the Chechens living in Moscow:

It is impossible that the Russian authorities do not have detailed information about how Chechens are treated in Moscow. There are tens of hundreds and even more serious cases of attack and violence that are replicated. Why measures are not taken? Why the same or similar crime takes places repeatedly? Why the policy does not change its attitude towards the victims?

In practice, when the newcomers arrive in Russia's cities they are registered selectively in the police stations. Ruslan Argushov explained that when people from Transcaucasia and the Northern Caucasus, especially the Chechens, are refused registration, even if there is a complete set of documents required for registration:

In Russia, people have to register with the local police where they live and work. One cannot find a good job, sometimes any job, if unregistered. In our case, we have to be registered anyway, because if a police officer stops us, we should show him a valid document, otherwise we are in trouble. However, the Russian authorities are not willing to register us. Sometimes they don't even explain why. Sometimes they look at into our eyes and say, "because you are a Chechen".

Authorities either offer no explanation for failing to register the Chechens or openly declare that they received an order to not register Chechens. Qasim Qaqash pointed out that frequently the police officers take away certificates of registration or put a

cancellation stamp on them without any explanations, forcing the owners to leave the city in order not to be detained:

I personally was registered in Moscow. However, I had to renew it every six months. It was before six months passed, and I showed up in the local police department to extend my registration. There I was told that they would not extend it. I objected to that and started to argue with them trying to change their decision. The police officer then took my documents, and cancelled my registration. I was left with no choice other than to leave Russia.

The majority of Chechens living in Russian cities know how to stitch the pockets of their trousers and jackets, both inside and outside, so that Russian servicemen do not “find” any drugs in their pockets. Tozun Bacheli said ironically, “Initially our people were bandits, they then became terrorists, and now they are becoming seamstresses.” This is a reflection of the existing direct, cultural, and structural violence in Russia against its Chechen subjects.

Prejudice and Stereotypes

Stereotypes involve generalizations about the typical characteristics of members of groups (Ross, 2007). It is about category-driven processing—thinking about others in terms of their membership in social categories. Prejudice is an attitude toward the members of some groups based solely on their membership in that group. People develop stereotypes when they are unable or unwilling to obtain all of the information they would need to make fair judgments about people or situations (Volkan, 1998).

A society may often innocently create and perpetuate stereotypes, but these stereotypes often lead to unfair discrimination and persecution of the other group of

people. Television, books, comic drawings, movies, and newspapers are all abundant sources of stereotyped characters. For much of its history, most of the Russian media portrayed Chechens as unintelligent, terroristic, or violence-prone (Russell, 2005). Diverse genres of Russian popular culture have created popular understandings of the Caucasian violence in Russia thus naturalizing Moscow's military actions in Chechnya (Grant, 2005). Prejudice against Chechens has been encouraged because Russians view these stereotyped pictures of Chechens.

The dominant characters and portrayal of Chechens in the classical Russian tales are negative (Grant, 2005). They are portrayed as mountain robbers who abuse their women, kill each other in vendettas, and hold Russian prisoners for ransom. In many tales, the Chechen men are depicted as bloodthirsty (Grant, 2005). Although they are also described as brave warriors and friendly to Russian travelers in other tales, the negative image is mostly internalized by Russian people.

A remarkably similar perception of the recent Chechen war now prevails among Russian citizens. Some undoubtedly consider Chechens to be a vicious and wicked people, who are both robbers and terrorists. Naturally, these images of the Chechen people are reinforced by some media. However, it must be noted that they have deep roots in Russian literature as these images were created as early as the first half of the 1800s.

Even Aleksandr Pushkin, the most famous Russian poet, in his unfinished poem *Tazit* (1829) used *Circassian* as an all-purpose name for mountain people but highlighted Chechens as especially warlike people. Said Sulimov commented that initially

Circassians were known in Russia better than Chechens, and this might be the reason for Pushkin's preference for the word to label the mountainous people of the Caucasus:

In the Northern Caucasus, the first hard blow on the Russian invaders was caused by the Circassians. Later, Chechens overshadowed the resistance of all nationalities of the North Caucasus to Russians. Perhaps Pushkin's intention was to highlight Chechens within the general term of Circassians.

In Pushkin's *Tazit*, the eponymous Chechen hero is an unusually dreamy person who is estranged from his martial culture. He is so strange and peculiar that his father is angry, and says: "You're no Chechen! You're an old woman, a coward, a slave, an Armenian!" Obviously, these words also reflect the Russians' stereotype of Armenians as peaceful traders. I remember how the people in Baku, Azerbaijan's capital, used these words in the twenty-day-long crowded anti-Armenian rallies that took place in late November and early December 1988 accelerating the demise of the Soviet Union.

In our times, the situation is not any better. For example, Viktor Dotsenko in his novel *Okhota Beshenogo* portrays Chechens as rapists, savages, and robbers. Russian films such as *Voyna* and *Grozovie Vorota* have dehumanized and demonized Chechens adding to stereotypes against them (Gilligan, 2010).

In Russia, racist tendencies have been on the rise for the last two decades. It should be noted that the Chechens are not the only target of racism in Russia. All foreigners, especially those with dark skin, are targets of the skinheads and the police who support skinheads. However, Asif Atayev said that the Chechens are the most vulnerable people living among them:

About twenty years ago in Moscow, Chechens were not treated as badly

as today. Have all of us become terrorists meanwhile? Apparently, the negative attitude towards us today is nourished by the state apparatus. This is a planned policy of the state organs. The Ministry of Interior Affairs together with others powerful organs of Russia prepare secret plans against us.

A violent campaign of skinhead groups in Moscow may be linked to a push to drive foreigners, especially Caucasians, out of the city. Many believe they are behind much of the crime in the city, a perception fuelled by the tendency of television news to cite the nationality of the criminals. Moreover, the government's "counterterrorist operation" in Chechnya has been accompanied by intensive propaganda directed against Chechens and all Caucasian ethnic groups. Police and other law enforcement officials routinely subject ethnic minorities to harassment and intimidation and often respond with indifference to racist attacks. Nabil Tagiyev noted that anti-terror state propaganda in the Russian media was very similar to that of the Western media; however, the former is worse in its character:

It is certainly worse in Russia, because in Russia "anti-terror" means "anti-Chechen". The state points to every Chechen, when it says "terror". The state has been successful in its anti-Chechen propaganda because in this system its power is overwhelming. It knows how to silence those who object to its policies.

Organized official propaganda has made many Russians believe that the Chechens are behind much of the crime in Moscow. Chechen refugees residing in Moscow and other cities fear for their lives. Violent skinheads beat and even kill people in full view of the police and public. Historically, strong nationalist currents, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism have traditionally increased in Russia during times of turmoil. Aman Sungurov said that

starting in the early 1990s, the Chechens became the most unwanted people in Russian cities:

We are the most unwanted people in the Russian cities, especially in Moscow. The Russian authorities made everything possible to make Russian people blame us to avoid themselves as a target to be criticized for the faulty policies. They have tried hard for this address change. They used all possible means to persuade the people of Russia that we are bad and dangerous.

During the course of police checks in the streets and at residential premises, the employees of the organs of the Ministry of Interior are detaining and taking Caucasians, primarily Chechens, to police stations. The fate of those who end up in police stations is always unfortunate. As Aman Sungurov said, Chechens and other people from the Caucasus, therefore, try to avoid going to police stations:

Sometimes our people bribe the police officers to avoid going to the police stations. Other times they display extreme loyalty when stopped in streets for document check. Everybody has developed his own strategy to please the authorities. Everybody knows that in the police stations consequences will be worse.

The residency rights of Chechens are also violated. In many cases, police officers enter into residential premises without a legal warrant applying force to those who live there. Aman Sungurov noted that the police checks are made at the premises of all non-Russians especially where Chechens and Dagestanis live:

The police cannot enter the apartments of Russians so arbitrarily. Just being a non-Russian resident is enough for the police to enter the apartment. No matter whether one is suspected or not, if one is from the Caucasus, he should be ready for a mid-night check. In a number of cases, people were detained and given orders to leave Moscow, and their apartments were sealed.

Arbitrary checks are not limited to Moscow alone. In other Russian cities similar checks also take place. Emil Nizamov said that he faced a similar situation in Vladivostok in the Russian Far East:

I was in my bed when I saw several police officers around my bed. I was scared and shouted for help, but they sealed my mouth. They searched everywhere in the apartment. They found nothing but some money. However, they did not take my money when they left. I understood that they were looking for something else. I felt lucky for not being taken to the police station.

It is argued that some criminal groups use the young skinheads to fight with their rivals on their behalf. Another version holds that the police manipulate skinhead activity to keep the “foreigners” in check. Said Sulimov said that whatever the force behind them, the skinheads constitute a serious threat to Chechens and other foreigners in the large cities of Russia:

They [the skinheads] do not do all what they do by themselves. They are organized and protected by the police authorities. At least some important police officers use and protect them. Also, I don't think that the police officers do it by themselves; they are instructed from above. Otherwise, they would not dare to do so much evil. I absolutely believe that this is part of an organized state crime against us.

When Russian human rights defenders publicize human rights abuses in Chechnya, in retaliation some Russian state-run TV channels show “documentary films” about the Chechen fighters dressed in Russian military uniforms arresting and killing the peaceful population of Chechnya. Aman Sungurov said that in these propaganda documentaries,

the soldiers speak Russian to the Chechens, but as soon as they are alone they speak Chechen:

The Russians have allocated rich resources to fight us in different ways. They have newspapers, TVs, radios, and many other means. Also, they make all kinds of films degrading us or supporting their policies toward Chechnya. To make those films they also get help from the local Chechen authorities who have common goals with the Russian authorities.

It is obvious that the producers of these films try their best to demonstrate to the Russian people that the Chechen fighters ignite hatred in the population toward the Russian soldiers.

Discussions and Conclusions

Psychocultural issues have always played an important role in the Russo-Chechen conflict in terms of shaping peoples' perceptions, behaviors, and attitudes, or motivating them in their struggle with the enemy. A number of issues have been discussed in this chapter, ranging from cultural identity to gender issues, identity formation, issues dividing the parties, revival of the Chechen language, the Russian mentality of war, as well as cultural and structural discrimination.

First, there are a number of socio-cultural markers such as language, traditions, honor, and geography that create social bonds among the members of a social group. These sociocultural markers are different for the ethnic groups embroiled in the conflict—the Russians and the Chechens, that influence their perceptions and reasoning differently. It is impossible to measure certain sociocultural markers such as honor,

religion, feelings, and emotions related to ethnic roots. However, it is easily discerned that those sociocultural markers are not the same for Russians and Chechens.

Also, culture and behavior are positively correlated, where human behavior generally is shaped by one's culture. In addition, motivations are culture-based, whereas interests are both local and universal. In this sense, the Chechen motivations are mostly culturally maintained, whereas the Russian motivations are interest-based. This fact ensures that the Chechen behavior is stronger versus the Russian interest-based behavior. However, it is important to point out that I am not saying that any motivation is purely cultural or interest-based. In addition, culture provides a framework for interpretation of the others' actions and motivations that includes developing stereotypes. In this sense, Russians negative stereotypes of Chechens are mostly a product of the state's policies and are also created by the media, rather than by cultural frameworks. Chechens' negative stereotypes of Russians, however, are a product of the direct cultural framework.

Second, the first and second Russo-Chechen wars became gender wars. Perhaps, as in all major wars, women's rights were violated severely during both of these wars. Many women were killed, left without a husband and children, raped or otherwise abused. For example, women were used as pawns in military campaigns; they were kidnapped, raped, and threatened by enemies to gain leverage over their countrymen. Much of the misogynist conduct was committed by Russian forces as they kidnapped and held for ransom the female relatives of prominent Chechen officials and rebel leaders.

The social change that takes place in Chechnya is not natural, rather it is imposed on the society by the extreme conditions of war and violence. Wars as well as political

and economic transitions are crucial events that dramatically alter society, redirecting the path of natural social change.

A group of Chechen women, the Black Widows, emerged as suicide bombers. Probably they were influenced by the radical Islamist groups in the country. However, the most important factor that converted them into terrorists was likely their deep held grievances. Some subjects in my study expressed deep beliefs that those women were sexually abused or were deeply frustrated when their spouses were killed.

Nowadays when there is relative stability in the region, women's rights in Chechnya continue to be violated gravely. Even the relative stability in the republic has not really changed their living conditions. Chechen women live in a state of fear because their rights are not protected by law. It is also noteworthy that the military conditions in the region helped to reveal the splendid skills of Chechen women as activists, advocates, combatants, healers, and conflict resolvers as they struggled to keep their families together.

The consequences of both wars have been unmerciful for many Russian women too, as they lost their sons and relatives. Their family's losses contributed to their ability to better organize and fight against Moscow's war policy and the universal mandatory military service rule of Russian law. The wars in Chechnya have shown that a gendered struggle in Russia manifested itself as war versus peace.

Third, the Chechen culture is highly collectivist and tightly integrated, whereas the Russian culture is relatively individualistic and loosely integrated. Compared to the Russian culture, group interests prevail over individual interests within the Chechen cultural group. It is obvious that it is the state machine that keeps most Russian

servicemen fighting in Chechnya. The Chechen fighters' in-group solidarity, on the other hand, is voluntary, cohesive, and strong, and is nourished by cultural values.

In addition, Chechens have a high-context communication style, whereas Russians have a relatively low-context communication style. Especially in wartime situations, high-context communication is effective because it motivates Chechens with relatively fewer words to act. Chechens also tend to be more collaborative than Russian people, and this is an asset under difficult life conditions than under normal conditions. This feature of their high context culture assisted the Chechens to survive many unbearable hardships, for example, when they lived on the run in the forests because of imperial Russia's policies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as well as their exile from their homeland during the 1940s and 1950s.

Fourth, the core parties in the Russo-Chechen conflict are the Russian state/government and the Chechen freedom fighters. But there are also a number of internal subgroups supporting each of the main parties. The Chechen freedom fighters are backed by the majority of the Chechen people, and this makes them especially powerful, adding to their ability to resist Russian state invasions into their territory. The Chechen fighters are ubiquitous and elusive, mostly due to the cooperation of the local people. Nevertheless, the Russo-Chechen war is not a clash of cultures or religions. However, it is culture that to a great extent defines the issues, goals, and strategies of both parties. The role of culture in mobilizing Chechens to fight is especially important.

The nationalist Chechen actors are not utility maximizers since they do not perceive the war in terms of game theory. Rather, they identify their goal of independence as non-material, value-related and non-negotiable. Religion, nationalism,

and fatalism motivates the Chechen fighters, making them determined and persistent. However, the Chechens do not identify themselves as racists. The majority of the subjects of this study expressed a deep respect for the Russian people, labeling them as the people of solidarity in support of Chechen rights.

Fifth, Chechnya and Russia have faced an identity challenge due to both wars. National, religious, and ethnic identities have become salient in Chechnya. For the first time in history, Chechnya became a quasi-independent state in 1991. It attained de facto recognition by Moscow with the Khasavyurd Peace Accord in 1996. Religion and ethnicity also became more salient for the Chechens during the course of both wars. Many Chechen subjects of this study mentioned their transition into a religious people.

The national identity of the Russians has also been influenced by the Chechen wars. Particularly during the first Chechen war, many Russian soldiers were unwilling to fight in Chechnya, questioning Russia's imperial policy. By the time the second Chechen war started, the Russian soldiers were mentally prepared by the Russian military authorities.

However, it was the *kontratniki* (a mercenary force recruited by the state) who especially took an active part in the war. In fact, the majority of the interviewees expressed their belief that calamities and human rights violations in Chechnya were committed mostly by the Russian *kontratniki*, who were deliberately recruited by the Russian military authorities. The *kontratniki* terrorized the people of Chechnya. They were privileged in a sense because they were well aware of their mission. Also, unlike regular army soldiers, the *kontratniki* were free from their mothers' disapproval of killing Chechen civilians.

Sixth, the status and state of the Chechen language and alphabet mattered for both the nationalist Chechen leaders and the Russian authorities. The Chechen leaders tried to diminish cultural ties with the Russians through changing the alphabet to the Chechen language, while the latter wanted to keep the Chechen culture as tightly oppressed as possible by means of the Cyrillic alphabet. Even though the Chechen authorities were well aware of the cultural damages the alphabet change would bring, they were resolute about it, primarily because they wanted to rid themselves of the influence of the Russian language, and to preserve Chechen culture.

In fact, both Chechen wars positively influenced the development of the Chechen language. Before the war, Chechen was not used as the language of instruction in the schools. Now, however, although unsystematic, in a few cases Chechen children are taught their mother tongue at school. Chechen grammar books are written and published by at least two people, one of whom was a subject of this study. There are also some textbooks in the Chechen language for schoolchildren whom I saw in the unregistered Chechen school in Baku.

Seven, the Chechens believe that they do not pose a threat to others; rather, it is Russia that has engaged in wars for centuries to expand into the lands of other nations in its quest to create an empire. Also, they believe that Russia's expansionism is an expression of its war mentality. The Chechens strongly believe that their struggle with the Russians is just and legitimate, since they defend themselves, their homeland and their cultural values. Although they do not approve of the terrorist actions of some radical Chechens, they still hold Moscow primarily responsible for the disaster blaming its provocative policies.

Tsarist Russia's primary imperial policy was to expand in all possible directions. The geopolitical importance of the Caucasus made Tsarist Russia commence a stubborn military campaign in the Caucasus. However, the same policy continued with Soviet Russia. The Chechens and other nationalities of the Northern Caucasus suffered from Soviet policies at least as much as they did from imperial Russia's policies. Chechen grievances are so great that the interviewees told me that even the rule of Hitler's Germany over the region would have been more humane.

The Chechen subjects of my study offered to make a simple comparison between the aggressiveness and antagonism of Chechens and Russians. They claimed that with the exception of some minor skirmishes with their Georgians and Cossack neighbors over trivial border issues, Chechens never disturbed the peace and tranquility of the region. They lived in harmony within their own communities as well as with their neighbors. Certain acts such as cattle or sheep rustling was described as not disturbing others' sovereignty, rather it was perceived acts of bravery also employed by their neighbors living in the region.

However, Tsarist Russia applied force to subdue the people of the Caucasus, Siberia, and Central Asia, and others to expand its sovereignty over their territory. Ironically, the Russian history books depict that the Russians brought civilization to the nations they conquered. All those nations still under Russian rule demand to this today their sovereignty. The Chechens interviewees used the verb "invade" rather than "conquer" when talking about Russia's expansionism stressing that no nation in the world disturbed the peaceful life of other nationalities more so than the Russians.

The Chechens also believe that the Russian literary elite barely questioned Russia's historical expansionism. Writers supported Russia's imperial policies. In this sense, not only Russia's historical wars, but also Russia's Chechen wars in the 1990s and 2000s have contributed to a change within Russian public opinion.

Eighth, some hate groups and individuals have developed prejudice and stereotypes against foreigners but especially against Chechens in Russia. The so-called "skinhead" youth are the most popular among these Xenophobic groups. The magnification of stereotypes against Chechens and other people from the Caucasus living in Russian cities is supported by some Russian institutions, servicemen, and police.

The Chechens believe that negative stereotypes directed against them were created by Russian writers since the early 1800s, and are now reinforced by the Russian media. The negative Chechen images portrayed by some media makes almost all parts of Russia other than Chechnya unlivable for the Chechen people.

Moreover, even though Chechens are constitutional citizens of the Russian Federation, they are discriminated against in Russian cities especially in Moscow. Their constitutional rights are violated not only by individuals and some Xenophobic groups, but also by certain public entities such as security and law enforcement institutions. The Chechen people have become so frustrated that even those who support Russia's unity are hesitant to travel to Moscow.

A question my interviewees posed to me was "If Chechnya is part of Russia, why then are the Chechens not treated as Russian citizens everywhere else in Russia?" Paradoxically, while asserting that Chechnya is an integral part of the Russian Federation,

state institutions discriminate against Chechen people whom they want to confine to Chechnya.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the psychocultural dimension of the Russo-Chechen conflict. It has argued that a number of psychocultural issues have contributed to the quality of the conflict, thus building a psychocultural framework is important to understand and explain it. However, this chapter does not claim that the Russo-Chechen conflict is a clash of cultures; rather it argues that psychocultural issues contribute to the formation of interests and priorities of the parties to the conflict. This chapter has discussed such themes as *cultural identity, gender and conflict, cultural diversity and issues dividing the parties, war and new identity formation, the Chechen language, the notions of state and war in Russian culture, and cultural discrimination and structural violence*. The following chapter will deal with violence as it is related to such notions as story, memory, metaphors, emotions and freedom.

Chapter 8

Violence: Story, Memory, Metaphors, Emotions, and the Notion of Freedom

Introduction

This chapter explores the correlation of the conflict and the notions of story, memory, metaphors, emotions, and freedom. Theories of violence, emotions and aggression, as well as approaches of storytelling and metaphors shed light on the discussions taking place in this chapter. The notions of freedom and nationalism are discussed as a separate theme in this chapter.

Unarguably, children and women are the most traumatized segments of the Chechen population because of the war in Chechnya. While women are impacted directly as well as indirectly by losing their husbands and sons in the war, children are also impacted in a number of different ways. First, their worldviews have been shaped by war traumas (Byrne & McLeod, 2004). Second, deprived of educational opportunities, or at least having their education frequently interrupted, children grow up illiterate, which has adverse effects on their future quality of life. Moreover, many children frequently share the fate of refugees in different conflict regions of the world, which means further deprivations and limitations for them. This is an important factor contributing to the vicious cycle of violence that becomes persistent and durable since in the context of a cycle of retaliation elements of justification and excuse are absent (Byrne & McLeod, 2004; Galtung, 2001; Kreidie & Monroe, 2002). Hence, while some young people are resilient others who grow up in a war environment perceive violence as normal in their everyday lives and are likely to behave aggressively in the future (Byrne & McLeod, 2004). When young people perceive violence as a means to resolve problems in their

formative years, transition becomes difficult for them in adulthood (Byrne, 1997a; Byrne & McLeod, 2004). Moreover, the young learn not only from the war context they are situated in, but also from their parents and older family members (Volkan, 2001). Hence, their future political attitudes are mostly compatible with their family members' current political beliefs, perceptions, and the stories they convey to their children (Ury, 1999).

A young generation impacted by the specific historic context today helps to shape the historical context tomorrow (Byrne, 1997a, Byrne & McLeod, 2004). Hence, breaking the cycle of intergenerational conflict depends on how the political worldviews of young people are formed (Byrne, 1997b). Experiences children acquire in their communities are significant for social change, as there is a direct and strong connection between the historical context, adult perception, and children's education (Byrne & McLeod, 2004).

This chapter highlights the respondents' thoughts, feelings, hopes, and fears about violence and the future. Through the voices of people who have suffered from war one can learn how they are drafted to fight in war, gain insight into their everyday experiences, and how they and their children cope in the postwar circumstances (Byrne, 1997b). In fact, as this chapter demonstrates, many of these people do not have normal life conditions to assist them in recovering from war traumas. The subjects of this study have never received the psychological aid they need. Social and economic reconstruction can occur through external support. However, no trauma recovery activities are organized for the Chechen refugee children. For example, the refugees living in Azerbaijan, children and adults alike, have not received any assistance from the government or the humanitarian organizations in Baku to help them recover from war traumas. Moreover,

the study participants are constantly anxious about future uncertainties as well as the current terror campaigns against them, the source of which, they believe, is the Russian secret service and the pro-Russian Chechen authorities.

In this chapter, the following themes are discussed: (1) memory, and its effects on conflict resolution, (2) conflict metaphors, (3) hopes and fears, (4) the notion of freedom (*marsho*) in Chechen popular culture as whether it is a myth or truth, and (5) nationalism as it is perceived by Chechens.

Memory

Memory is an important factor in war situations. It is difficult to force oneself to forget the psychological impact of fear and deprivation. Hassen Diab told me the following story about how his children were hiding from the Russian bombings during the first Chechen war:

When terrible gun battles and missile attacks started, children were fleeing to the cellar where they were waiting in fear and horror. Horrified by the roar of air jets and tank shootings, they have witnessed this violence for many days and nights. Hungry, tired, sleepless, and terrified by the worst possible nightmare, our children were physically and psychological traumatized. Seeing them like this made us extremely angry with the heartless Russian authorities.

Apparently, the fears and hopes of children have a direct linkage to those of their parents, even though they may be exposed to the traumas of war to different degrees. The worldviews of young people and even adults are shaped by similar war experiences and have implications for conflict resolution processes.

Olivia Ward, a bureau chief of the *Toronto Star* in Moscow, witnessed a similar situation in the village of Samashki, Chechnya in 1996:

...I hardly needed expert evidence of childhood trauma. It was built into the lifestyle of war, in the way families lived in concentric circles around their homes as though confined by an invisible fence. The largest circle was for daytime, when cars heaved along the roadways, stall vendors blasted defiant Chechen music into the markets and people stood chatting in the open air. Then a smaller circle as the dreaded curfew approached and children were herded into their neighborhoods. And finally the tight circle of the family hearth where doors were sealed and heavy wooden shutters bolted in an illusion of safety... Inside the airless room the children were not relaxing, but waiting, dark circles under their eyes. They had hardly slept since the latest gun battles and missile attacks had forced them to flee to a neighbor's cellar where they cowered in the dark, shrinking from the rustle of rats... For too many days and nights they have witnessed this relentless violence and their parents' helplessness to defend them from it. The thin membrane of childhood has been torn away, leaving them open to the poisons of the world... Tracing the lives of children in Chechnya was like descending through the levels of hell. Close to the bottom were children broken by physical as well as psychological wounds. Amina, her thin fingers wrapped around the hospital-bed railing in pain, sobbed almost absentmindedly, as if she had forgotten how to draw an ordinary breath. From her small pelvis a thicket of tubes sprouted, replacing the functions of organs torn apart by shrapnel... By the time they are 15, the [French] doctor told me in a whisper, those boys will be dedicated fighters. If Chechnya does not win its independence from Russia, they will continue the struggle to the death. Beyond, to the next generation (Ward, July 1996).

These war scenes are carved into the memory of young people, making it unforgettable, and consequently affecting peace processes negatively. Also, war stories are very likely to grow into political myths to be used by those who want to perpetuate war.

During one of my interviews, Mazen Osman invited me to see a video of a new Chechen version of "Lezginka," a national dance of Lezgins, a people of Dagestan, which is also popular among almost all other people in the Caucasus Mountains. Chechens, Azerbaijanis, Circassians, Georgians, Abkhazians, Kabardins, Mountain Jews, Ossetians,

Ingilos, the Russian Kuban Cossacks as well as Terek Cossacks and various other ethnicities of Dagestan have their own versions of Lezginka, which can be a solo, couple, or group dance in which men and women are dressed in traditional costumes. Men wear an ornamental sword on their side and women are decked out in long, flowing national dresses. The men dance in quick, concise steps, falling to their knees and leaping up quickly, whereas the women dance quietly, taking light and small steps. When the dance is performed in pairs, the couples do not touch each other, and the woman dances around the man.

In the new version of Chechen “Lezginka,” however, the dancers are children—both boys and girls. They dance to the “music” and roars of cannons and the explosions of bombs, war cries, and wolves’ howls. While the music is continuous, the dance scenes are interrupted by bloody war scenes. When I asked Mazen Osman if the Chechen children watch this video clip, he confirmed with surprise in his eyes that this was the very case:

If a Westerner asked this question, I would not be surprised. This clip is prepared for our kids, and many of us educate our children with it. I must tell you that it is very effective.

Considering the fact that this dance is a part of the process of the socialization of Chechen children, it is not difficult to imagine its impact on young people’s transformation into functioning adults within the given social context. Put simply, the learning process of Chechen children in their families as a social institution commenced with the formation of their memories, which is likely to produce a new mode of struggle and new warriors in the context of the Russo-Chechen conflict. Preoccupied with feelings of disapproval about raising children with hatred of the other I asked if the Chechen

children were fervent anti-Russian. Aman Sungurov replied that their children are not anti-Russian, rather they growing up with the feeling of patriotism:

We simply teach them of the danger, and help them know the danger. Please note that we also tell our children many good stories about Russians. When they grow up to perceive the world, they will differentiate between good and bad.

The nature of the socialization and development process of children in the context of deep-rooted conflicts, therefore, is important in terms of developing effective communication and problem-solving skills (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Byrne & McLeod, 2004; Polkinghorn & Byrne, 2001). Moreover, the socialization process influences identity formation from early childhood onwards (Byrne & McLeod, 2004; Senehi, 1996, 2000). Limited contact with the other helps in the creation of stereotypes of the other, developing faster and persisting longer. In this sense, the younger generations of both Chechnya and Russia develop fictive images of each other faster than their ancestors did before, because the latter had more frequent contact that assisted overall in building good relationships among the grassroots laypeople.

Collective Memory

The collective memory, which is constructed, shared, and passed on by the Chechens, is integrative and cohesive. It is represented mostly in their stories, because other influential means such as erected monuments or books have been almost absent in Chechnya due to Soviet state policies. Particular narratives about the past are reproduced and reframed, perhaps without being questioned and contested by the collective memory of an oral culture in which Chechen people share a sense of heritage and commonality. One is very

likely to hear similar stories from different Chechens of different ages who have never seen each other.

The collective memory of Chechens has played an important role in the emergence of the national movement in the republic. Stories about past difficult days mobilized and inspired Chechens to preserve their independence. Qarib Qaribov explained this issue in the following manner:

People waited for a good moment to “explode”. That right time came when the Soviet Empire became weak and sick. Even a child knew about what had happened to the Chechens. Nobody forgot how children, women, sick and old people...died while being deported like cattle. This made the Chechens very unified to defend the motherland.

However, in many instances, the Chechen leadership manipulated the collective memory to gain more support from the people while the young Chechen state was failing. Chechen leaders borrowed from mythology to legitimize the Chechen state and the struggle of the Chechen people for an independent state. Those subjects in this study who had a collective life in the form of frequent gatherings never expressed any stories about the political usage of their collective memories. However, Ilias Danielov, who does not live in the Chechen community, acknowledged this point:

In many instances, instead of acting realistically the Chechen leaders preferred to manipulate the emotions of the people through the past stories. Even, I bet you, new myths occurred; exaggerations of dead tolls, falsifications of conditions, etc. took place. People, especially youth were influenced. It does not mean that everything used by the leaders or those who claimed that they were leaders was baseless. Of course, not, but deliberate usage of provoking stories and deliberate additions to the realities was commonplace in Chechnya.

Worst of all, the old stories were linked to new ones, creating a greater portrait of the calamities caused to Chechens by others. Imagination also plays a role in the formation of memories (Boulding, 1990), for they are always the products of a reconstruction of the past according to present concerns. In this sense, contemporary stories attempt to link to those that happened about sixty years ago, and even beyond. Alim Dudin explained how tsarist Russia's policy of eliminating some *auls* in Chechnya in the eighteenth century is compared to the atrocities that took place in some Chechen *auls* in 1944 as well as the bombardments of some villages in the region during both the first and second Chechen wars:

We all witness today that history repeats itself. The meaning of and reasons for the anti-Chechen ventures of the Russians are the same as they were two hundred years ago or simply sixty years ago. Only people, time, and forms are different. For us it doesn't matter whether it is Yermolov or Grachev, Nikolay or Putin, Alexander or Yeltsin. All of them kill in order to control.

However, not all stories have a negative connotation. Many people still remember the Russian soldiers helping them before and during the trip into exile. Many acknowledged that they learned through the stories how the Russian soldiers saved many Chechen lives by sharing their bread and water with them. Dede Amin, the oldest subject of this study, recalled the compassion of the Russian soldiers toward the exiled Chechen people:

Then I was a very young boy. However, I remember it clearly, as if it happened yesterday. It was very hard to travel. We were suffering from cold and hunger. Children and old people were becoming sick. Some of them died. We did not have enough food to survive, or blanket to keep ourselves warm. Some of the Russian soldiers were very nice and compassionate to us. They were trying to help us as much as they could with providing hot tea, water, or anything they could.

Perhaps these kinds of constructive stories of the good relations between Russian soldiers and the Chechen people may play an important role in constructing positive peace processes at the community level, which may be transferred into higher political levels at later stages of the peacebuilding process.

Individual Memory

Perhaps, there is always an exchange between the personal memories of an individual and the collective memory of the social group to which he or she belongs. The fact that Chechen memories have continued through the storytelling process without being written down efficiently caused them to change somewhat while keeping the central ideas unchanged, people added their own interpretations to them. However, different stories about the same event tend to match up. Although individuals tell their stories separately when those stories come together they form a narrative. Also, collective memory and remembering with others shapes individual memory. Hence, it is possible to argue that there is an invisible link between group and individual memories. It is probably hard to find out how they influence each other, however, despite the nature and the dynamics of the groups, past events and experiences may affect subsequent activities significantly. When I asked Dede Amin about the role that individual stories have in affecting the collective memory of Chechens and affecting individual people's minds today he remembered that:

The Chechens' past lives in our memories, and our present is influenced by our memories. However the Russian history books write about it, however people try to change it, doesn't matter, it won't change significantly because we remember our past. But the fact that stories, both collective and individual, affect peoples' minds is solid.

However, a key issue is whether the influences of collective as well as individual stories, to which individuals are open, are primarily negative or constructive. As I discussed below in the “Peacemaking through Storytelling” section of Chapter 10, stories may also have a very constructive effect on peoples’ minds and contribute to the processes of peacebuilding. It is important to acknowledge that memory’s role in the socialization process of people is important, which, in turn, is crucial to the formation of identity or helps some parts of the identity to become more important. To ensure that the conflict is ongoing cooperation among the group members is necessary, and the formation of this cooperation is assisted by the memories of the past.

Metaphors

Sometimes people use a metaphor to describe conflict. One of the best ways in which to understand conflict participants’ views of a conflict is by considering the metaphors they use to describe their conflict (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007). Keeping this in mind, one of the questions the subjects were asked during the interviewing process was related to the notion of metaphor through which people spoke about the conflict. I asked all the subjects of this study what their metaphor for the Russo-Chechen conflict was. They were also requested to provide a single word that would best display their belief about the conflict (see Table 3).

Metaphoric language pervades the everyday speech of people who spontaneously describe conflict as something else. Moreover, people use a metaphor to express their expectations and feelings about the conflict, as if it were a different object or process

(Lederach, 1995). The metaphors that the subjects of this study used also reflect their perceptions of what happened in the past and what may happen in the future.

The fact that the Russo-Chechen conflict became overt during the early 1990s made people use war-related metaphors that imply violence, killing, shooting, and a thirst for power as well as revenge. These kinds of metaphors seem natural in the context of war or in its psychological milieu. The metaphors are also powerful tools for demonstrating peoples' wishes, emotions, and affection.

When I asked the subjects in this study about their metaphor of this conflict, slightly more than half of the Chechen respondents identified their metaphor as "genocide." The rest described it as "freedom," "independence," "ethnic cleansing" or "ethnocide." In contrast, the Russian respondents used such metaphors as "blood," "unnecessary war," and "mistake" (Table 3).

Table 3: Metaphors of the conflict

Inter- viewee	Geno- cide	Indepen- dence	Freedom	Ethnic cleansing or ethnocide	Blood	Unnecessary war	Mistake
Chechens	55% (26)	20% (11)	20% (11)	5% (5)			
Russians					60% (5)	32% (2)	8% (1)

As the "genocide" metaphor implies, many Chechens believe that the Russian Army committed a crime against all the people of Chechnya by aiming to eradicate them *en masse*. When I asked the respondents for the reason behind their choice of the "genocide" metaphor, many talked about the destructive consequences of the war, blaming the

Russians for inhumanely targeting everybody, and everything in Chechnya. Mola Ramazonov referred to the Samashki massacre of 1995, the Novye Aldy massacre of 2000, and countless mass graves in Chechnya, perpetrated by the Russian armed forces:

As a complex, the Russians committed genocide in Chechnya. The Russian armed forces targeted civilians, including children, women, and the elderly. They targeted our culture, family, homes, and peaceful life. They massacred our people in Samashki, Novye Aldy and many other places; they forced our people to flee from their homes; they ruined our schools; they used chemical weapons against our people... this is a genocide.

The respondents who articulated the genocide of the Chechen people by the Russian armed forces support their arguments in general with the indifference of the Russian soldiers to the elderly, women, and children. Moreover, they fired shells and bullets from cannons, tanks, jets, and helicopters into schools, hospitals, residential and cultural buildings, as well as convoys of refugees. The subjects of this study displayed a great number of pictures of burned people, including children and the elderly, as well as some video materials depicting the bitter face of the war.

Moreover, some Chechen respondents preferred using the terms “ethnic cleansing” or “ethnocide” to genocide, which they perceived as the same metaphor. The respondents pictured their perceptions of the war through these metaphors as the merciless civilian massacre of Chechens and the devastation of human beings together with their cultural heritage. Alim Dudin said that the total character of the war ensured the use of extreme violence and brutality of the Russian armed forces against the ordinary, helpless, and innocent Chechen people:

Whom do the Russians fight? Children and women, or maybe old and

weak people? Their intention is to kill as many Chechens as possible. And, in many cases they kill Chechens by using other Chechens. Age, gender, and views of people do not matter for them. They want to “resolve” the Chechen question once and forever. The quick and short way is what they are doing to us now.

For 22 of the Chechen interviewees, the war means either “independence” or “freedom”. They perceive the Chechen declaration of independence and resistance to the Russian troops as just and legitimate. Simply put, the war of the Chechens is just and legitimate because it has a defensive character, whereas the war of the Russians is perceived as unjust and illegitimate because it has an offensive character. The Russians are viewed by Chechens as invaders and oppressors because their intention and actions are designed to eliminate the freedom of Chechen people in every respect. However, Moscow has tried hard to create its own supporters in Chechnya. These people are relatively few in number. Oruj Osman pointed out that basically the unionists are clans or relatives of the pro-Russian Chechen leaders, through which Russia can justify and execute its policies:

Chechens defend their lands against Russians’ attacks. Chechens want to win their freedom from Russians’ oppression. Chechens want to be independent from Russians’ colonization. If Chechens don’t fight for their rights, Russians will colonize them forever. Russia would never grant rights; rather rights can be taken from Russia forcefully.

Those who used the metaphors of independence and freedom portrayed the conflict as a national liberation movement. Their expectation of the conflict is to bring liberty to the people of Chechnya. In fact, people who described their views of the conflict with these metaphors many times spontaneously mentioned the word *independence* during the conversation.

The Russian interviewees identified the war with the metaphors of *blood*, *unnecessary war*, and *mistake*. Although the bloodiness of the Chechen war or any other large-scale war is assumed, this metaphor also has some political and tactical implications. As some of the interviewees mentioned, the huge civilian casualties could have been avoided. However, irrational political calculations and the tactical weaknesses as of both wars caused great human losses. Many believe that the necessary measures were not taken to resolve this conflict in a more constructive way with the less of human casualties. Thus, it is believed that the bloodiness of the Russo-Chechen war is not only a logical result of war, but also it is the result of the faulty war strategies of the Russian authorities. Yuriy Ignatevich's position was quite critical in this respect:

What the Russian military did in Chechnya revealed that Moscow's overall war strategy was wrong. It is also wrong now. Chechens are the citizens of the Russian Federation, aren't they? How can you kill them as you did in Afghanistan? How can you build trust again? Who will believe in your words?

Arzu Samedov also claimed that in no war other than World War II did Russia lose so many soldiers within the first few months:

During the first two months of the war, Russians lost in Chechnya so many soldiers that they did not lose in Afghanistan throughout the entire war. This fact alone explains how bloody the Chechen war is, as well as how great the Russian leaders' disappointment is.

When I asked the Russian respondents whom they hold responsible for the destructiveness of the Russo-Chechen war, almost all held "both sides equally responsible but especially Russia". Only Valerie Borisov held the Russian leadership fully responsible:

If you cannot rule properly, you don't have to ruin; at least don't ruin. At least, don't kill the poor civilians. At least save the kids. You should produce a formula to resolve the problems that is why you are there. If what has taken place in Chechnya is resolution, then imagine what destruction would be. If they [Chechens] don't want to live with you, what do you want from them? Let them go!

Some of the study's subjects explained the *mistake* metaphor they used with regards to the state's defective policies toward the Chechen question. Constructive dialogue at the very beginning of the conflict might have brought about certain opportunities to settle the conflict peacefully within a mutually acceptable framework. However, the efforts made in this regard were not enough to bring about positive change:

Nobody on any side ever admitted any mistake he did in this conflict. However, obviously the whole war is a mistake of the leaders. They filled their pockets only. They did not care about the ordinary people. The leaders of the both sides could resolve the problem, if they wanted.

In the sixteen years of fighting since 1994, the war has not brought about any positive change for either side. None of the parties has reached its objectives, although the leadership may claim the opposite. Now, after all the casualties and destruction, it is better understood that the war was unnecessary, at least because it would not bring any success or benefits to anybody. Also, after so many years of struggle and great losses of civilians, the future still seems gloomy and full of uncertainties. Hence, new and well-prepared constructive approaches should be formulated and adopted immediately.

Yuri Ignatevich, a Russian educator in Baku, commented that in many cases old mistakes yielded new mistakes. He criticized the Russian army leadership, blaming it for the renewal of the war in 1999:

It is not only the Chechens who think of revenge. The Russian military leadership also had similar feelings when they lost the war in 1996. How did the war start again in 1999? They came to take revenge for 1996. Moscow claimed that there was no order in Chechnya, and terrorists were everywhere in Chechnya, and then sent troops to Chechnya. Did the things get better? No, the things went even worse. Civilians got killed, refugees appeared, and everything got ruined in Chechnya.

The feeling of revenge among the Chechen people is as strong as the process of forgiveness. Radical Chechens especially advocate the use of the same methods as their enemy, Russia, uses against Chechen civilians. However, their primary target is the structure of the Russian state as well as the Russian military and secret service. Most Chechens I encountered in my field research believe that all methods are legitimate to use against the Russian invaders and if they use extreme means they should not be considered terrorists. However, although many Chechens have mixed feelings about *al Qaida* and its leader bin Laden, almost all of my study respondents do not believe that there are any ties between the Chechen freedom fighters and *al Qaida*. Ilias Danielov said that linking the Chechen question with other international issues, whatever they may be, is unacceptable:

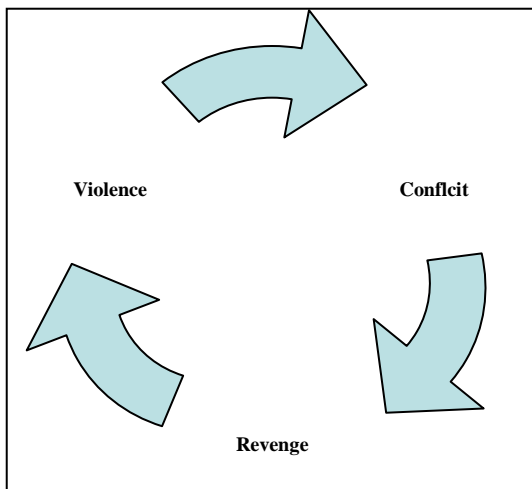
All those bandits and looters around the world, who had nothing to do and were bored, came to Chechnya for an adventure. They did mess up the purity of the movement in Chechnya. After they came [to Chechnya], Russia increased the dose of its claims that all Chechen fighters were terrorists.

The Chechen leaders had different opinions about the methods to be used in their struggle, with both extremes led by Maskhadov and Basayev. The former advocated a combination of diplomacy and military force, whereas the latter advocated taking revenge against the Russians. Similarly the Chechen people hold both of these feelings

simultaneously, which are very likely to come into play, depending on the attitude of their antagonists.

The terrorist acts allegedly committed by the “Black Widows” in a Moscow subway on March 29, 2010 once again demonstrated that the feeling of revenge among the Chechens has not subsided. The history of the violent Russo-Chechen conflict allows the argument that this inhuman violence against innocent civilians in Moscow is likely to generate into new violence in Chechnya by Russian servicemen, targeting not only potentially dangerous elements but also innocent civilians (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Cycle of violence-conflict-revenge



On March 31, 2010, the Chechen spokesperson Batukaev denied the accusations leveled against Chechen separatists by the Russians. However, merely suspecting the Chechens as responsible for the Moscow attacks might be enough for a new set of Russian operations in Chechnya, if the real perpetrators are not found.

The metaphors used to describe the Russo-Chechen conflict indicate a perception that the conflict is made up of emotions among other things that may explode at any point, bringing about new waves of violence. The metaphors reflect the important themes that the Russo-Chechen conflict generate that can be used not only in the analysis stage, but can also assist in developing creative ideas for managing this intractable violent conflict.

Hopes and Fears

An extended period of bloody war in Chechnya (1994–96 and 1999–present) gave rise to poverty and unemployment in the republic that in combination of an easy access to weapons, escalated the growth of the crime rate in the country. In many cases, it appeared impossible for Chechen families to save their children from joining rival groups of fighters or bandits in the republic. Most children, who could not differentiate between the armed groups with different goals, believed that they were doing right. The psychologies of those young people influenced by the bloody war context were susceptible to the calls of a false patriotism. A moral sense of self and the way it is formed is related to people's socialization and emotional development (Byrne & Senehi, 2006). Hence, this study has also focused on the perceptions of people about their sense of self and the political future of their country by studying their relevant hopes and fears (see Table 4 and Table 5). The informants' feelings of hope and fear for their self and country are reflected in their responses.

Personal Hope and Personal Fear for the Future

The questions of one’s personal hopes and fears were asked of all the fifty-one Chechen participants in this study (see Table 4). The most common hope for the future mentioned by study participants was national (96 percent). Examples of national hopes included “independence,” “victory,” “re-emergence of statehood”, and other political desires. Another major theme mentioned was related to self, in which hopes for the future focused on personal or family-related wishes. Responses included “to see my children go to university,” and “to see my family live in peace,” etc. However, national problems were almost everybody’s fear for the future that included concerns such as “national illiteracy,” “everlasting war,” and “submission to Moscow,” etc. The next theme respondents raised was self. The subjects expressed their worries for the future, which included “losing a family member,” and “failing to see freedom,” etc.

Table 4: Personal hopes and fears for the future

Personal Hope	Frequency	Valid Percent
National	49	96
Self	38	74.5
Personal fear		
National Problems	47	92
Self	22	43

Personal Hope: National

Most of the respondents pointed out that their personal hopes for their countries' future were more important. Oruj Osman is a forty-two-year-old community leader. During the quasi-independent years from 1996 to 1999 in Chechnya, he was a Minister of Transportation and the Governor of Shali province in Chechnya. He explained that his best hope about the future is that an independent Chechen state will re-emerge soon and Chechnya will become a very civilized nation:

The whole world will see that Chechnya is a democratic country where human rights and rule of law are respected. The world will see that Chechens are not terrorists. Kadyrov's terrorism in Chechnya will cease forever. People will truly be free.

Like Oruj Osman, Said Sulimov, a man in his thirties, desires independence for his country and freedom for his co-nationals:

Chechnya will be a free country, and then its citizens will be free too. If Chechnya is not free, no Chechen is free. Chechens' fate is linked to the fate of Chechnya. Our country will become free, and the refugees will return to their homes.

Honar, a man in his thirties, also believes that the independence of Chechnya will be remedial for the people with war traumas:

Our nation, our people may recover from the traumas of the war only if our country becomes free and independent. Otherwise, it will be very difficult to get out from under the ruins this war caused. Free Chechnya will be a remedy for all traumas our people suffer from the war.

Similarly, Hayati, a man in his forties hopes for a peaceful and wealthy country, and he believes that Chechnya is capable of being rich:

Chechnya's right is to be a wealthy country, at least because of its rich oil resources. Chechnya could be as rich as Kuwait, if Russia let it. Our country needs peace; and I believe that one day it will be peaceful, and its citizens will be free and happy.

The national theme was represented by the aspirations of winning independence from the Russian Federation and building a democratic state in which the rule of law would prevail and human rights would be respected. More politicocultural and socioeconomic hopes for their national future such as wealth, women's rights, education, and peace were also mentioned by the interviewees.

Personal Hope: Self

The respondents also perceived that their personal future was associated with their country's future. Some pointed out that they did not hope for any personal happiness outside of the welfare of their entire nation. Nevertheless, the respondents mentioned such personal hopes for themselves as "having a good job," "having a family," "seeing a child happy," and "going to university." Hasan, a nineteen-year-old boy, hopes that he will be able to attend a university and become a lawyer:

I wish to go to university to become a lawyer. However, I know that if we don't return back home, my wish might not come true. Going back home, however, doesn't depend on us. Nobody asks us what we want. Nevertheless, I am optimistic about the future.

Moreover, Adil, a man in his late twenties, said that he wants to have his own family and children. Consequently, he wants peace and prosperity in his country so that he and his family are free and secure, and protected by law:

I wish to marry and live in peace. However, in today's Chechnya it is impossible. I do not want to live in fear and stress. In addition, I would care about my family. Therefore, I hope my country will be ruled by law and justice.

Atik, a forty-five-year-old man, hopes to have a good job and see his children happy. He says that it is hard for him not to be able to work:

I always worked in my life, and I like to work. However, here I am deprived of that opportunity. In fact, before coming here I also was not working because of the war. We were just caring about our lives. I hope for a good job and happy life for my children.

In addition, Qurban, a person with disabilities, hopes for a better life associated with a wealthy national state:

I hope our state will be able to provide a better life to its citizens, including myself. I believe that Chechnya has all kinds of potentials to become a peaceful, prosperous, and powerful country. What it needs is just getting rid of this damned war.

The Chechen people are aware that without a peaceful environment it is almost impossible to build a peaceful and happy personal life. Hence, they illustrate the importance of resolving national problems first to clear the way for one's own personal happiness and realization of one's own hopes and goals.

Personal Fear: National Problems

The respondents' perceptions about their personal fear for the future of their country are highly associated with their personal hopes for themselves, since they mostly perceive the resolution of national problems as a pre-condition for the fulfillment of their personal

hopes. However, most of the respondents had a much deeper concern about national problems.

However, some have lost their belief in the peaceful as well as armed resolution of national problems in the near future, and have started to search for alternative options regarding how to spend the rest of their lives. Abdulla, a forty-year-old man, asked me about the possibility of immigrating to Canada:

It is about 10 years we are here waiting for the conditions to improve back home. Chechnya's problems are only swollen every day. The situation only worsens. I have understood that I need to find somewhere else to go.

Moreover, Oruj Osman identified illiteracy as his worst fear about the future of Chechnya. He added that the illiteracy of his people would primarily help Ramzan Kadyrov, the pro-Russian Chechen president, and Russian authorities to manipulate the people of Chechnya in the future:

You see here how much we value education. You witness under which conditions we try to educate our children not to let them remain illiterate. We do our best to educate our children here at any expense. One of the worst national problems of Chechens now is the lack of education. We will see the adverse consequences of this in about 10-15 years from now. Kadyrov and Moscow will benefit from this. Making Chechen youth illiterate is their deliberate policy.

Further, Said Sulimov identified his fears for his nation as the problems associated with the mass psychological disorder of the Chechens:

The worst national problem will be manifested in the form of poisoned and ruined psychologies of the masses by the war. Recovery from the psychological wounds will take decades or even more, since there are no favorable conditions in Chechnya to treat people. The system should

be available as a complex- hospitals, schools, recovery centers, professionals, etc. - to help people, but it is not available. Today, many Chechens care only about survival trying to meet their basic needs. Psychology is secondary. But tomorrow the situation may change.

As their stories suggest, the Chechen people's personal fears about national problems are significantly high. In addition, the data illustrates that many of the subjects do not hope for any personal happiness in the future before the national problems are resolved. For the majority of the subjects in this study national problems are more important. Moreover, the personal fears of people related to national problems are correlated to the personal fears of self.

Personal Fear: Self

The most recurring theme related to personal fear was the fear of being killed, either by Russian or pro-Russian Chechen agents. Less than two years ago, one of the co-nationals of the Chechens, Gaziyeu, was shot dead in his car in Baku. Shortly after leaving Baku, I learned that one of the respondents in this study, Abdurrakhmanov, was also killed in a suburb of Baku. Uncertainty about the future is another personal fear of self. Most of the Chechen respondents in Baku are anxious with regards to their personal future. For example, Vahid, a thirty-eight-year-old man, said that every Chechen feels that he or she is a target for Ramzan Kadyrov's men:

Ramzan's terror is my fear. It is not only me, but all of us who are a target of his employed terrorists. I am not scared of them. However, nobody would want to die.

Natik, a man in his late twenties, also identified his personal fear for himself as future uncertainties:

It is not easy to wait forever without being sure about the future. How long can one wait for changes? I am personally tired of waiting. What is expecting me and all of us tomorrow? Nobody can guess.

Country's Hopes and Fears for the Future

The interviewees were also asked a number of questions related to their hope for their country. The majority of the respondents (58.8 percent) identified their hope for their country as "independence," 36 percent preferred the word "victory" or other words with similar meanings such as "success" or "triumph." Only 4 percent of the subjects used the word "peace." However, when asked, those who named independence and victory clarified that peace and democracy are implicit in their hopes. This experience demonstrates that Chechens do not simply desire any kind of peace to emerge, rather, they mostly expect peace as a natural outcome of a Chechen victory.

Over half (52.9 percent) of the respondents named the continuation of the war, defeat, and Chechnya's remaining as a country dependent on Russia as their main fears for their country's future. Fear of not being able to continue fighting the Russians as well as pro-Russian Chechens and the latter's ability to stay in power for a long time emerged as another significant theme (23.5 percent). Some respondents (13.7 percent) expressed their fears about the depopulation of their country and non-Chechens' re-location into Chechnya. Others (9.8 percent) expressed their fears of losing certain cultural values such as a high literacy rate and strong family traditions.

Country's Hope: Independence

Most respondents' hope for the future of their country is that Chechnya will become independent. A few articulated that this will happen soon enough, while some others perceive that it will take longer. An independent Chechnya is envisioned as a peaceful and wealthy country that is respectful of human rights, and in which people will be free and happy. Oruj Osman expressed optimistically that the Chechen state will reemerge soon:

Our state will re-emerge. In a year, we will retake Grozny. Independent Chechnya will be peaceful and democratic. People will enjoy freedom of choice. They will choose all what they want.

Unlike Oruj Osman, Aras thought that Chechnya's independence was not close and easy.

Nevertheless, he was also positive about the future of Chechnya:

It will take many years to regain new power to beat the Russians. We are in the period of stagnation. But we are not defeated. We will consolidate our power again to become even more powerful than before. We will eventually beat the Russians.

Likewise, Sanan thought that many years would pass before Chechnya becomes independent, and he hoped to see that day:

I believe Chechnya will be independent one day. But that day is not close. It will take many years before we could extract our independence from Russia. I believe my generation will see that day. We will see our children as citizens of an independent Chechnya.

Country's Hope: Victory

A significant portion (37.2 percent) of the respondents expressed their hope for the future of their country as winning the war. They pointed out that their just position deserves its triumph. Normally, these people see the issue as a matter of national pride. In addition, some perceive the issue as a matter of religious pride, or in defeating Russia that is as important as becoming independent. For this latter group of respondents the process of achieving independence is important. Russia's humiliation as a loser is perceived by these people as a source of pleasure. Dede Amin expressed this view in the following way:

I wish just to see the victory, and nothing else. To bring Russia to its knees and to demonstrate this to the world, this is what I wish to see.

On the other hand, Mamoon noted that their war was a just war in contrast to what he described as Russia's unjust war, and this is an overwhelming source of power for Chechens:

We defend our country, and ourselves. They came to kill us in our own lands and destroy our country. Eventually, we will win. Our victory over the invaders is inevitable. Our position is just and strong.

Farhad, on the other hand, praised his nation and its fighting skills referring to historical accounts of Chechen's bravery and heroism:

My nation is undefeatable. When General Yermolov encountered Chechens the first time, he compared them to the Circassians who were famous in Russia as brave people. He then said that compared to the Chechen strikes the Circassian attacks are like mosquito bites. Now, it is about three hundred years that we did not submit to Russians. A true

Chechen will die, rather than surrender. Eventually, the Russians will lose this war.

Saber, however, stressed that Chechen oil is Russia's primary target in addition to land stressing the geopolitical importance of Chechnya to Russia:

This war is about our honor and existence. Russia wants our lands and oil. We resist. We will win.

Kubilay compared Russia to Nazi Germany stressing the former was even worse in its treatment others:

Russia is worse than Nazis. The world sees that Russia tries to eradicate Chechens; Russia wants to wipe us off the earth. We will laugh at the end.

Likewise, Serkhan argued that Russia uses unethical means of propaganda to degrade Chechens in the world to justify its inhumane policies; however, its tragic end was inevitable:

Russia tries every way to degrade us in the world as terrorists. We are not [terrorists]. Our war is just war. We are defenders, but not offenders. Russia's disintegration is inevitable.

Table 5: Country's hopes and fears for the future

Country Hope	Frequency	Valid Percent
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Independence	30	58.8
Victory	19	37.2
Peace	2	3.9
Country Fear		
War and Dependency	27	52.9
Ceasing to Fight	12	23.5
Depopulation of Country	7	13.7
Losing Values	5	9.8

Country's Hope: Peace

Peace is greatly described by the people whose peaceful life had been disturbed for about fifteen years. In fact, it is implicit in the respondents' hopes for their country. The respondents wish for peace, but they believe that within Russia no positive peace can be reached. It can only be attained through the independence of Chechnya. The respondents neither want, nor hope, for negative peace. Said illustrated that the peace they wish to see in Chechnya should be decisive and eternal:

As long as Russia is our neighbor, it will disturb our peace. We should defeat them for once and forever.

Tekan supported Said's idea, and added that the Chechens' peace should be a product of a stronger Chechnya:

Russia is our neighbor; we cannot get rid of it. We cannot move Chechnya to another region. However, we need peace, but not any peace. It should be provided by our people and a strong national state. Russia

should be forced to accept us as a peaceful neighbor as a norm. It then will stop disturbing us.

Moreover, Namik commented that the Chechens should dictate the peace conditions to ensure that all of their needs are met:

After all, peaceful country and peaceful life is our right. However, it shouldn't be Russia who will impose the peace conditions on us. Rather it should be us to dictate peace conditions, as it was in Khasavyurd.

On the other hand, a significant portion of the respondents expressed their fear in connection with the continuation of war that might perpetuate Chechnya's dependency on Russia.

Country's Fear: War and Dependency

A significant group of respondents (52.9 percent) identified war and Chechnya's dependency on Russia as a fear for their country's future. Continuation of the war is perceived as bad, but stopping it by surrendering to Russia is regarded as even worse. These worries of the respondents about the future of their country do not necessarily reflect their beliefs. Nor did the respondents try to anticipate the future. However, they mentioned that their worst fear about Chechnya is related to the everlasting war and the possibility of remaining part of Russia. Albik stated that Chechnya's dependence on Russia would ruin his personal life as well:

I will never live in Russia's Chechnya. If war lasts longer and Chechnya loses the opportunity of becoming independent, I will rather live abroad.

Similarly, Yavuz said that the idea that Chechnya would remain dependent on Russia is the worst feeling for him. He put his idea in the following way:

War should be ended; and Chechnya should not be part of Russia. It is worse than anything to see Chechnya dependent on Russia.

Nazim defined his worst fear in a similar way:

The worst fear is losing the struggle and again becoming Russia's colony. My country and my people, finally, deserve to be independent.

Other respondents explained their perception of their country's fear as ending the fight with the Russians, since this would mean losing the war.

Country's Fear: Ceasing to Fight

Some respondents (23.5) raised fears for the future of their country concerning ceasing to fight, since they believe that stopping the fighting would mean losing the war. Even though the intensity of fighting is low, it is a sign that there is no ultimate winner yet. Tomorrow, however, conditions may change in favor of the freedom fighters. Said Sulimov argued that nowadays the act of fighting tactfully itself rather than fighting strategically was important:

Today there is no need for many fighters in Chechnya. It is important just to keep fighting until the circumstances get better. Then, the way we fight may intensify again. However, today we should not lay weapons down.

Hayati Dadayev expressed his confidence that Chechens will continue to fight. He noted that war conditions entail changing strategies:

Our enemies say that we stopped fighting. No, we did not. Stopping to fight would mean surrendering. Today, our actions are not noticeable, tomorrow; however, it may be different. War strategies always change. There is not a rule to be conspicuous every day.

Oruj Osman also noted that quality was more important than quantity, and the number of Chechen fighters might multiply if necessary:

If today our children number five thousand, tomorrow they may count twenty thousand, thirty, forty, even fifty thousand. It is important to keep struggling; the number is not important at all.

However, other respondents thought that the immediate problem for Chechnya was related to its population that was shrinking fast.

Country's Fear: Depopulation of the Country

The respondents (13.7 percent) also revealed their concern about Chechnya's depopulation. They articulated that they knew from their historical experience that leaving their motherland empty might cause unwanted future consequences, since uninvited guests may occupy their lands and homes. They also fear that Moscow may deliberately move non-Chechens into Chechnya. Others think that few people would move into Chechnya under the war conditions. Dede Amin recalled the events of the 1940s and 1950s, and warned about possible similar consequences:

Others came to our homes in the 1940s and 1950s. If we leave Chechnya empty, children and grandchildren of those people will reappear in our lands. Under any conditions, we should be the landlords of our properties.

Sadik Odoglu disagreed with Dede Amin arguing that the dangerous war conditions in Chechnya would be a repellant for others:

Now the times are more dangerous in Chechnya. Outsiders would hesitate to occupy our homes, even if they are backed by the local and Federal governments. Nobody would want an unsafe home.

Other respondents perceived that losing national values would be even more fearful.

Country's Fear: Losing Traditional Values

Values are important to Chechens partly due to their national culture, and partly because of their religious beliefs. However, a relatively smaller number (9.8 percent) of my respondents mentioned that Chechen values face destruction. In addition, some salient values were a direct legacy of Soviet rule. Literacy among the Chechens, for example, was almost 100 percent when the war started. Today, however, entire generations do not know how to read and write. Family values are threatened because in many cases couples are not able to live together. Women lost their husbands, or they live in extreme poverty under conditions of fear and anxiety that affect normal family life negatively. Hayati Dadayev commented that family values in Chechnya were in danger, since they were a target of the enemy:

Our sacred family values are damaged. In fact, they are targeted by the enemy. Losing our values will make us weaker. They have special plans how to destroy us; it is not only by arms.

In addition, Oruj Osman stressed the importance of education for a healthy society:

Our new generations are illiterate. This is sad. In the long term, this will turn out to be a great loss.

Telman Turan also mentioned that even though the Chechen female population was targeted by Moscow's rape policy, Chechens would preserve their national values under any circumstances:

A society caring so much about the honor of its female population has faced a policy of mass rape of its women by the enemy. This is frustrating. Does not matter what they do to us we will preserve our national values.

In the following section, the Chechen value of freedom and its association with violence is examined.

The Notion of Freedom- *Marsho*: Myths or Truth?

This section intends to highlight the importance of the notion of freedom in Chechen culture evaluating its correlation with violence. Once, Mikhail Yuryevich Lermontov, a famous Russian poet of the nineteenth century, wrote about Chechens: "their god is freedom, and their law is war" (Dudaeva, 2002:36). The core of Chechen culture rests on the notion of freedom, and the common usage of this word in spoken language is ubiquitous (Gammer, 2006). However, some scholars contest this interpretation, arguing that freedom myths were deliberately developed by certain Chechen circles as part of their ideology in order to keep peoples' spirits up in their struggle with the Russians (Campana, 2009). In addition, Ilias Danielov confirmed similar claims during our interview. Although these arguments cannot be refuted completely, they hardly reflect the truth as well, at least because the word "freedom" is widely manifested in the everyday

usage of Chechen life. Dede Amin expressed his views about his ideas of freedom in the following way:

We, Chechens, love freedom. In fact, it is not something new. Perhaps, all nations love freedom, including us. We lived in mountains as well as plains freely. We were always like this. Even centuries ago, our people were equal and free. We had no classes, no lords, and no servants, as you understand today. In the mountains, everybody was free and equal.

Alim Dudin also mentioned that freedom is a motive of many movies and books, which is a clear indicator of how much Chechen people care about it:

It is not us alone who want freedom. It is everybody's and every nation's right. People make movies and write books on it. Also, it is our natural right. Nobody has a right to deprive us of that right. All what we do is about demanding our rights and fighting for them. We fight for our rights because this is the only way to get them. We want to be free. We don't need lords. We do not need outsiders to rule us. We know how to live by ourselves.

When I asked some of the respondents in this study about the place of *marsho* in their everyday lives to understand whether the usage of the word was spontaneous or not Musa responded that Chechen people desire *marsho*:

I never thought about it. It seems we use the word frequently; but how frequently, it is hard to say anything about it. I think we do not pay attention to it. However, all what I can say, our people like *marsho* itself; they live with it.

Moreover, Atakhan reported that freedom is extremely important in their culture, so that people would always want it, and if necessary fight for it:

People would want freedom; they would die for it. It is something that we don't have to even discuss it. We feel true freedom when we live as

we want. An outside ruler, as well as outside rules makes us feel in captivity. Since we cannot live in slavery, we always revolted.

When a question followed about whether Chechens would care about their personal or clan freedom without caring about the central power, Atakhan said that:

It is impossible to have personal or community freedom separately, because a central power always brings and applies its own rules to people's lives. If you can read our objective history, you will see that our people rebelled against the authorities when they perceived that their freedom was violated. Also, they resisted the Russians due to the same perception. Islam and culture organized them. If freedom was an individual asset alone, it wouldn't be such a valuable source of our strength against the invaders.

Perhaps it is illogical to argue that the love for *marsho* alone made Chechens initiate and subsequently renew their historic struggle with Russians. This argument would also undermine the multiple causes and motives of the Russo-Chechen conflict. However, it is possible to argue that the Chechen understanding of freedom also constitutes a fertile ground for the justification of direct as well as cultural violence on their part. For example, Mola Ramazanov argued that claims about the notion of *marsho* as an artificial doctrine are made to reject the nature of at least the past two-hundred-year history of the mountain peoples' struggle with the Russians.

During the war, one may need to create an ideology. Using mythology alone in order to create a political ideology would not help much. There also should be a solid ground for it. Freedom is part of us- Chechens. Who would lose a part of his body? Also, one cannot create a strong myth out of nothing; even myths should have some strong grounds. The notion of freedom is very important for the Chechen people today, as it was hundreds of years ago.

Stories passing from generations to generations help to develop and shape certain

Chechen myths. However, myths indicate that there was an original truth, or a phenomenon that people regarded as truth. But regarding the notion of *marsho* itself, any kind of old stories are supported by the contemporary social as well as personal lives of people. It is very likely that the war discourses in Chechnya in the 1990s revived and assisted with the new interpretation of *marsho*, enhancing its meaning, rather than adding to or recreating a new notion.

Some scholars have pointed out that freedom is not only one of the central concepts in Chechen culture, but also that its role in shaping Chechen psychology is undeniable (Gammer, 2006). Interestingly today Chechen nationalists attach their concept of freedom either to modern Western political connotations or to Islam. However, its meaning goes far beyond the Western and the Islamic sense of the word. In daily greetings Chechens say *marsha woghiyla*, *marsha ghoyla*, or *marshala doiytu*, which literally mean “enter in freedom,” “go in freedom,” or “wishing freedom to you.” respectively (Gammer, 2001:6). Apparently, *marsho*—freedom—as a concept has its origin in the culture itself. Thus, it wouldn’t be hard for the Chechen guerrillas to make attempts to justify any violence against the Russians, whose actions are perceived by the Chechens as violating their *marsho* (freedom). However, considering the violation of the Chechens’ freedom for a long period of time makes the understanding of *marsho* much clearer.

The need for freedom is an integral part of one’s basic human needs, which is also presented as the means to avoid repression (Galtung, 1990). Freedom includes the following elements: (1) choice in receiving and expressing information and opinion; (2) choice of people and places to visit and be visited; and (3) choice of a way of life. The

freedom need of the Chechen people has been violated to an extreme degree. The Chechens, for example, were deprived of the choice of a place to visit, since they were sent into exile in the 1940s. For these mountain people whose dearest value is freedom, a life in exile was incredibly hard and full of deprivations (Flemming, 1998). Even today, people in Chechnya or in the refugee camps suffer from political oppression.

Perhaps without attaching any meaning to *marsho* in their everyday lives, a considerable number of Chechen subjects in this study noted that the dearest word in their culture was *marsho*, while their metaphor for the Russo-Chechen conflict was mostly considered as either *genocide* or *independence* and *marsho*.

Moreover, Chechens are frustrated because Chechnya is an open prison, coupled with the “filtration points” created by the federal forces in Chechen territories where both men and women are detained and tortured. In this regards, Musa told his own personal story in the following manner:

The Russian soldiers took me from my home, and brought me to their filtration point. They kept me there 15 days, but, as if it passed like one and a half years. They tortured me every single day several times. Once they bit me on my head, and kept me in the very cold water for a long time [his story was interrupted by his silent cry]. After losing all hopes for my release my relatives paid them an enormous amount of a bribe to free me.

Moreover, Sanan, an informant in this study, commented that it was not all about the neighborhood sweep operations, detention, interrogations, tortures, etc. alone, but it also was about confining peoples’ freedom of movement and freedom of work. He stressed that it appeared as if Russian policy in Chechnya was about banning people from breathing the air.

Nationalism: A Rising Trend?

This section examines the correlation of the rise of nationalism in Chechnya with the increasing violence. Nationalism tends to become prominent during a time of threat partly because an ethnic group's needs for affiliation and companionship becomes necessary during a time of threat (Rosenblatt, 2006).

The Chechen freedom fighters and their supporters are nationalists. During the interviews, I noticed that many confused nationalism with racism, perhaps because in the Soviet Union nationalism was perceived as an equivalent of racism. Aslan Aliyev said that even though he fought for Chechnya he was not a nationalist:

May Allah kill me instantly when and if I become nationalist. We are not nationalists, and we respect all other nations. We also respect Russians as much as other nations. We are not nationalists, and we do not see others as inferior to us.

When I pressed him why does he want to have a nation-state, he became confused. Then we agreed to use the term "patriotism" instead of the term "nationalism". The Chechens are not racists because Islam is against racism, and they respect this religious teaching. After so many years of violent armed struggle with the Russian troops, they still respect the Russian people and do not hold them responsible for the devastating military operations of the Russian military machinery in Chechnya.

Nationalism satisfies these needs by bringing the in-group members closer to each other. Hudayat Baysan noted that during the early 1990s, the threat or perceived threat to the Chechens was greatest, contributing to the national unity of the group, which in turn encouraged the Chechen leadership to pursue radical policies vis-à-vis Moscow:

The structure of our communities allows us total solidarity. We have had our own *adats* [customs] to regulate our lives. This is not lawlessness. We always had high national pride. We were and are bound to each other very tightly, which helps us to resist the outsiders. However, Russian threat and brute force cemented together those of us who appreciate our values.

Said Sulimov commented that when religious feelings mixed with nationalism it also influenced in-group solidarity in Chechnya:

Islamic faith made our Chechen culture even greater, because it contributed to our social order. It did not take anything from us, rather it only added to our life and culture, and provided the basis for alliances with other Islamic peoples of the region in our struggle with Russia.

At the same time, this ethnoreligious mix enabled the group leaders to manipulate group nationalism through the exploitation of fear or the hate of Russian authorities. Interestingly, none of the subjects in this study displayed a deep hatred toward the ordinary Russian people, while believing that Russian policies have always added to the nationalistic feelings of the people of the region. Alim Dudin explained this point in the following manner:

In our mountains, no offense against individual and *teip* honor could go unpunished, and even feuds could go on for generations. How can we bow our heads in front of Russian invaders, who humiliate and kill us? Russian rule in Chechnya and the entire Caucasus had been imposed by force. The Russians brought no positive values to us. They try to get from us what they want through force. This adds to our nationalism. But we don't blame the people of Russia; we don't keep them responsible for Russia's policies as well. They have no say in Russian policies.

Thus, the delicate line between Chechen attitudes to the Russian state machine and the Russian people should be highlighted. Stereotypes are less likely to be attributed by

Chechens to out-groups that are frequently encountered (Rosenblatt, 2006). Chechens have been in continuous contact with and have developed friendly ties with Russians over an extended period of time. However, paradoxically, some of the Chechen subjects of this study did not feel any compassion for the Russian civilians who lost their lives. For example, Abrek Ali, commented on this issue in the following manner:

Condemning our acts in Russian cities as terrorism is ridiculous. If killing 350,000 civilians in Chechnya is legitimate, how can the Chechen attacks on Russian strategic objects be terrorism? Don't forget that one third of our population is killed by the Russians in the last 20 years. It is genocide, but nobody talks about it.

The level of nationalism and ethnocentrism escalates when expected tangible rewards associated with in-group loyalty manifests itself. In addition, ethnocentric nationalism tends to be the greatest in those groups that experience the lowest quality of life (Rosenblatt, 2006).

The Chechens' expectation of independence as a tangible reward enhanced their nationalist feelings during the early 1990s. Aspirations toward independence were a superordinate goal and a strong uniting force across clans. Chechen nationalism was also strengthened by the threats of a more powerful out-group—Russia. However, Chechen nationalism started to decrease as a legitimate force when intragroup competitions emerged and gradually increased in the mid-1990s. Referring to the disunity among Chechen leaders, Mola Ramazanov spoke out about the confusion and different tactics used by rival groups:

Some got confused whom to follow and whom to trust. With no democracy traditions people did not know that some split in ideas is

normal. However, adopting different war tactics that separated some of our leaders also played an important role in this confusion.

The most active individuals in the Chechen national movement were religious who were also pro-Western. Oruj said that this could be perceived as an identity problem of the Chechen people who hesitate to orient their political discourse to influence their further cultural development:

Yes, we are Muslims. All the democratic states who support our rights know that we are Muslims. It is our identity, and obviously, they respect it. Above all, we are human beings. We trust in many valuable western values such as democracy, freedom, free elections, human rights etc. All these values are also compatible with Islam. So, there can be nothing wrong with being pro-Western and Muslim at the same time. Also, there is nothing wrong to be a Muslim and at the same time a democratic country.

In fact, the Chechens who have sought out Western support for their deeds have been quite successful. Many informants of this study expressed their confidence in Western values such as justice and respect for human rights. Interestingly, some Russian intellectuals have criticized the Western stereotype of the Chechens, arguing that it seeks to undermine Russian sovereignty by encouraging Chechen secession (Tishkov, 2004).

The Chechen people have also overestimated their strength in terms of courage and morality while underestimating the strength and virtue of the Russians. The overwhelming majority of Chechens consider that the struggle they have committed themselves to is superior to all alternatives that were rejected. For example, Hassan Diab compared Chechens to their Circassian, Avar, and Azerbaijani neighbors constantly stressing the former's bravery:

Chechens fight better than the rest in the Caucasus. We die but do not yield. What the others do? They simply do not fight. If they fight, they do not die. We are different from all of them.

While Dada Emirov argued that it would take almost one year before Chechnya will defeat its enemies and become independent, he also overestimated the Chechens' military strength. However, the source of this assessment does not lie only in the Chechens' self-esteem. Rather their belief in their just position and zealous willingness to reach their national aspirations may explain this particular behavior.

However, nationalist fervor in Chechnya started to decline in significance as frustrations emerged from within the group. Today, for example, almost all the Chechens I met outside of Chechnya view the president of Chechnya, Kadyrov, and his pro-Russian government as more dangerous to the creation of an independent Chechnya. The Chechens dislike him so much that they call Kadyrov a non-Chechen, and even a non-Cossack. Mazen Osman stressed that Ramzan Kadyrov is the person most responsible for killing most of the Chechen dissidents abroad and at home, considering him an enemy even worse than the Russian authorities:

We blame others. However, Ramzan [Kadyrov] is the worst out of them. Everybody knows that once he was one of us. See what now! Now he is thirsty in our blood. He is ready to kill all of us. He is not tired with killing. His strategy is clear. He is trying to intimidate everybody by killing some. He is trying to keep all Chechens at home and abroad in fear. Ramzan is building his own cult. He is terrorizing all Chechen people. Nobody feels safe in Chechnya. Even his own people who work for him do not feel safe because, he is eliminating his own people as well.

The nationalist identity of many Chechen people declined in significance in the past few

years. In the past, the Chechen people in exile were subject to identity change as the official policy of the Kremlin supported the gradual assimilation of the Chechen people (Williams, 2000). The deportation years also affected the Chechens' identity in many ways as. For example, Chechen children were deprived of going to school for thirteen years as a new generation of children grew up illiterate (Williams, 2000). Ironically, this deliberate Soviet action was one of the many reasons that gave rise to the Chechen's sense of unity. Sufi Islam started to play an important role in Chechen society during this period leaving Chechens with a legacy of "underground Islam" (Williams, 2000:103). While the Soviets aimed to assimilate the Chechens, and integrate them into the Soviet people, the exile years served to deepen the Chechens' sense of religiosity and nationalism (Bennigsen & Wimbush, 1986). Despite all the negative and positive changes in the identity of the Chechen people, they preserved the core of their national identity. Their return to their homeland was a great victory that nobody at that time talked about aloud; it encouraged the Chechen struggle for independence, deepening latent grievances that erupted in a very violent form in the early 1990s.

Discussion and Conclusions

In this chapter I discussed (1) story (2) memory; (3) metaphors; (3) hopes and fears; (4) freedom; and (5) nationalism. Below, I outline the key findings of this chapter.

First, Chechen people are great storytellers and are prone to telling their personal stories of hardship that keeps their collective memory alive. They are eager to tell their stories of the past, in which grievances, hardships and injustice are embedded. It is likely that a Chechen storyteller will tell stories related to the collective life of the Chechens,

rather than an individual person's life or it will have a special meaning for the people of Chechnya. Consequently, it is more likely that the Chechens use the pronoun "we" rather than "I". While most of their stories are about the atrocities of the other, some stories praise the other. This plays a role in helping to avoid Chechen youth's growing biases against the other while recognizing the perceived source of their troubles. Hence, it does not seem much grounded to argue that the Chechen struggle against Russia is blind and based on an abomination.

Moreover, it is possible to gain rich information about Chechens' history, feelings of grievances and joy, perceptions of the other, and nationalistic sentiments through their stories. Hence, it is feasible to argue that by themselves stories are a powerful tool for teaching information about Chechens' life, perceptions, and feelings. Moreover, stories are a means for communicating to youth past events to keep the collective memory alive. In some cases, this may have an adverse effect on children's education by fostering feelings of grievances and revenge. However, the compassionate and benevolent culture of the Chechens is likely to provide a delicate balance between hatred and sympathy.

Second, stories and memories are positively correlated, since they foster each other. Memories are important to analyze and understand the Russo-Chechen conflict as well as to design a solution to it. Popular stories survive, passing from generation to generation, although they may be subject to some change. Sometimes collective stories contribute to a conflict eventually becoming intractable because they impact people's minds and shape their psychologies.

Moreover, stories are always valuable resources to learn about people's perceptions, grievances, and expectations. Both collective and individual memories can

also be constructive because they also contain good stories about the other. The subjects of this study told both positive and negative stories about the other. Stories are the raw materials of storytelling, which may become an important tool in designing an appropriate conflict resolution method to handle the differences of the parties to conflict. Storytelling as a means of conflict resolution is explained and discussed in more depth in Chapter 10- the dispute systems design chapter.

Third, people have meaningful metaphors of the Russo-Chechen conflict, which reflects their perceptions of this conflict. Many Chechen individuals expressed their meaning of the war with the metaphor “independence” or “freedom.” Others used such words as “genocide” or “ethnic cleansing.” All these metaphors display how people perceive the conflict. Obviously, most of the subjects of this study perceive the Russo-Chechen conflict as the independence of Chechnya and the Russian induced war aimed at Chechens’ eradication.

The Russian individuals, however, preferred to use the metaphor “blood,” “unnecessary war,” or “mistake.” Each of these metaphors has a strong meaning since they are powerful tools in revealing people’s images of the conflict. In many instances, the story participants described their own view of conflict by using a single metaphor, which is symbolic and contains a single word, or just a few words. In fact, metaphors can be very useful in assessing the conflict as it is understood by people, and in designing dispute resolution systems.

Moreover, it is meaningful to compare and contrast the metaphors of the Chechen and Russian subjects of this study to assess peoples’ attitudes to the conflict. Apparently, the Chechens’ metaphors are closely connected with their national aspirations or

grievances, whereas Russian metaphors are associated with the criticism and condemnation of war. The metaphors display that although the Russians do not necessarily agree with the Chechens' position, they do not approve of the war and violence as well.

Fourth, emotions such as fears and hopes are important to understand how people position their own lives and their own country within the holistic framework of the conflict. Naturally, the extended period of war and violence in Chechnya has affected people's lives dramatically. The respondents of this study were asked questions related to their personal hopes and personal fears as well as their country hopes and fears for the future. This study has revealed that the respondents are more prone to think about hopes and fears in terms of national issues rather than their own personal lives. Most see their own happiness linked to the fate of their country. Although this is not meant to measure the level of nationalism among the Chechens, it indicates what kind of resolution of the Chechen question would be acceptable by its people.

For the majority of the Chechen respondents their personal hopes for the future of their country are more important, while they also perceive their personal future as connected with the fate of their country. The majority of the subjects expressed a belief that a happy personal future entails a peaceful environment in Chechnya that needs to be an independent and prosperous country. Based on the respondents' images it is possible to argue that the Chechens do not desire a negative peace in Chechnya. They primarily want to see Chechnya's victory over Russia followed by a permanent peace. However, most respondents did not express a strong belief in forging a permanent peace, although about 59 percent of the respondents expressed their hopes for Chechnya's independence.

Many respondents expressed their concern that as long as Chechnya is a neighbor of Russia, peace in the region will be volatile, and only a strong Chechen state may bring peace into Chechnya.

Other interviewees (37.2 percent) expressed their hope for victory over Russia, while worrying about the possibilities of a lasting war and the dependence of Chechnya on Russia (52.9 percent). A total of 23.5 percent of the subjects revealed their major fear for their country as ceasing to fight the Russians, because this automatically would mean losing the war to Russia. It may seem paradoxical that some respondents do not want war when they also fear secession to war. However, they want peace provided that Chechnya wins the war.

Slightly more than ten percent of the respondents expressed their concern about the depopulation of Chechnya, worrying about the movement of new waves of newcomers into the country. Older generations who witnessed the devastation of Chechnya by the newcomers in the late 1940s and 1950s worry more about Chechnya's depopulation. Nevertheless, many respondents think that the times and conditions have drastically changed so that outsiders would not settle in Chechnya. Moreover, the war conditions do not offer a favorable life for outsiders to settle in Chechnya.

Some subjects of this study (about 10 percent) explained their country's fear as losing cultural values. They argued persuasively that both the first and second Chechen wars have affected their sacred values deeply and negatively, ruining such strong institutions as family, and cultural institutions. Moreover, they contended that the strong and sacred Chechen family was a direct target of the Russians, since losing family values would make Chechens weaker. The mass rape of Chechen women by Russian soldiers is

also perceived as part of a deliberate Russian policy of ethnic cleansing similar to the rape-war process undertaken by Serbian forces in Bosnia. In addition, they argued that leaving Chechen youth illiterate is a rational choice of the Russian authorities, which in the long run will work against Chechnyan society.

Fifth, the notion of freedom has a central place in the Chechen culture. The Chechen way of life has given a special meaning to the notion of freedom. Some argue that this is a product of Islamic faith, whereas others think that Chechens had this value long before Islam emerged in the region. It is also argued that the Chechen radicals have created myths of freedom to forge their own ideology to mobilize peoples' nationalist feelings and deep patriotic emotions to go to war against the Russians. However, it does not reflect the full reality of the situation because the overall history of the Chechen people confirms that freedom was always dear to the people of the region. Although the respondents did not provide any clear evidence of the use of the word *marsho* in their everyday life tacitly, their stories also did not support the reverse. Rather, some respondents claimed that the people of the mountains, including Chechens, want to live free or die; if only because living with the rules of a foreign invader is unacceptable. The centuries-old resistance of the Chechens and other mountain people of the Caucasus to Russians is evidence that the local people do not accept any outside authority in any form, be it tsarist imperialism, Soviet communism, or contemporary Russian semi-liberalism.

Freedom is a basic human need for all people, including Chechens, whose everyday living denotes to it a particular cultural meaning. In political terms, the crucial point is that Chechens do not regard themselves as free within the Russian Federation.

The Chechen people's perception of freedom cannot be changed forcefully. This study presents strong evidence that as long as the Chechen perceptions have not changed, it is impossible for the Russians to win the armed struggle. However, the hostilities can be negotiated to bring about a satisfactory resolution acceptable to the Chechens. Only then can the outcome be regarded as strong, permanent, and sustainable.

Finally, nationalism and ethnocentrism arose in Chechnya in the early 1990s with Chechen aspirations for independence and after the declaration of its independence. As the subjects of this study mentioned, the in-group solidarity among the Chechens was always solid because of their customs, which became even stronger with the coming of Islam due to its contribution to the existing social order. The fact that Russia has always tried to apply its policies to the people of the North Caucasus by force made the people's resistance even more tenacious. Nationalism became one of the major factors in mobilizing the Chechen struggle against the Russian armed forces in the 1990s. However, it started to diminish by the early 2000s. One of the major reasons for its recess was the disunity among the Chechen leaders that confused many guerrilla fighters. The shift of the original goal—Chechnya's independence—is most likely to be another important reason. The decline in importance of nationalism in Chechnya is also one of the major reasons for the relative political stability in Chechnya nowadays. However, the recent events in Moscow's subway might be a premonition for a new wave of nationalist fear in the region.

Conclusion

This chapter has studied violence and its association with stories and memory, metaphors, emotions (hopes and fears), as well as the notions of freedom and nationalism. Based on the data, this chapter came to the conclusion that stories and memories influence people's psychology and behavior, presenting rich insight into both the analysis of the conflict and in formulating creative methods for its resolution.

Moreover, people may attach special meanings to their perceptions of a particular conflict through the metaphors they use. This chapter presents the images of the subjects of the Russo-Chechen conflict through the lens of metaphors. The metaphors used by the Chechens are generally associated with Chechnya's independence and tragedy, whereas the metaphors used by the Russians are related to their criticism of the war.

Further, people's feelings about their own future and about the future of their nation and country were also discussed in this chapter according to the data provided by the respondents. According to their stories, most Chechens perceive their personal happiness in connection with the well-being of their country. Likewise, their worst fears are connected with the troubles of their country and nation.

Chechen ideology is based on the notion of freedom, and it is discussed in this chapter. Whether the notion of freedom as used in Chechnya was authentic or artificially created to motivate the people is a key core question. The notion of freedom is widely used in the everyday life and language of Chechens. Its use is so tacit that most Chechens do not even notice its intricate meaning. The understanding of freedom constitutes the cornerstone of Chechen ideology, however, it is not created artificially.

Finally, the nationalist aspirations of Chechens are important in motivating people in their struggle with Moscow. Although nationalism was and is dynamic in Chechnya with vicissitudes at different times, it may be argued that it has always been strong enough to bring people together and make them fight for their common future.

The following chapter discusses the role of the media in the Russo-Chechen conflict. Its primary importance lies in the fact that not only has the media influenced the conflict in Chechnya, but the Chechen conflict has also influenced the course of development of the Russian media. It is also important to note that the propaganda war between the Kremlin and the Chechens has been rough and blatant, and continues to this day.

Chapter 9

The Practice of Conflict Management in Chechnya: The Role of Civil Society

Organizations and the OSCE

Introduction

This chapter deals with the role of civil society organizations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in managing war in Chechnya. Conflict management practice in Chechnya is not rich and productive for a number of reasons. Although Russia has been subject to external criticism for its brutal policy in Chechnya, the Chechen question is regarded as an internal Russian matter that prevents international actors from playing an active role in the resolution processes. Russia's swaying willingness to allow external actors to take some initiatives in the Chechen predicament is another factor. The OSCE has been unable to fully perform its intervention plans in Chechnya because Russia frequently changes its policies permitting this organization to function in the region. Also, the OSCE's conflict management practice in Chechnya indicates that the institution is not capable of handling intractable ethnic conflicts in Chechnya, Abkhazia, Ossetia, and Karabakh. The grave nature of the war in the region is also discouraging for third party efforts that are weakened by ongoing military hostilities. However, the role of the OSCE in Chechnya should not be underestimated because, it is as an active actor trying to bring some positive change to the problem. Moreover, civil society organizations are also working to transform the crisis in Chechnya.

In this chapter, I discuss the third party efforts to manage the conflict in Chechnya at the official and unofficial levels. At the official level, two methods of conflict resolution were used: (1) mediation; and (2) negotiations. At the unofficial level, civil

society organizations mainly played a role in contributing to the resolution of the conflict. The official actors are the Russian Federation, the Chechen Republic of Ichkeriya, and the OSCE. The unofficial actors are the Union of the Committees of Soldiers' Mothers in Russia (CSMR), and the human rights organization Memorial.

Activities of the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers

The Committee of Soldiers' Mothers in Russia (CSMR) has made a considerable contribution to the resolution process of the Russo-Chechen conflict (Caiazza, 2002; Eichler, 2006). Above all, it attracted the attention of the mass media, Russian society, and the international public to the mass violations of human rights by and within the Russian armed forces. These activities enabled the Committee to defend the soldiers who refused to participate in the Chechen war (Eichler, 2006). The Committee organized soldiers' mothers to take their sons from Chechnya, and to stop the war. Although the war did not cease because of the activities of the Committee, its acts played a serious role in Moscow's reconsideration of its official policy against Chechnya (Eichler, 2006).

The Committee became a genuine civil society organization defending the human rights of the Chechen people inspired by the "politics of pity" among other factors (Oushakine, 2006). CSMR was the first Russian NGO to issue an antiwar statement in November 1994 demanding that Moscow immediately stop the war in Chechnya (Eichler, 2006).

In the construction of a culture of peace, women's role is important (L'Homme, 1999). The CSMR organized many antiwar activities throughout the first Chechen war. In 1995, the International Congress of Soldiers' Mothers "For Life and Freedom" was

organized in Moscow (Eichler, 2006). In 1996, the CSMR organized a conference called “Chechen War and Human Rights” (Caiazza, 2002). In 1999, the CSMR began a public campaign to protest the Russian state’s falsified official figures of human losses in Chechnya. The same year the CSMR issued several statements and letters addressed to the highest state authorities, demanding an immediate political process to settle the war in Chechnya. In 2000, the CSMR called the second International Congress of Soldiers’ Mothers “For Life and Freedom” that took place on February 26–27 in Moscow (Caiazza, 2002). About seventy committees of soldiers’ mothers and two Russian and European human rights organizations adopted resolutions in support of soldiers’ mothers’ activities. In 2002, the CSMR called the third International Congress of Soldiers’ Mothers “For Life and Freedom” that was held in March. About one hundred regional organizations of Russian soldiers’ mothers and fourteen Russian and international human rights organizations adopted resolutions in solidarity with the soldiers’ mothers to develop a further strategy. In the same year, the CSMR called the conference of Soldiers’ Mothers “Chechen deadlock: where to search for a road to peace?” that took place October 18–19, 2002 in Moscow (Caiazza, 2002).

When the Antimilitarist Radical Association (ARA) started to fight against mandatory military service in Russia during the 1990s, the most remarkable support came from the CSM, which expressed the mothers’ political voices in discussions of Moscow’s military policies. The Russian mothers believed that they should pursue their sons’ interests as part of their maternal responsibilities (Caiazza, 2002).

The CSMR had an amnesty project for all the participants of the Chechen war. The State Duma accepted this project in 1997. Moreover, from 1998 to 1999, the State

Duma accepted the CSMR's demands for amendments to the Law of the State Budget concerning burials and identification of servicemen killed in Chechnya. In 1998, the CSMR began a broad public campaign for the amnesty of about 40,000 soldiers who were fugitives and who had suffered from human rights violations. In June 1998, the State Duma accepted this amnesty (Amadeo, 2006).

The CSMR received a number of awards that acknowledge its successes in the field of human rights protection and antiwar campaigns. In 1995, the CSMR was honored with two awards: the Sean MacBride medal (Ireland) and Professor Rafto Award (Norway) for its human rights and peace-related activities. In 1996, the CSMR received the Right to Livelihood Award for opposing militarism and violence in Chechnya and in protecting the rights of Russian soldiers. In 2000, the CSMR was honored with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation Award (Germany), for its human rights protection activities.

Memorial's Human Rights Actions

A number of human rights organizations in Russia are involved in human rights issues in Chechnya. One of the most remarkable organizations is the *Memorial*, human rights institution, which emerged as a social movement during the years of *perestroika*. Its main task was to awaken and preserve of the societal memory of severe political persecution in the former Soviet Union.

Memorial specializes in research and human rights, and has education centers in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and several other cities within the Russian Federation as well as in some post-Soviet republics such as Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Latvia, and Georgia. *Memorial* collects information about the violation of human rights in the territories of the

former Soviet Union, which are valued by international human rights organizations, as the United Nations, the OSCE, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Memorial has taken risky observation missions to dangerous regions of armed conflict such as Nagorno-Karabakh, Tajikistan, Transdnistria, in the zone of the Ossetia-Ingushetia conflict, and Chechnya. In January 1994, *Memorial* organized the formation of an antiwar front uniting more than one hundred social and political organizations. *Memorial* has been active in many regions of Russia as an organization for social and legal counseling for refugees and displaced persons.

Memorial addresses the protection of freedoms and victims of war as well as struggling against ethnic discrimination. During the Soviet era, *Memorial* organized a series of protest actions. In the spring of 1989, Soviet servicemen brutally dispersed people meeting in Tbilisi (the capital of Georgia) that led to many deaths. As a result, *Memorial* protested the brutal abuse of human rights in Moscow. *Memorial* also persistently demanded freedom for all remaining political prisoners in the USSR.

Perhaps no other civil society organization has done so much as Memorial to detect human rights abuses and advocate for the protection or people's rights in Chechnya. Its activities range from reporting war crimes committed by Russian servicemen in Chechnya³⁶ to criticizing Moscow's war policy as well as the human rights abuses. As a result, members of *Memorial* have suffered.

Natalia Estemirova, an award-winning Russian human rights activist and board member of *Memorial*, who investigated murders and abductions in Chechnya, was abducted in Grozny and found dead in Ingushetia on July 15, 2009. It is believed that her

death is connected to her investigations of government-backed militias in the country (Kramer, 2009). *Memorial* issued a statement following her death, pointing out that the Chechen authorities had expressed dissatisfaction with her work more than once. After Estemirova's tragic death, Oleg Orlov, chair of *Memorial*, accused Ramzan Kadyrov, the Chechen president, for her death. President Medvedyev felt it necessary to point out Kadyrov's innocence (Barry, 2010).

The following events in Chechnya demonstrate that Estemirova's murder was an organized crime. Less than a month later, the head of the children's charity "Save the Generations," Zarema Sadulayeva, and her husband Alik Dzhabrailov were also found in a car in Grozny with fatal gunshot wounds.³⁷ Moreover, Sergei Kovalev, a member of the Russian State Duma from 1993 until 2003, contributed to the protection of human rights in Chechnya. In 1993, he co-founded the movement *Choice of Russia* that later became a political party and was renamed as *The Democratic Choice of Russia*. This movement has become an important advocate for human rights protection in Chechnya.

Even though Kovalev was Yeltsin's human rights adviser he was publicly opposed to Russia's military involvement in Chechnya in December 1994 (Kovalev, 2008). He kept in contact with Chechen fighters, and urged Russian soldiers to surrender. Kovalev personally witnessed and reported the realities of the first Chechen war. His daily reports via telephone and on TV galvanized Russian public opinion against the war. For his activism, he was removed in 1995 from his post in the Duma. Kovalev was an outspoken critic of authoritarian tendencies in the administrations of Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin. In 1996, he resigned as head of Yeltsin's presidential human rights commission. In 2002, he organized a public commission to investigate the 1999 Moscow

apartment bombings for which Chechens were held responsible. However, the public commission was paralyzed when one of its members Sergei Yushenkov was assassinated,³⁸ another member Yuri Shchekochikhin was allegedly poisoned with thallium,³⁹ and its legal counsel and investigator Mikhail Trepashkin was arrested.

Viktor Popkov, another Memorial activist, was a pacifist who taught non-violence. Since 1995, Popkov negotiated the release of dozens of civilian hostages and prisoners of war, delivered humanitarian aid to refugees, and documented atrocities in Chechnya. He also helped to release some of the Russian prisoners of war held in the presidential palace in Grozny just before the Russian bombing in 1995, and he filmed the aftermath of the Novye Aldi massacre in 2000.⁴⁰

In 1999, Popkov conducted a forty-day hunger strike to protest the renewal of the war in Chechnya. Afterwards, he became involved in attempts to restore contacts between the Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov and the Russian federal authorities (Roshchin, 2009). During the second Chechen war, Popkov often was arbitrarily detained by the security forces and his humanitarian activities were severely hindered by the Russian military.⁴¹ On April 18, 2001, Popkov was fatally shot near the embattled village of Alkhan-Kala in Chechnya while delivering medical supplies to civilians. Soon afterwards, he died in a military hospital in Krasnogorsk, Moscow Oblast, without regaining consciousness.⁴²

Lidia Yusupova is another *Memorial* activist whose activities are also noteworthy. She became a human rights activist during the second Chechen war, using her legal expertise and personal experience obtained during both wars to assist others who were entangled in the bloody conflict. She has been working for years to document human

rights abuses and torture in Chechnya. Even today, Yusupova gathers testimony from Chechen people whose rights are violated, and presses their cases with law enforcement and military agencies. In addition to providing the victims with legal assistance, she informs the world's public about violations of human rights in Chechnya that are committed by both Russian servicemen and some Chechen militia. The BBC News Service described Lidia as the bravest woman in Europe, and representatives of Amnesty International have similarly declared that she is one of the most courageous women working in Europe. Both Yusupova and her organization were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize which resulted in receiving many death threats over the telephone (Berglund, 2006).

The environment for *Memorial's* activities worsened lately, threatening the activists' lives. On July 18, 2009, following Estemirova's death, *Memorial* suspended its activities in the Chechen Republic stating that it cannot risk the lives of its colleagues even if they are ready to die in order to carry on their work.

The OSCE in Chechnya

The OSCE started its activities in Chechnya in April 1995 by providing assistance to Chechens and Russians. The Chechen conflict is one of the most important issues on its agenda since the beginning of the second Chechen war in 1999 (Bloed, 2000). Russia provided its needed consent when the OSCE states decided to send an Assistance Group (AG) to Chechnya (Shkolnikov, 2009). The OSCE mandate included two main dimensions: (1) human activities, and (2) a crisis management role (OSCE, 1995-2010a). The main tasks performed by the OSCE AG included: (1) promoting respect for human

rights and fundamental freedoms through developing democratic institutions and processes; (2) facilitating the delivery of international aid to the region; (3) working with the Russian authorities and other international organizations to ensure the return of refugees and internally displaced people to their homes; (4) promoting the peaceful resolution of the crisis within the principle of the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation; (5) pursuing dialogue and negotiations; and (6) supporting efforts to promote the rule of law, order and public safety (Skagestad, 2010). In general, the OSCE started its work in Chechnya successfully. Moscow even permitted Tim Guldemann, the Swiss diplomat, to guide the Khasavyurd negotiations that yielded a peace accord in 1996 (Gilligan, 2010).

In March, 1995, the Kremlin allowed the OSCE permanent presence in Chechnya (Hearst & Steele, 1995). The OSCE AG to Chechnya began working in Grozny on April 26, 1995 and operated there until December 16, 1998, when the AG's international staff was evacuated to Moscow because of the deteriorating security situation (Gilligan, 2010). In subsequent months, the AG conducted several working visits to Chechnya. However, renewed armed hostilities in the region required the remaining AG local staff to be evacuated to Ingushetia in September 1999 (OSCE, 1995-2010a). It took more than a year for local AG staff to move to the new AG office in Znamenskoye in the north of Chechnya in December 2000. In 2001, one of the immediate priorities of AG's activities in Chechnya was to ensure the return of its international staff to this country (OSCE, 1995-2010a). The negotiation process began in 2000 to solve technical problems impeding the AG's return to Chechnya, and eventually it resulted in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Security between the AG and the Ministry of Justice

of the Russian Federation that enabled the AG's international staff to return to Chechnya on June 15, 2001 (OSCE, 1995-2010a).

The relations of the OSCE and Russia have both cooperative and competitive dimensions (Freire, 2005). The OSCE's activity in the Russian Federation is affected by Russia's behavior towards the organization. While the OSCE has to promote its own principles and conciliatory procedures, it also has to reconcile these principles, to which Russia became committed, with Russian aspirations and national interests, which in several instances have become incompatible goals (Cornell, 1999).

Most importantly, the AG crisis management role became engaged in mediation activities together with the Russian Federation and the local authorities aimed at the promotion of a peaceful resolution of the crisis and the stabilization of the situation (Bloed, 1995). This process was accomplished through dialogue, respect for the territorial integrity of Russia, and was in accordance with OSCE principles that were laid down in the Decision of the Permanent Council of 11 April 1995 (OSCE, 1995-2010a). In the pursuit of its tasks, the AG initially enjoyed freedom of movement, and was allowed to establish relations with civilian and military representatives as well as individual members wishing to contact the AG. Later, however, its activities were constrained by Moscow as military operations in Chechnya intensified that generated severe criticism in the OSCE's Istanbul Summit of 1999 (Clinton, 1999).

The relationship between the mission members and the local authorities as well as with the Russian Federation was not always warm, which rendered its activities more difficult (Freire, 2005). The difficulties in the AG's work were enhanced with the "misinterpretation of the mission's mandate, and personal threats to OSCE officers,

including attacks against the AG's premises in Grozny in the fall of 1995 and in August 1998" (Freire, 2005:162). All of these Intimidation tactics led to the AG's withdrawal from Chechnya, which prevented the mission from pursuing the tasks envisaged in its mandate. This latent tension shaped the parties' perceptions about the OSCE's involvement (Shkolnikov, 2009).

At first, the Chechen authorities demonstrated their satisfaction with the AG's activities (Shkolnikov, 2009). They even expressed interest in the support the AG could offer with regard to post-conflict rehabilitation, in particular, the reconstruction of the economy and infrastructures, and the training of public officials. However, this interest did not last long, as their positive attitude gave place to harsh criticism (Freire, 2005). Because the Chechens were demanding full independence from Russia, that undermined the principle of Russia's territorial integrity. The Chechens criticized the organization for supporting the idea of resolving the conflict within the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation while welcoming the OSCE's presence as a way of internationalizing the issue (Freire, 2005).

Shortly after the OCSE started its mission, it appeared that neither the Chechen side nor the Russian side was happy with OSCE policy toward the region (Freire, 2005). In 1997, when Tim Guldemann, the head of the AG, made a comment that Chechnya was still part of the Russian Federation, the OSCE personnel were ordered out of the republic by the Chechens who saw Chechnya as a *de jure* independent state since 1996. The situation worsened with the resumption of armed hostility in 1999 that endangered the safety of the mission members (Shkolnikov, 2009).

For the Russian government, international mediation between the state of Russia and one of its “subjects” does not make sense due to the internal nature of the problem (Skagestad, 2010). Russia makes it known on every occasion possible that it is fighting terrorism in Chechnya in the same way it would in any other town in the Russian Federation. The September 11 2001 events in the United States further emboldened Russia to declare that its struggle with the Chechens was within the framework of the international “war on terror” (Bacon, 2007). When the United States announced a global war on terror after September 11, Russia was pleased and welcomed this international effort knowing that it would also assist Russia to find legitimacy in its brutal approach to the Chechen problem (Gilligan, 2010).

On one occasion, Sergei Ivanov, the Defense Minister of Russia, said that whoever hoped Russia would start negotiations with Chechens should negotiate first with Osama bin Laden or Mullah Omar, equating the Chechen rebels with international terrorists and al-Qaida within Afghanistan (Freire, 2005). At the very least, Moscow wanted to make it known that the Chechen issue was as important to it as the al-Qaida issue was to the US and its Western allies. Putin remarked that Russia did not negotiate with terrorists, it destroyed them (Litvinovich, 2004). Considering itself a superpower, or at least a great power, Russia sees no need or reason for international involvement in the Chechen question.

From the very beginning, the Russian position towards the OSCE has been ambiguous (Freire, 2005). This ambiguity has been especially clear with regard to the OSCE’s activities in Chechnya. On the one hand, Russia wanted the OSCE in the region to win world public opinion approval and to prevent other international and regional

organizations from involving themselves in the Chechen question. On the other hand, it wanted to limit the activities of the OSCE to coordinating humanitarian aid only (Shkolnikov, 2009). Russia has always been unwilling to let any outside entity, including the OSCE, intervene politically in Russia's Chechen problem (Asbarez, 2010).

Russia's expectations were that the OSCE would approve Moscow's war on terrorists, and when they were not fulfilled, Russia did not hesitate to criticize OSCE policies (Zellner, 2005). It was not coincidental that Russia's foreign minister Ivanov mentioned that the OSCE could be effective only if it took into account the interests of all participating states, implying that it was using selective approaches that undermined the basic principles of the organization's functioning (Freire, 2005).

When Russia renewed its military intervention in Chechnya in 1999, and violent combat resumed, the West had new concerns regarding the proclaimed democratic orientation of the Russian Federation as well as its peaceful efforts to resolve disputes. In the Istanbul Summit Declaration, the OSCE states reaffirmed their belief that a political solution to the Chechen question was essential.⁴³ In 2004, the OSCE-Russia relationship deteriorated when Russia accused the organization of double standards regarding the way it treated the issues (Oganesyan, 2004). The OSCE states criticized Moscow for not fulfilling its obligations (Freire, 2005). In addition to Russia's aggressive Chechen policy in 2003 and 2004, Moscow did not fulfill its commitment to withdraw Russian military forces from Moldova and Georgia, two former Soviet republics, further deteriorating relations with the OSCE (Freire, 2005). The Kremlin supported its uncompromising position, especially in the case of Georgia, with these republics' alleged support of

Chechen terrorist operations in Russia. Georgia has always denied such accusations, but it did not help in improving Russian-Georgian relations (Cornell & Starr, 2009).

The second Chechen war brought about more difficulties in OSCE involvement in the Chechen question. During the first war, OSCE facilitation and mediation efforts produced visible results (OSCE, 1995-2010c). During the second Chechen war, increasing constraints were placed by Moscow on the organization's decision-making and implementation efforts. For example, in the summer of 1995, the OSCE was successfully involved in the negotiations for the release of over a thousand people in a local hospital in Budyenovsk, who were taken hostage by the Chechen leader Shamil Basayev over his demands for the resumption of negotiations regarding the conflict in Chechnya (OSCE, 1995-2010c).

Russia wanted the AG to concentrate on the distribution of humanitarian aid and the resettlement of refugees, leaving aside the political settlement of the conflict (Nikolaev, 2003). Repeated calls from both AG and OSCE headquarters for the cessation of hostilities, the conduct of negotiations, and efforts to find a political solution to the conflict have been ignored by Russia. While negotiations with Chechen officials took place, Moscow continued rejecting all offers of third party mediation arguing that the separatists were terrorists and unless they surrendered their armaments there could be no solution (BBC, 1999).

Boris Yeltsin made it publically known at the OSCE Istanbul summit in 1999 that a lasting peace in the Chechen Republic and so-called peace talks with the Chechen secessionists were not the same thing, and therefore, no talks with the terrorists would take place (BBC, 1999). He also stressed that Russia wanted peace and a political

solution to the situation in Chechnya, and to achieve peace Chechen terrorist gangs had to be totally eradicated (Jenkins, 1999). Yeltin's ideas were supported by other Russian politicians such as Nikolai Britvin, the Deputy Representative for Southern Russia. He argued that the OSCE and others who were discussing the necessity for political dialogue with the insurgent leaders were either shortsighted or had hidden motives.⁴⁴

Russian Foreign Ministry sources made it explicit that the OSCE could play a certain positive role in resolving the Russo-Chechen conflict, but only after the 'anti-terrorist' operation in Chechnya had been brought to a successful conclusion (RFE/RL, 1999). Despite Russian claims, the OSCE has considered the situation a matter of international concern, as displayed in the Istanbul Summit in 1999, where the OSCE member states clearly condemned all forms of terrorism, but underscored the need for respecting international norms, particularly with regard to international standards on human rights and humanitarian law (Mason, 1999). In addition, the OSCE has repeatedly asked its member states not to use the fight against terrorism as an excuse for human rights violations (Freire, 2005).

Despite repeated appeals for the cessation of violence and violations of human rights in Chechnya, the international community has remained mostly inactive mainly due to Russia's great power status (Skagestad, 2010). Western pressure on Moscow usually focuses on human rights, ignoring concrete measures such as economic sanctions. Many subjects in this study expressed their concerns about the West's naivety, believing that the Western states could force Russia to comply with the established international rules of human rights. On the other hand, the Kremlin has accused the OSCE member states of applying double standards to Chechnya while addressing other ethnic conflicts

with different tactics. Russia seemingly violated its own commitments to the OSCE by invading Chechnya in 1999 (Freire, 2005).

The OSCE has maintained pressure on Russia regarding human violations in Chechnya that are often raised at the organization's multiple meetings. The OSCE's pressure resulted in Russia's decision to limit OSCE involvement and action in Chechnya (Gilligan, 2010). Both OSCE and independent reports emanating from the republic stress that arbitrary detentions during raids, looting, the physical abuse of villagers, extra-judicial executions, beatings, torture, and other human rights abuses committed by Russian and pro-Russian forces have not changed the political and military climate in the region (Williams, 2004).

With the amelioration of conditions in the field that eventually created minimum security guarantees for international observers, the OSCE has maintained pressure on the Russian Federation for the safe deployment of its observers in the field (Bloed, 2000). In April 2000, Russia agreed to the return of the OSCE AG to work within the framework of its 1995 mandate, with special emphasis on humanitarian projects, in collaboration with the Special Representative of the Russian President for Human Rights (OSCE, 1995-2010b). The group also concentrates on economic and environmental problems and offered support to facilitate a political solution. Nevertheless, by the end of 2000 there were no explicit moves to allow the return of the OSCE officers. Negotiations restarted in March 2001, and the Russian Ministry of Justice was made responsible for providing the necessary security guarantees. The AG was allowed to return to Znamenskoye, Chechnya in June 2001. This town is situated in the northern part of the country. With the aim of pursuing the principles stated in its 1995 mandate, the AG's return was understood as a

major breakthrough. Chairman Mircea Geoana noted that an important phase of the AG's efforts had ended, and the most difficult phase was yet to come (OSCE, 1995-2010b).

The restrictions imposed on AG's activities reveal the contradictions in Russian policymaking (Freire, 2005). While accepting the OSCE's involvement in appeasing the international community and to possibly prevent other international organizations from getting involved in the issue, Russia prevents the OSCE from having a relevant role in the field, since it interferes directly with Russia's activities and restrictive policies in the area. Russia wanted the OSCE to give up its political role in Chechnya, where the organization wanted the mission of monitoring human rights to continue (Dixon, 2003). The lack of agreement between the OSCE member states and Russia on the renovation of the AG's mandate led to the cessation of its activities on December 31, 2002. The OSCE office was closed in March 2003 (Dixon, 2003).

The OSCE AG stands ready to facilitate a political settlement of the crisis. Once the OSCE office was reopened, the AG started receiving requests for assistance concerning missing people and engaged in the delivery of humanitarian aid, in addition to the implementation of various projects, particularly those directed toward children and young people with the aim of supporting the post-violence social, psychological, and professional rehabilitation of victims (Freire, 2005). However, despite Russia's consent to the group's return, Moscow has shown its discontent toward the OSCE approach, criticizing it for its arousing passions surrounding a separatist republic instead of handling useful humanitarian projects (Gilligan, 2010). Russia wanted the OSCE mission to be withdrawn from Chechnya by the end of 2002, stating that the group's activity

should be confined to the coordination of humanitarian assistance, including the return of displaced persons. According to Russian sources, the political component of the OSCE AG mandate had been fulfilled in its entirety (Gilligan, 2010).

Moscow wanted to narrow the AG's tasks limiting its activities to humanitarian, economic, and environmental issues (Jack, 2003). Once an official of the OSCE noted that "It is important for the OSCE to have a presence in Chechnya, with a broad mandate... If the OSCE can continue its work in Chechnya in a way that is acceptable to all parties, this can contribute to reducing instability, insecurity and lawlessness."⁴⁵ Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov expressed Russia's position by commenting that the OSCE failed to assess the new reality in the breakaway republic where the situation is perceived to be returning to normal.⁴⁶

In 2003, Moscow prepared a referendum on a new constitution and new presidential election in the Chechen republic (Shkolnikov, 2009). The Russian authorities invited a team of experts from the OSCE and the Council of Europe to visit the republic and assess the preparations for the referendum. The gesture was a testimony to Russia's openness to constructive cooperation with international organizations in Chechnya (Freire, 2005). Despite considering the referendum as a first step in the resolution of the conflict through political reconciliation, the OSCE drew attention to the fact that 'deep skepticism', which was not a favorable indicator prevailed among members of civil society. With respect to the referendum's expected results, the OSCE was halfhearted on the expected constitutional changes stating it remained uncertain as to whether it would bring about peace.⁴⁷ Many Chechen political analysts claimed that the referendum would

worsen the political situation in the republic and incite radicalism, destroying any opportunity for dialogue (Aliyev, 2003).

The March 2003 referendum in Chechnya paved the way for the presidential elections in October 2003 (Wood, 2007). The OSCE was not able to monitor the October 2003 elections when Akhmad Kadyrov, a high profile Chechen collaborator with the Kremlin, was elected president (Shkolnikov, 2009). Allegedly, the election was fraudulent and the new pro-Kremlin Chechen president seemed to point towards Moscow's option for an imposed settlement (Wood, 2007). The new Chechen President managed to impose some order in the republic by brute force before he was assassinated on May 9, 2004 (Gurin, 2004). In August 2004, Alu Alkhanov was elected Chechen president in a non-transparent ballot with the tacit approval of the Kremlin (Wood, 2007). Alkhanov did not promise substantial political improvements in the republic that would contribute to the resolution of the problem. He was replaced by Ramzan Kadyrov, Akhmed Kadyrov's son, in 2004 (Hughes, 2007).

Since 2003, Moscow has repeatedly stressed that the war in Chechnya is over. In 2009, the Kremlin claimed victory (Klussmann, 2009). Revealed Russia's "peace" policy, and explaining why the Chechens were not dissatisfied that the OSCE activities ceased in the republic in the late 1990s and early 2000s. On many occasions, the Chechens argued that the AG was not active in Chechnya, and many complaints against human rights abuses were ignored by it. Despite Chechen Foreign Minister Ilyas Akhmadov's requests to send observers to Chechen villages targeted by Russian forces to witness the level of destruction and human rights abuse, the OSCE AG did nothing and remained silent, which generated wide criticism of the organization (Freire, 2005).

In fact, the Kremlin adopted a tough position regarding both negotiations with the Chechens labeling them “terrorists,” and toward the direct political involvement of the OSCE in the republic. The constraints imposed on the organization led to the hampering of its efforts, and ended in the withdrawal of OSCE activities from the Chechen republic (Jack, 2003). Proposals regarding a settlement based on the Swiss canton model that would allow political representation of the different groups, implying participation and dialogue, and eventually reducing competition for power and the radicalization of positions in such a fragmented society were also unsuccessful (Freire, 2005).

The OSCE’s involvement in the affairs of other former Soviet republics is another source of tensions with Russia. The OSCE has been influential in former Soviet republics such as Azerbaijan and Armenia through its direct involvement, including preventive diplomacy, mediation, and monitoring activities, despite any clear signs of success in resolving the conflicts in these countries (Cameron, 2009). Russia still considers the former Soviet republics as its sphere of political-economic influence, and therefore it uses its veto power over the organization’s decisions that are adopted by the consensus of the member states.⁴⁸

For a successful intervention by a third party as well as the transformation of the Russo-Chechen conflict there are at least two pre-conditions that need to be fulfilled. First, Moscow should abandon its stubborn claim that the bandits and terrorists in Chechnya it struggles with do not represent the Chechen people. Second, the Chechen nationalists should agree that the final status they seek for Chechnya excludes total independence. Only then, can the Russo-Chechen conflict be mediated effectively and the republic be transformed into a new peaceful and open state. However, the question of

vital importance is whether everybody should stand by and observe the events until the parties agree with these pre-conditions or if the conflict resolution process should be conducted anyway in the hopes of bringing about some positive change. Later in the following chapter, I defend the second approach by designing an appropriate dispute system.

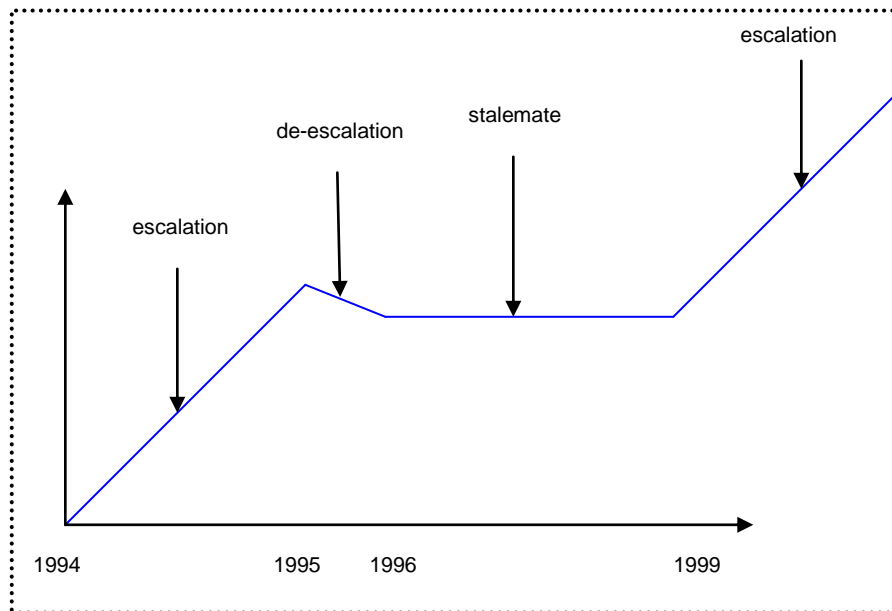
Negotiating the Conflict

The renewed Russo-Chechen conflict has been very dynamic (Matveeva, 2007). Similarly, the first, unlike the second Chechen war, was dynamic in terms of negotiations (Seely, 2001). The first formal negotiations over the conflict took place in May 1996 and lasted until November 1996. The outcome favored the Chechens because it contained the withdrawal of Russian troops and full independence for Chechnya in five years (Hoffman, 1996). Practically, it would mean a total withdrawal from the conflict by the Russians. However, the attack by Russian planes on Chechen guerrilla camps in August 1999 proved that the Russian side had not totally withdrawn from the conflict in 1996. Russian authorities claimed that Russian forces were there to defend Dagestan as part of the Russian Federation where the Chechen fighters tried to promote a mass uprising, but in fact, the combat soon expanded into Chechnya revealing Moscow's hidden goal (Gilligan, 2010).

The negotiations over the Chechen conflict illustrated that the parties to the conflict can employ other means of contact rather than fighting. Negotiations may take many forms ranging from communications exchanged from a distance to face-to-face dialogue (Druckman, 2008a). Rubin and Brown (1975) have defined negotiation as “the

process whereby two or more parties attempt to settle what each shall give and take, or perform and receive, in a transaction between them” (Druckman, 2008a:193). Negotiations between the Russians and the Chechens primarily started when the stalemate stage began in 1995 despite frequent fluctuations in the situation. The stages of conflict are roughly shown in the figure 5.

Figure 5: Dynamics of the Russo-Chechen conflict



The parties made some conciliatory moves that resulted in a de-escalation of the conflict in 1995. During the spring of that year, Russian troops moved their operations away from Grozny to other places in Chechnya, and Yeltsin called for spring peace initiatives that he renewed later in 1996 (Seely, 2001). His moves were probably calculated toward trying to build some trust in order to construct a reliable negotiation environment.

The Chechens were also trying to start negotiations with their adversary. However, the frequency of impasses was a major factor that kept negotiations from going forward (Wood, 2007). To break the impasses the Chechens developed some other negotiation strategies that they linked to other issues in the same area of negotiation. For example, when a group of one hundred and twenty-seven Chechen fighters led by Shamil Basayev attacked the town of Budyonnovsk in June 1995, and herded more than one thousand hostages into the town hospital, Basayev demanded two key things: an end to Russian military action in Chechnya, and the commencement of peace talks (Gilligan, 2010).⁴⁹ Basayev's demands were made through televised telephone negotiations with Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, as a good example of distance negotiation with some consequences for further negotiations in two ways (Druckman, 2008a).

First, the Chechens attempted to negotiate with what they had in their hands to break the impasse. Consequently, they tried to link their "Budyonnovsk negotiation" to another negotiation in the same area (Druckman, 2008). Second, the outcome of the negotiations increased the political pressure in Russia on the Russian government to negotiate with the Chechens. A cease-fire was called immediately, and soon thereafter, the negotiations started in Grozny between the Chechens and Russians under the auspices of the OSCE (Zürcher, 2007).

Russia had failed to reach its objectives through military measures, which ultimately brought it into the talks (Hughes, 2007). However, it was very difficult for the Russian delegation to negotiate because of the delegates' different views as some wanted to make a deal, while some others refused to talk with the guerrilla regime (Moore, 1996). The behavior of the delegates mirrored the different views of the Russian people

and politicians to the conflict.⁵⁰ Since the Russian team was composed of individuals with varying interests, it had neither a single agenda for the talks, nor a single position to defend it (Associated Press, 1995). The primary reason was that some of the team members were closer to Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, while others banded to President Yeltsin who was suspicious that Chernomyrdin (and later Lebed in 1996) would emerge as a possible threat to his position in the upcoming elections if negotiations were successful (Seely, 2001). Apparently, it was important to keep an intraparty negotiation going concurrent with those between both conflicting parties in “a two-level game” (Druckman, 2005:197). The conflicting expectations of the Russian negotiators not only resulted in a negotiation dilemma, but also created serious problems in reaching any successful outcome (Gall & Waal, 1998). Another threat to the negotiations was the inexperience of the Chechen negotiators and the fact that they were not allowed by their party leaders to give away too much in their role as Plenipotentiaries.⁵¹

Despite all the inconsistencies, an initial agreement over Chechen disarmament and the gradual withdrawal of Russian troops was signed on July 21, 1995 (Siren & Fowkes, 1998). Within two days the cease-fire agreement was signed by both parties (Associated Press, 1999). A final accord was signed on July 30, 1995, soon after which Russian Prime Minister Chernomyrdin declared that the war was over (Siren & Fowkes, 1998).

However, neither side seriously complied with the agreement. The peace process was disrupted in early October when one of the Russian team negotiators, General Romanov, was badly injured in a bomb attack (Yablokova, 2003). He was a moderate and respected by all sides in the dispute. This attack occurred at a time when Romanov

was making progress in the peace talks with the Chechens (Yablokova, 2003). The timing of the attack raised suspicions that the event was aimed at sabotaging the peace talks (Moscow Times, 2003). There were rumors that some Russians wanted to kill him because of their interests in keeping the war ongoing for financial purposes (Seely, 2001).⁵²

After the attempted assassination of General Romanov, Russia declared that it was suspending the agreement reached in July (Seely, 2001). It then again tried to form a reliable puppet government in Chechnya with which to negotiate. Soon elections were held in Chechnya, which resulted in Doku Zavgayev, who was Russia's man, winning more than 90 percent of the popular vote, and he formed a government (Hughes, 2007). Soon, Russia found Zavgayev's government highly ineffective despite its "legitimacy" and turned again to the Chechen rebels for negotiations (Seely, 2003).

Before making it possible to arrange new peace talks, both sides suffered tremendous losses of resources (Gilligan, 2010). The Russian loss of men was so great that Yeltsin faced strong opposition from his generals in Chechnya who offered to hold talks with the new Chechen leader, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev.⁵³ In late May, the OSCE mediated peace talks resulting in Yeltsin and Chernomyrdin signing an agreement with Yandarbiyev, which proposed a cease-fire that was to begin on June 1, 1996 (Zürcher, 2007). However, the June cease-fire was ignored by both sides mainly due to the tough position held by the Russian Generals Kulikov and Grachev (Seely, 2001). This clearly demonstrated that the peace process was influenced by different groups within the Russian conflict party, each of whom had different goals, plans, and aspirations. The

intraparty opposition within the Chechens also made negotiations with the Russians more difficult.

On June 16, 1996, Yeltsin won the first round of the presidential elections in Russia with 35 percent of the votes (McFaul, 1997). The runner-up was the communist leader Gennady Zhuganov with 32 percent of the votes, and third place went to Alexander Lebed with 14.5 percent of the votes (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 1996). Now, Yeltsin needed Lebed in order to win the second round of the elections. Therefore, he immediately started to bargain with Lebed, offering him a senior position within his administration (Seely, 2001).

On July 3, 1996 Yeltsin was elected president of the Russian Federation for the second time, receiving 53.8 percent of the votes (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 1996). His alliance with Lebed played a decisive role in his victory (Seely, 2001). Soon before the second round of the elections, General Grachev was replaced by Lebed who also became head of the Security Council (Hughes, 2007). On August 10, 1996, Lebed was appointed as a representative of the Russian president in Chechnya. He decisively fought the intraparty opposition in Russia, and persuaded Yeltsin to dissolve Chernomyrdin's State Commission for Regulating the Chechen Conflict. This empowered Lebed to set up an environment for more successful negotiations with the Chechens (Seely, 2001).

On August 31, 1996, Lebed and Maskhadov, Chechen Chief of Staff, signed the Khasavyurt peace agreement, which finally established peace in the region.⁵⁴ Still it is hard to conclude that Lebed could have been able to stop the war and initiate negotiations toward settlement single-handedly, if there had not been the disastrous loss of Russian troops prior the peace talks in August 1996 (Gidley, 2005). The Khasavyurt agreement

ensured that the Russian side made concessions to the Chechens that they did not expect when talks commenced in 1995 (Seely, 2001). The overall situation in Chechnya was unfavorable for the Russians during the time when the talks took place, which influenced the negotiating behavior of the parties as well as the final outcome of the negotiations.⁵⁵

According to the Khasavyurt peace accord, Russian troops would be withdrawn from Chechnya and the question of Chechnya's independence would be frozen for five years until 2001 when a referendum would be held to determine the political status of Chechnya. On October 17, 1996, President Yeltsin fired Lebed as a result of intraparty conflict. Lebed reacted to his dismissal by saying that the situation in Chechnya would rapidly deteriorate (CNN, 1996 October 16). However, almost three years elapsed before military operations in Chechnya were renewed in 1999.

When the stipulations of the Khasavyurt and Moscow Agreements were violated in 1999, hopes for a peaceful resolution of the Russo-Chechen conflict died. This time Moscow had more sophisticated military plans to regain its lost position in Chechnya. After Russia achieved its objective, it balked at negotiations with the Chechens either explicitly or silently.

Akhmed Zakayev, once Aslan Maskhadov's special representative in Europe, argued that his meetings on November 18, 2001 with General Viktor Kazantsev, President Putin's plenipotentiary representative in the Southern Federal District, did not bring about any resolution (Politkovskaya, 2007). The Chechens perceived this meeting as a turning point in initiating a peaceful dialogue. The Chechen leader's representative suggested an immediate cease-fire and the initiation of negotiations, in addition to immediately stopping the purges that caused mutual alienation (Politkovskaya, 2007).

Zakayev also let Kazantsev know that Maskhadov was the chief Chechen negotiator, and they had a formula that “would allow Russia to remain an indivisible state” (Politkovskaya, 2007:204).

It was not exactly clear what kind of formula the Chechens had to preserve the wholeness of Russia, but the approach itself was a sign that the Chechen leaders were ready to resolve the problem within the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation. If this historical opportunity had been used, it would have brought about a long-lasting political solution to the Chechen predicament for Russia.

It is obvious that a weaker Russia has been more willing to negotiate with the Chechens, rather than a Russia with stronger political and economic capabilities. When Moscow gained military successes in Chechnya and removed certain internal political ambiguities, the Russian authorities tried to avoid negotiations with the Chechens, and the Kremlin started to call for the unconditional surrender of the rebels. This, in turn, weakened OSCE conflict management activities in Chechnya.

Conflict Regulation/Conflict Resolution: Prospects for Peace

As discussed in previous chapters the international mediation that arose in the Russo-Chechen conflict were not successful for a number of reasons. Above all else, both parties have incompatible goals that need to change in order to reach a resolution. However, they have taken hard positions and are not willing to shift them. The Russian government’s military, political, and legal initiatives have failed to address the root causes of the conflict. Some conflict resolution attempts have taken place in Chechnya by a number of civil society as well as international organizations. The Russian Soldiers’

Mothers' organization and the human rights organization, Memorial, have been among other civil society institutions who have intervened in Chechens' human rights affairs. The OSCE and the Red Cross organizations are the international institutions that have been actively involved in the Chechen conflict. Although the OSCE has played an active and important role in bringing humanitarian aid to the region as well as in protecting human rights in Chechnya, it has not been very effective in terms of bringing about political change in the region. The Red Cross organization, on the other hand, organizes and leads humanitarian relief assistance missions after emergencies. The OSCE whose primary responsibility was defined as that of mediator has especially not been successful primarily due to Russia's unwillingness to cooperate. Russia perceives itself as a super, or at least, a great power that needs the OSCE in Chechnya for propaganda purposes only.

Today, Russia claims that the Chechen conflict is over and the republic has started to heal its wounds. Further, it claims that Chechnya has stability, Grozny is rebuilt, children go to school, and the Chechen government is strong enough to preserve political stability in the republic. However, it is apparent that the underlying structural causes of the conflict are not removed. "Band-Aid" solutions have been applied to treat the symptoms of the conflict rather than its deep causes. The Chechen guerrilla fighters are not totally defeated. They are quite strong and well organized. It is difficult for the Russian military to crush them entirely because of the support they receive from the local people. The Chechen diasporas in Europe are organized and that may influence domestic policy in Chechnya in the future. If the war were over then the Russian secret service would not hunt Chechen leaders abroad. Overall, the wounds of this war are too deep to

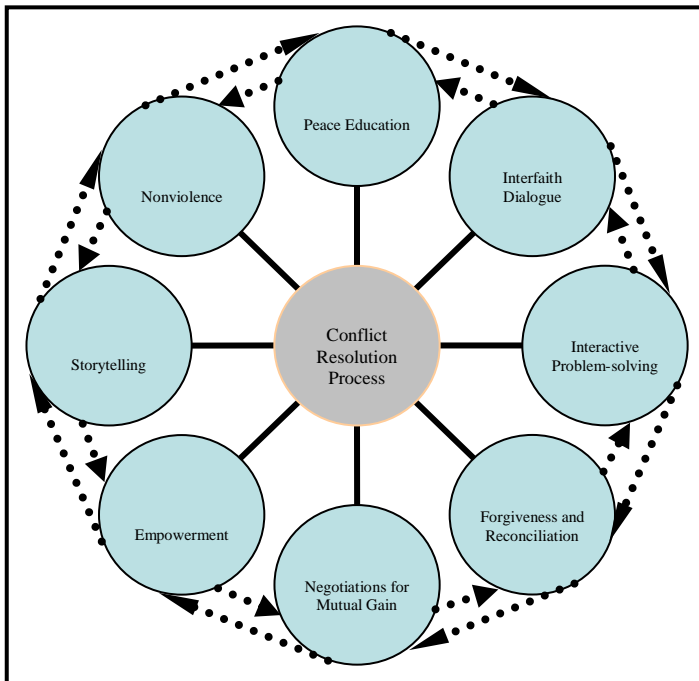
heal overnight. Thus, a long-term sustainable resolution of this conflict requires a thoughtful approach to address the underlying deep issues.

In the previous sections, I outlined two preconditions that need to be met to resolve/transform the Russo-Chechen conflict. First, it is necessary for the Kremlin to stop labeling all Chechen fighters as bandits and terrorists, even though surely there are some. This strategy is used by Russia to legitimize its use of force. However, the resolution of this conflict requires abandonment of the use of force. Russia should declare the Khasavyurd peace accord and the Moscow treaty valid. Such an approach would enable Russia to discuss the problems with those who fight about them. For the same reason the Chechens should not demand full independence as a precondition for peace talks. As this research has depicted, there is a model—the Tatarstan model—that might fit with the needs and aspirations of the majority of the Chechens, and satisfy the Russians too.

However, these two preconditions have not been met at this point, and it is not foreseen when they may be met. Will the conditions become ripe for a shift in both side's positions ever? It is hard to predict. Then there are two options: (1) to wait until the conditions become ripe for negotiations (Zartman, 2008); or (2) to take action on different levels to bring about some change to the situation- graduated reciprocation in tension-reduction or gradual reduction in tension (GRIT), a strategy set forth by Charles Osgood (Kriesberg, 1998). The first option is not favorable because of the indefinite period and the moral implications of waiting. The second option where the de-escalation process begins through a small and unilateral concession to the other side aimed at building trust and cooperation is exactly what the PACS field advocates.

Recently, many deep-rooted intractable ethnic conflicts have taken historic steps towards resolution (Byrne, 1995). Hence, arguing that intractable conflicts are irresolvable is meaningless. In any case, these negative and destructive arguments can and should be challenged.

Figure 6: Conflict resolution radial



While bloody battles between the Chechens and Russian servicemen took place, civil society organizations in Russia have done a tremendous job to mitigate violence in Chechnya both against the Chechen civilians and Russian soldiers. Peace is not elusive in Chechnya, but it should be struggled for. Peace is not only a product, it is also a process, and thus it is dynamic.

Although the political climate is not ripe for a permanent resolution of the Russo-Chechen conflict, a dispute systems design might be productive in addressing its

complexity. Conflict resolution practitioners employ a number of analytical tools to address the root causes of ethnic conflict depending on its nature (Lederach, Neufeldt, & Gulbertson, 2007). In this sense, I have designed a conflict resolution system that includes a number of elements as shown in Figure 6. The structural and psychocultural incentives such as peace education, problem solving workshops, and storytelling, etc. would help to create fertile conditions for further political resolution of the conflict (Byrne, 1995).

The following chapter explains how and why a set of conflict transformation activities will bring about the changes the Chechens and Russians need and seek to achieve. Conflict transformation efforts set goals, such as promoting nonviolent approaches to conflict, reducing intolerance, empowering the oppressed, encouraging reconciliation and dialogue, as well as negotiating for mutual gains among other things. These goals are pursued mostly through informal activities such as interactive problemsolving workshops, interfaith dialogues, or inter-ethnic community development projects. To achieve these goals a number of peacebuilding methods are to be employed to simultaneously address issues on different levels.

Discussions and Conclusions

This chapter discusses the third-party efforts within the context of the Russo-Chechen conflict in the 1990s and 2000s. It is also depicted in this chapter that a number of Chechen misbeliefs that should be abandoned. Misbeliefs held by Chechens include: (1) the West can punish Russia and restore justice in Chechnya; and (2) reaching one's objective through military means is easier. The OSCE involvement in Chechnya as a

mediator and a humanitarian organization has not proved too successful. Although the West has repeatedly condemned human rights violations in Chechnya its direct involvement in the Chechen question would be illegal, immoral, and impossible.

First, the Russo-Chechen conflict cannot be solely characterized as destructive; rather it also has a number of positive and constructive outcomes. One of the most incontrovertible products of the Russo-Chechen conflict is perhaps the growth and reinforcement of Russian civil society organizations such as the Committee of the Russian Soldiers' Mothers and Memorial. Although none of these organizations were established because of the Chechen conflict, their activities in the realm of human rights defense have been significant. The civil and national identity of these organizations provided them with special power and an opportunity to oppose Moscow's oppressive official policies. The maneuvering capability of these organizations is also impressive, unlike that the activities of the OSCE, which have been subject to Moscow's numerous bans. In a sense, Russian civil society organizations were instrumental in the testing of Russian democracy.

Second, Russia's main criticism of the OSCE relates to its concentration on the Caucasus and Central Asia that Moscow still perceives as its own sphere of influence, if not its backyard. Nonetheless, despite Russia's accusations that the organization was ineffective and that it was applying double standards, it allowed the OSCE to be involved in the Chechen situation to some extent to win approval from the international community. However, the OSCE's conflicting approaches to the Chechen question beyond humanitarian aid have worsened the OSCE-Russia relationship. On many occasions, Moscow drew limits to the OSCE activities in Chechnya.

The crisis management activities of the AG have encountered many difficulties, resulting from the limited power of persuasion of the OSCE along with reluctance from both parties to allow some flexibility in their rigid positions. While the resisting Chechens demand independence, Russia refuses to confer such status on them. In addition, Russia has imposed many restrictions on the OSCE's mediation role. Russian acquiescence to the deployment of the OSCE in Chechnya was a demonstration of the Russian desire to appease the international community while enhancing the OSCE's role in the European security framework. However, when confronted with the implementation of the mission's mandate, Russia was less cooperative, particularly after 1999. Moscow rejected the OSCE involvement in the process of conflict resolution even though the AG's mandate clearly stated its role as a mediator.

Third, the OSCE tried to renegotiate its return to Chechnya with Russia. The organization wanted to engage in a long-term program of technical cooperation, addressing the real needs of the republic, based on its expertise and experience. However, talks did not produce visible results, since Russia saw no point in a renewed involvement of the organization due to its lack of financial means for rebuilding and rehabilitation. Although the organization finally managed to return to Chechnya, the frictions between the OSCE and Russia presented additional evidence regarding the ineffectiveness of the OSCE as a mediator between the Kremlin and the Chechens.

Consequently, the prospects for the settlement of the conflict in Chechnya are not bright. In fact, Moscow does not seem eager to want to grant independence, nor even a broad and encompassing autonomous status to the rebel Chechen leadership, based on an agreement acceptable to both sides. The situation has changed as most of the population

wants peace, even if it is a difficult and slow process that includes corruption and other illicit activities that thwart progress. Russia will find the necessary grassroots support for the implementation of the principles and processes that have been overwhelmingly approved in the republic by referendum. The Russian position remains inflexible regarding staying with the eventual negotiations with the secessionists on the framing of an open dialogue and the consideration of different options at the negotiation table. An imposed solution remains at the top of the agenda. The existence within the Russian Federation of many groups seeking autonomy might justify Russia's belligerent stance in regards to not starting precedents that would encourage other secessionist movements within its territory that would be impossible to repress afterwards.

Fourth, it is evident that the OSCE's efforts and abilities to settle the conflict are limited. The political character of the organization's decisions and its non-enforcing nature means that the OSCE AG might facilitate the conduct of dialogue, but it has no concrete means of pressuring the parties to reach an agreement and to assure compliance with the agreed-upon measures. Probably only in the face of the mutual exhaustion of both parties could the OSCE AG play a more significant role with regard to the settlement of the conflict, preventing each side from losing face by accepting a compromise, thus acting as an international guarantor.

This effort could reveal an interesting approach in overcoming the protracted character of the Chechen war. However, Russia perceives the OSCE's efforts to be grudgingly included because it is a means of preventing other international organizations from getting involving in the affairs of post-Soviet countries. However, if the Russian efforts to increase the role of the OSCE are mostly motivated by the desire to obtain

legitimacy for its activities in the former Soviet Union, then the Russian pro-OSCE orientation might be questioned. In hot regions like Chechnya, Russia wants the OSCE's blessing but not its direct interference or supervision.

Fifth, Russian officials' claims of fighting terrorism in Chechnya are not supported with the forms and scope of the military operations. The entire population of Chechnya, including children, women, and the elderly, suffer human rights abuses because of Russian military operations and its security tactics. If Russia's goals of fighting terrorism are legitimate, the means are by far exceeding the needs, which has been a cause of concern for the international community. Moscow's harsh Chechen policies deepen the grievances of lay Chechens as well as making the conflict more intractable.

Moreover, the form and scope of Russia's use of force raises another legitimate concern. If the most important international actor involved in the Chechen issue is the OSCE, whose the role is limited and ineffective, then it is hard to claim that the third party role in the resolution of the Chechen question is successful. Hence, the current complex socio-political-economic and military situation in Chechnya entails a new format of conflict resolution with more civil society involvement and humanitarian participation.

Sixth, the scope of terrorism in Russia is not something generally agreed on. In other words, whether it is a part of international terror or not is debatable. Following the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington on 11 September 2001, the Chechen conflict again fitted neatly into a straightforward interpretation of Russian officials— it was part of the 'war on terror' in which Russia was engaged just as much as the United

States, the UK, and others. Even before the attacks of 11 September, the US, Russia and the UK were cooperating together in response to the perceived threat of Al Qaeda, the international terrorist organization. After that date, Putin clearly presented Russia as standing alongside the United States, having suffered similarly traumatic attacks (particularly the Moscow apartment bombings of 1999) and as the frontline of Europe's defense against so-called 'Islamic terrorism' in Chechnya. On the one hand, any such support for the war on terror was welcome in the West. On the other hand, although more emphasis appeared to be put on *understanding* Russian difficulties, the Western governments criticized Russian action in Chechnya from 1999 onwards. With the exception of a few Chechen nonviolent acts in Turkey, Russia has been the only space for Chechen bloody actions. This fact supports the claims that the Chechens fight Russia to gain their own rights having no connection to international terror organizations.

Finally, proceeding from the presumption that there are basically two main types of strategies to choose between, namely (a) a coercive/punitive strategy; and (b) constructive engagement, the realistic choice for an organization such as the OSCE narrows down to finding a workable version of the second option. Even that option is subject to serious limitations, since Russia, as a major member state of the OSCE and a party to the conflict, insists that the Chechen question is a purely internal matter. This highlights pessimistic sentiments about the feasibility of progress regarding the resolution of the conflict. Still, it cannot be completely excluded that a situation could arise (as it did back in 1995) when Russia may find within its own best interest to avail itself of the good offices of the OSCE to seek a way out of the seemingly never-ending imbroglio. Fortunately, almost everyone—including the Russian leadership—professes to agree that

the conflict cannot be solved by military means alone. A political solution has to be found. To achieve this result, major efforts must be made in several directions. Humanitarian needs must be alleviated, refugees/IDPs must be given a safe return to what is left of their homeland, the infrastructure must be rebuilt, and—most difficult of all—the distrust caused by the military campaign with its death and destruction must be dispelled. To have visible achievements it is necessary to employ a new set of innovative conflict resolution methods that are applicable to the Russo-Chechen conflict. Nonetheless, it is not realistic to expect any quick and easy solutions.

Conclusion

This chapter primarily discussed the role of civil society institutions and the OSCE in the management of the Russo-Chechen conflict. It concluded that while the efforts to transform this conflict were significant they did not bring about a positive and permanent change. The following chapter addresses designing an alternative conflict transformation process to what was discussed in this chapter. A transformation system designed and presented in Chapter 10 primarily contains unofficial Track II strategies, in which all segments of the societies and leaderships are included.

Chapter 10

Designing a Successful Conflict Transformation System

Introduction

In today's world, nationalists who fight against all the odds for total independence, such as the Chechen fighters are rare (Gurr, 2007). As discussed in Chapter 3, in the 1990s, there were many regions in Russia with secessionist aspirations, today however, there is only one—Chechnya, the first region to declare its independence from the Russian Federation in 1991. Even though the Russian authorities have recently declared that the war in Chechnya is over, there are a number of reasons not to agree with this claim. First, the initial objectives that the Chechen leaders formulated in their strategy are not fulfilled, neither have they abandoned their goals. Second, the Chechen forces who fought against the Russians still exist and they are quite well organized. Third, the warfare has taken on a new form as the Chechen refugees are organized abroad in large diasporas, especially in Europe. Fourth, the war is not finished, at least in the minds of the Chechen people whose injuries are so deep that the process of healing will require quite a long time.

Declaring that the war is over without addressing its root causes could bring about new problems in an uncertain future. It is better to address the deep-rooted causes of the Russo-Chechen conflict in a constructive way to transform it into a new form more durable and acceptable by both parties, rather than denying the existence of complex issues, and keeping stability in the Chechen Republic solely by brute force. The history of the Russo-Chechen conflict demonstrates that every time it erupts from dormancy into an overt state of war it becomes more destructive. Consequently, this chapter takes a

collaborative approach to conflict and discuss a number of conflict transformation activities that have already taken place as well as conflict resolution opportunities that might be relevant to, and useful for the transformation of the Russo-Chechen conflict.

Maire Dugan's (1994) "Nested paradigm" suggests that conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes should be considered from narrow issues to broader systemic aspects. The "nested paradigm" has implications for both conflict resolution practitioners and peace researchers. Although an immediate remedy for a local problem may be offered by a conflict resolution practitioner, a peace researcher would take the issue into another realm in which the deep structural and systemic concerns would also be considered.

Dugan's (1994) paradigm lays out different levels of conflict—issues-specific, relational, sub-systemic, and systemic—that give rise to one another. Issues-specific microlevel is nested within the relational level that, in turn, is situated within the structural sub-systemic level. The sub-systemic structural level is contained within the largest systemic level. Dugan's argument is that a conflict may be manifested or rooted in different levels. Thus, to address a social conflict the practitioners must work on different levels.

Moreover, Lederach (1998) suggests that we must approach peacebuilding like a system with a design and architecture. It has the operational function of linking immediate action and long-term goals. Its primary task is to develop a conceptual plan for social change. Typically, the process of peacebuilding is driven by a crisis orientation that tends to produce a response to immediate needs through short-term objectives. Long-term projects and programs for social change are defined by what is necessary and

possible emerging from the crisis. The social architectural design of peacebuilding thinks in decades, in which long-term goals and plans are defined by a measured understanding of the context, purpose, and program. The long-term vision about peacebuilding should not be allowed to isolate us from practical steps related to the realities of day-to-day life (Lederach, 1998). Lederach also notes that peacebuilding actors play an important role in both short- and long-term social change.

John Paul Lederach (1997) has integrated Dugan's nested paradigm into the framework for peace and justice building. Lederach thinks about a long-term conflict resolution process where the design of social change initiatives may cover decades for permanent consequences to emerge. Hence, it is necessary to move beyond post-accord peacebuilding efforts in order to construct an organic, broad-based long-term social change design (MacGinty, 2006).

PACS offer a number of formal and informal methods of conflict resolution such as mediation, negotiation, conciliation, and reconciliation. Byrne and Keashly (2002) among others offer other forms of interactive conflict resolution such as structural change, short- and long-term economic investment plans, public education, community-building efforts, physical and mental health care, religious reconciliation efforts, community empowerment, healing and storytelling, forgiveness, problem-solving workshops, and integrated education, etc. This multimodal multilevel intervention process in conflict entails an analysis of a number of factors associated with history, religion, demography, politics, economy, and psychocultural factors (Byrne, 2008a).

Elsewhere, Byrne (2002) discusses the intractable-tractable model, relating it to micro-macro peacemaking efforts in Northern Ireland and South Africa, explaining the

driving forces behind the peace processes in those two regions. He studied the underlying causes of these two conflicts as well as settlement efforts in both regions. Byrne (2002) argues that ethno-political conflicts are socially constructed, and have a dynamic nature changing over time. Therefore, their multidimensional aspects should be explored to fully understand their intractability. In the examples of the South African and Northern Ireland peace processes, he persuasively discusses that transforming an intractable ethno-political conflict into a tractable one is not impossible, although it requires some compromise between the parties before a resolution is reached. This end stage is contingent, however, on the pre-negotiation processes, and in-depth analysis that form an understanding of the underlying issues (Byrne, 2002).

Based on the nature of a conflict situation, a specific method of conflict transformation may be preferred. Byrne (2001), for example, discusses consociational and civic society approaches in Northern Ireland, where from 1972 to 1985 the British government tried four times to implement a power-sharing government between the Unionist Protestant and Nationalist Catholic elites. These efforts failed because of the recalcitrance of one or other of the political parties. With the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement the Irish government was included in the political process for the first time that in turn resulted in the inclusion of previously marginalized political groups. Since 1985 the British and Irish governments—“the external ethnoguarantors”—mitigated the conflict through a coercive consociational approach to elite conflict management (Byrne, 2007). The efforts to bring Unionists and Nationalists together at all levels showed that such a transformational approach is necessary to construct a multimodal, multilevel, contingency approach to conflict resolution in Northern Ireland (Byrne, 2001b).

Conflict Resolution Levels

To create a sustainable peace the process should commence on three different levels- top, middle, and grassroots- at the same time. Lederach has identified those levels simultaneously in terms of the participating leaders who are grassroots, middle range, and top leaders (Lederach, 1997). Lederach (1997) argues that work on all these three levels is necessary to move toward the construction of a broad-based approach to peacebuilding. In fact, these three levels work not only for post-accord peacebuilding processes but also for the processes of resolving conflicts at earlier stages.

The grassroots leaders include local leaders, leaders of indigenous NGOs, community developers, local health officials, and refugee camp officials among others. Peace efforts made at the local level would assist the parties to learn how to respect each other's cultural differences (Byrne, 1995), reduce prejudice of the other as well as empower people to deal with war traumas (Lederach, 1998). Even though grassroots leaders may not have direct access to the negotiation process, they enjoy an enormous power, the source of which is the local people (Pearson, 2001). In the case of the Russo-Chechen conflict, the local leaders on the Chechen side play an important role in organizing local people and in deciding what should be done next. Due to the cultural peculiarities, their influence on the local people is sometimes stronger than that of the middle range and top leaders. Therefore, their efforts to define a new path to peace might be crucial.

The middle-range leaders are middle class ethnic and religious leaders, intellectuals, and humanitarian leaders. As Lederach (1998) argues, an organic rather than hierarchical approach to politics creates a web of activities of people on different levels.

The place of the middle-range leaders in that web is also essential since they are well-known and respected people in the communities. They may deal with many important problem-solving activities such as creating peace commissions, training people in peace education, organizing problem-solving workshops, as well as bringing up innovative and constructive ideas.

The top leadership involves military, economic, cultural, political, and religious leaders with high visibility who focus on high-level negotiations. While the middle-range leaders deal with organizing problemsolving workshops, the grassroots leaders take initiative to train grassroots leaders, alleviate war traumas, and reduce prejudice.

The top leadership engages in negotiations to bring a change to the problem. Since the activities on all three levels take place at the same time, a web of interdependent activities and people is created that is systemic in orientation, holding people and processes together (Lederach, 1998).

This holistic approach to conflict resolution is also powerful because of its ability to remove obstacles related to taking on hard, crucial responsibilities. The responsibilities are shared among the leaders on all three levels. This is important especially for deep-rooted social conflicts, in which leaders frequently blame each other for any kind of failures. This broader process of conflict resolution would bring about a more productive and long-lasting outcome.

Peacemaking through Peace Education

Since peace education aims at creating in the human consciousness a commitment to peace (Harris & Morrison, 2003), one of the first steps towards the resolution of the

Russo-Chechen conflict should be made through it. Many scholars believe that peace education is a key element of conflict transformation at any level, including ethnic conflicts (Bekerman & McGlynn, 2007). Sustained education is considered necessary toward peacebuilding but it is not sufficient by itself since it depends on the political, economic, and social structure of change. Peace education needs to struggle against dysfunctional human relationships, as well as commit itself to more critical approaches through which it may disclose the historical forces and political structures that generate and sustain conflict in our world (Johnson, 2007). The concepts of peace and peace education have to come down to the local level to embrace all people (Galtung, 1983).

In the contemporary world the notion of societal peace has become more elusive, although the number of post-accord states is growing and turning from violence to political diplomacy in order to remove the enmity that has divided them (Johnson, 2007). Relying on diplomacy as the major channel toward peace is less than satisfactory (Johnson, 2007). In divided states, for example, “where deeply entrenched distrust of the other has impeded political progress toward peace settlement . . . political diplomacy alone is not able to mend the walls of division” (Johnson, 2007:21). In divided societies, groups hold on to their perception of the other as the enemy by tirelessly venerating their own “chosen traumas” and “chosen glories” (Volkan, 1998). This type of perception is ongoing because an older person unconsciously externalizes his or her traumatized self onto a developing child’s personality (Volkan, 1997). When people continue to harbor feelings of injustice towards “the other” it is very difficult to negotiate a peaceful coexistence (Zuzovski, 1997). Hence, to build sustainable peace in divided societies, a dramatic change in the collective worldview is needed, and a reframed understanding of

the other must be developed (Johnson, 2007). Then education as a primary conduit for the transmission of knowledge, culture and values acquires extra importance. To succeed peace education must be systematically integrated and politically contextualized. Johnson (2007) among others argues that systemic approaches to peace education must include engagement at multiple levels of government, education ministry, political party systems, labor unions, commercial enterprise, school and university, and family and community.

The Integrative Theory of Peace and the Education for Peace

Danesh (2007), one of the most successful practitioners of peace education, has set forth the integrative theory of peace and the concept of education for peace that is applicable to different ethnic conflict cases including the Russo-Chechen conflict. Peace and education are inseparable sides of civilization (Danesh, 2007). Therefore, any human problem can be addressed through the education for peace. As Danesh (2007) explains, the main premise of the Integrative Theory of Peace (ITP) and the Education for Peace (EFP) program is that all human beings relate to themselves, the world, and life through the lens of their specific worldview. According to the EFP, effective and sustained peace education needs to focus on all aspects of human life: intellectual, emotional, social, political, moral, and spiritual (Danesh, 2007).

The ITP is based on four subtheories: (1) peace is a psychological, political, moral, and spiritual condition; (2) peace is the main expression of a unity-based worldview; (3) the unity-based worldview is a prerequisite for creating a culture of peace and healing; and (4) comprehensive, integrative, and life-long education within the framework of peace is the most effective approach for a transformation from the

metacategories of survival-based and identity-based worldviews to the metacategory of unity-based worldviews (Danesh, 2007). As the IPT postulates, peace is more than just a political condition. This point is of vital importance concerning the situation in Chechnya, and especially now when peacebuilding is in progress in this country, psychological, moral, and spiritual aspects of peace should also be given a close attention. As an integral part of the IPT, psychological, moral (empowerment), and spiritual (interfaith dialogue) themes are discussed in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

Danesh (2007) discusses how EFP curriculum is designed to be comprehensive, integrative, all-inclusive, and both universal and specific. It is comprehensive and integrative because it includes all aspects of peace—biological, psychological, social, historical, ethical, and spiritual forces, and integrates them into one whole and all-inclusive framework. The “all-inclusive” aspect of the curriculum refers to the fact that it involves all members of the school community: teachers, students, administrators, and indirectly all parents. The “universal” principles of peace are fourfold: (1) humanity is one; (2) the oneness of humanity is expressed in the context of diversity; (3) unity in diversity is a prerequisite for peace; and (4) peace requires the ability to prevent and resolve conflicts without resorting to violence. Application of these principles is “specific” within every community, because it aims to safeguard and celebrate one’s unique cultural heritage within the context of these “universal” principles. Of course, it would sound a bit naïve to claim that EFP curriculum can be applied in Chechen schools, where in most cases even normal material conditions are not available for education.

However, working toward comprehensive and integrative curriculum in Russian, including Chechen, schools would bring long-term benefits.

An ITP is based on at least four conditions for the implementation of a successful peace education program: (1) a unity-based worldview; (2) a culture of peace; (3) a culture of healing; and (4) a peace-based curriculum for all educational activities (Danesh, 2007). Four goals of ITP are especially important. These are: (1) assisting all members of the school community to reflect on their own worldviews in order to develop a peace-based worldview; (2) helping participants to create a culture of peace in and between their school communities; (3) creating a culture of healing in order to help members to recover from the damages of war and violence affecting their families, community members, and themselves; and (4) learning how to prevent new conflicts and resolving them by peaceful means (Danesh, 2007). Reaching these goals in Russian and Chechen schools is not unrealistic. Creating a culture of peace should and can be a part of education at K12, if a relevant program is developed and applied. To teach students properly all members of the school community should be trained to develop peace-related worldviews. This, in turn, may help to create a culture for healing/empowerment that is especially important for people who suffered from the damages of war. Such a holistic peace education approach would contribute to learning how to handle conflicts peacefully thus minimizing the risk of future violent conflicts or at least addressing them peacefully.

Adult Education

While discussing peace education for children at schools, one should not forget about adults, at least because in most cases the source of violent behavior is adult stories that

shape young minds (Ury, 1999; Volkan, 2001). Indeed, adult education should be an integral part of the conflict resolution processes in the Russo-Chechen case, since it is the adults who both fight and prepare their children to fight the other in the future. Some scholars discuss the importance of adult education for the peaceful transformation of conflicts (Alger, 1996; Houghton & John, 2007; Nolan, 2007). Houghton and John (2007) argue that peace education opportunities for adults in South Africa are rare, and short-term peace education interventions have limited impact. They also argue that peace education is something more than just acquiring knowledge and skills because it does require more sustained peace education programs and the growth of the peace education community in South Africa (Houghton & John, 2007). Similarly, promoting peace education programs in both Russia and Chechnya would bring about a positive contribution to peace in the region. To enhance the effect of these programs they should be permanent and not limited to children alone.

By considering other examples of adult education in divided societies, one may foresee its effects in Chechnya. Nolan (2007) discusses adult education and community relations in Northern Ireland. The programs for adults in Northern Ireland include courses related to prejudice reduction, local history, assertiveness training, victim support, equality awareness, mediation skills, antisectarian workshops, and listening skills, among others. All of these peace education courses make it explicit that integration, not segregation, is the end goal in Northern Ireland, which cannot easily be reconciled with strategies that build upon difference (Nolan, 2007). Almost all of these components of peace education would work either in Chechnya or in Russia, if not in both. For example,

prejudice reduction programs in Moscow and St. Petersburg would initiate and strengthen positive attitudes of local people toward Chechens living and working in these cities.

The peace process in Chechnya should be hailed at this point, with education being recognized as a central means to conflict resolution. Examples show that adult education has played some positive role even in the most intractable conflicts, such as the Northern Ireland predicament (Nolan, 2007). The role of adult learning in Northern Ireland focuses on the power of knowledge to dispel prejudice to create a world of shared values. Similarly, if applied to Russia and Chechnya, adult education would bring about only some positive change. The importance of adult education is evident in Russia, including Chechnya as its constituent part, at least because of apparent needs in prejudice reduction, victim empowerment, equality awareness, mediation skills, and listening skills. Special classes for adults held in evening schools, community centers, and other places wherever possible, would affect people only in some positive way.

A postmodern acceptance of different cultures is important for a peace process that builds upon ethnic distinctions. As with the Dayton Peace Accord for the former Yugoslavia and with other peace agreements brokered with international assistance, the consociational model of elite governance and grassroots peacebuilding, in partnership within Northern Ireland, has sought to create a political equilibrium between Unionists and Nationalists (Byrne, 2001b). Such a political framework transposes the direction of previous integrationist educational policies in favor of a celebration of difference, an approach that is fraught with difficulties (Nolan, 2007). In fact, the cultural differences of Chechens and Russians can be seen as richness and positive value, rather than as a separating line. Since Russia is a multinational country, the importance of adult learning

is vital for peaceful and respectful co-existence to emerge in the entire country. Therefore, adult education programs should not be limited to Chechnya and major Russian cities alone, rather they should be nationwide. Certain relevant TV programs may also be effective in influencing people's views; however, the effect of in-class lessons for both children and adults would be exceptional.

In addition, adult education may empower both local Chechen and Russian people to participate in peacebuilding. Due to oppressive official policies and the damage of both wars, local people in Chechnya are unaware of the importance of their role in peace activities. Thus, educators and researchers need to forge a new way of building relationships between peace practitioners and local communities. Unfortunately, peace researchers primarily focus their research on the activities of foreign-policy elites and their institutions and practices, thus inadvertently serving the knowledge needs of these elite while tending to ignore the knowledge needs of local laypeople. Serving the needs of people will require peace researchers to be more attentive to the needs of local people, and to assist them in understanding how they are linked to both national and world political, economic, and social systems (Alger, 1996). These needs would be met by means of peace education as well as storytelling (Senehi, 2009). Once the role of the local communities in peacebuilding is acknowledged, peace education as a process will be intensified in Chechnya contributing into long-lasting peace in the region.

Worldviews and Peace Education

Danesh (2007) has identified three worldviews related to peace and peace education: (1) survival-based, (2) identity-based, and (3) unity-based. An education for peace program

postulates that all conscious human activities are shaped and determined by people's worldview, which in turn is molded by the education received from families, schools, and communities. Consequently, a comprehensive program of peace education requires attention to family welfare, parenting, school curriculum, pedagogical methodology, community relationships, economic conditions, sociopolitical policies, and leadership practices (Danesh, 2007). Hence, peacebuilding should only be a part of the holistic revival of the Chechen community. Chechen people's welfare needs should also be met in order to enable them to participate in peace education programs, since making social and educational programs attractive to poor and hungry people is almost impossible. Therefore, governments should also be involved in the process of peace education both directly and indirectly supporting different socio-educational programs. In Chechnya, this would also restore people's trust in political power. In fact, authentic education as a process of creating a civilization of peace should also be one of the priorities of the Chechen government that can support its sustainment through supporting Chechnya's citizens.

The survival-based worldview uses power for domination and control and worldview is especially prevalent in times of crises and danger such as natural disasters, terrorism, and war (Danesh, 2007). It is very likely that for over fifteen years this worldview has been dominant in Chechnya where oppression and control by force are primary goals of state or non-state entities. The political and economic crises, as a natural outcome of war and terrorism, have facilitated the use of violence.

The identity-based worldview that aims at survival, competition, and winning has also been important to Chechens who tried to preserve their ethnic and religious identity.

The overall harsh conditions in Chechnya made people continuously strive for individual and group advantages in all realms of life—personal, familial, social, economic, and political. This worldview is characterized by the domination of such issues as individualism, nationalism, racism, and other issues that separate individuals and groups from each other (Danesh, 2007). As Danesh (2007) argues, within the framework of survival- and identity-based worldviews, competition, conflict, and even violence are generally the norm rather than the exception, which has been a norm in Chechnya since the early 1990s.

Danesh (2006, 2007) argues that the worldview based on the notion of unity is related to three fundamental peace-related issues: (1) safety and security for all; (2) encouraging individual and group achievement and distinction; and (3) providing opportunities for a purposeful life in a unified environment. The unity-based worldview operates according to the principle of unity in diversity and holds as its final objective the creation of a civilization of peace (Danesh, 2006). The well-prepared program of peace education would help local communities to progress into this civilization (Danesh, 2007). As a dominant idea of peace education in Chechnya, and Russia as a whole, this worldview would contribute to peace and prosperity in the long term.

EFP curriculum is formulated within the parameters of a unity-based worldview, and its main purpose is to assist teachers, students, and staff to create a culture of peace in their school community. An important and serious peace program in Chechnya should be based upon a unity-based worldview. Since a culture of peace and healing encourages every single community member to be involved in the peace process, it should be built in Chechnya in the name of permanent peace. In Russia, including Chechnya, if the main

goal of a culture of peace were to create an atmosphere of mutual trust, respect, and recognition, reaching a peaceful resolution of the Russo-Chechen conflict would be easier. Finally, as cultures of peace and healing require that the school curriculum as a whole be implemented within the framework of the principles of peace, reforming the Chechen education system is a necessity.

Implications for Chechnya

Peace education as a strategy to defer, transform, and to resolve violent intractable conflicts may be applied to the Russo-Chechen conflict. If used decisively and properly, peace education can contribute to the peace between Russians and Chechens. Above all, the notion of peace should be built into the school programs in the Russian Federation, including Chechnya. This process may help to form an effective tool to oppose destructive nationalism arising out of parental education as well as formal school education. However, peace education is not limited to school curricula alone; rather it means a lot more. Adult education as part of the intricate peace education process is important in both Chechnya and Russia at least to assist alter adult destructive stories that contribute to shape children's behavior. In other words, developing peaceful individuals should not be limited to children alone. Moreover, the people of both Chechnya and Russia may be informed about the importance of their role in the processes of peacemaking through peace education programs.

Peacemaking through Interfaith Dialogue

The Russo-Chechen conflict is not a cultural conflict or clash of religions despite the fact that culture and religion have a serious motivational effect in this conflict, especially for the Chechens. Moreover, it is more likely that the Russians have more religious stereotypes of the Chechens than vice versa. However, this issue is not decisive because Russia has Muslim communities that have co-existed in Russia with Christians for centuries (Shlapentokh, 2007) developing certain streams of positive relationships. Hence, in Russia, there is a fertile ground to begin an interreligious dialogue between Christian Russians and Muslim Chechens on different levels, and formats to address existing intergroup problems in Russia and Chechnya. Also, this interreligious process should acquire a permanent character to be more effective in conflict resolution and transformation.

One of the key points is that if religion has the power of motivating people to struggle for their rights through different means including the application of force and violence, then the power of religion should be explored to forge constructive politics (Amaladoss, 2001). World practice has shown that education about the religious “other” is a powerful tool to overcome the ignorance that leads to the formation of negative stereotypes to bring about the dehumanization of the “other,” often used as a tool to escalate conflict. Therefore, efforts to re-humanize people through religious teachings must be made (Francoeur, 2006). Different religions of the world together can reach a strong human solidarity to oppose violence and human suffering (Arinze, 2002).

It is surprising that the Russian Orthodox Church and the Mosque have not cooperated in any significant peace projects related to the Chechen tragedy. Interfaith

dialogue through religious institutions could bring both the Muslims and Christians of Russia together on different social levels—grassroots activists, middle-range leaders, and elites—for conversation that can take an array of forms possessing a number of different goals. These conversations can address issues that matter to the participants. However, interfaith dialogue is not a debate or a rivalry, rather, its aim is at mutual problem solving. It is argued that nowadays the rising number of Russia's Muslims worries Russia's Orthodox Church (Page, 2005). Nonetheless, the fact that Russia is a home to about twenty three millions indigenous Muslims implies that Christianity and Islam have peacefully co-existed for a long time, that created peaceful traditions that can be harnessed for interfaith dialogue to reconcile, heal, and prevent destructive violent conflicts.

Dialogue meetings can be organized separately for the top, middle, and grassroots leaders (Lederach, 1997). The top religious leaders of Russia's Muslims and Christians can frequently meet at conferences, TV programs, among other venues to discuss and stress religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence. Consequently, the people of each religious community could have an opportunity to hear religious leaders and other members of the other community speak about tolerance that could assist in preparing a road map to follow for conflict transformation. In this way, religion could be a contributing factor to peacemaking in the Russo-Chechen conflict.

The interfaith dialogue meetings could at least contribute to building trust to deescalate the climate of fear in the region. The Russian Orthodox Church could lead these dialogue meetings, which really increase trust among the Muslim communities especially the Chechens as part of the church's peacemaking mission. Muslim and

Christian communities may then develop “a common justice agenda to facilitate commitments across lines of religious division” (USIP, 2003).⁵⁶

The reintroduction of Islam into Russian society would have a twofold effect. First, the Muslims of Russia, especially the Chechens, would be freed from the burden of being perceived as potential terrorists. Second, the false fear of Muslims among Russia’s Christians that is reinforced by state policies and the media would be removed. Moreover, Islam’s revivalism as an opposition movement to fundamentalism is directed toward one’s internal renewal. Many renowned scholars and peace activists agree that Islam is a religion of peace forbidding terrorism and violence (Hanley, 2007; Presbyterian Record, 2004). However, its teachings of how to conduct war is what the Western media mostly emphasizes without giving the proper explanation necessary to prevent misperceptions (Allen, 2001). In doing so, unfortunately, the media does not hesitate to misinterpret Islam (Saeed, 2007). Islam does not object to rapprochement with Christianity; rather, both Abrahamic religions have a great deal of similarities and commonalities that should be used as a force for reconciliation between Chechnya and Russia.

Interfaith dialogue will also nurture the joint activities of both religious communities in Russia that may contribute to real social change affecting the Russo-Chechen peace process. Dialogue can explore the commonalities of both communities to stick with the peace process as well as addressing structural challenges. However, the state should not be involved in these activities so as not to undermine its credibility. The Ottoman model of producing religious tolerance may also be useful in the Russian

context, since these two states have similarities in ethnic and religious diversity (Barkey, 2005).

The religious community members who learn about each other's problems and shortcomings may develop mutual understanding (Francoeur, 2006). Direct communication is a powerful tool for developing mutual respect and tolerance as well as empathy (Abu-Nimer, 2004). It may also strengthen the sense of the need for cooperation to mitigate violence as well as oppressive policies of the state (Abu-Nimer, 2004). Interfaith dialogue may also have an empowering effect on different religious communities to do work to maintain internal peaceful co-existence (Arinze, 2002). The religious peacemakers can play an important role in mitigating the effects of defaming the stories of the other if not in eliminating those kinds of stories (Gopin, 2004). Achieving this end is especially important in both Chechnya and Russia, where the younger generations should be free from stereotypes about each other so that they can live in a peaceful environment.

William L. Ury (1999) offers some simple steps to mobilize the third side, one of which is about changing the story. It is certainly not easy to block all or some stories of the past, but systematic work with parents would bring about a significant positive change. Giving Chechen and Russian children a positive picture of their past and future would remove the principal obstacle to prevent destructive conflict that lies in their minds. The war and conflict stories spread from person to person and from parent to child. The time to question and refute defaming stories and their embedded assumptions has arrived (Ury, 1999). In this sense, interfaith dialogue may play an informative and encouraging role in the Russo-Chechen conflict.

Furthermore, these types of dialogue may direct people toward constructive self-criticism. Marc Gopin (2004) believes that people should try to examine the deepest roots of conflict within themselves in order to free themselves from the soul-poisoning effects of destructive conflicts. People need to examine their inner lives so that their character becomes a true ally of healing that enables them to truly listen to others in new ways, and view troubled relationships from a fresh perspective (Gopin, 2004; Ross, 2007; Ury, 1999).

The role of the media in interfaith relations is also important. The principles of freedom of speech and freedom of the press make it impossible to ban the media from printing negative views. However, work can be done with the media too, to invite it to be constructive through the medium of peace journalism. Moreover, not all of the media in Russia adopts a hard line with regards to the Chechen question. Finally, both the Islamic and Christian communities of Russia need to perpetuate interfaith dialogue through institutionalizing their intercourse. Ephemeral and temporary interfaith dialogue attempts would not bring about rich gains. It is also important that both religious communities in Russia participate in peace activities, since a dialogue is not a unilateral act. Institutionalizing and perpetuating interfaith dialogue might make it possible to form special conflict resolution teams composed of activists from both communities to enter situations of conflict and social tension. Regardless of its short-term contribution to peace in Chechnya, a tradition of interfaith dialogue should be started so that it can be fruitful in the long run.

Implications for Chechnya

It is hard to claim that the healing and constructive potential of religion is effectively used in the context of the Russo-Chechen conflict. Despite long traditions of the co-existence of Russia's Christians and Muslims, religion has not been used effectively for dialogue in respect to the Chechen conflict. However, interreligious dialogue may strengthen solidarity among Russia's Muslims and Christians bringing about significant positive change in the peace process in Chechnya, and elsewhere in Russia. In fact, it is not only the Orthodox Russians and Muslim Chechens that need to participate in the dialogue. Other nationalities of Russia, such as Muslim Tatars and Russia's Jews, may also participate in the interfaith dialogue to both institutionalize and perpetuate the process.

Peacemaking through Interactive Conflict Resolution

Interactive conflict resolution is another medium that Chechens and Russians can use to understand the needs, fears, and aspirations of each other that might be useful in the peace process. Ronald J. Fisher (1997, 2005, 2008) outlines the interactive conflict resolution process in the forms of dialogue, conflict analysis, and problem solving.

The theory and practice of third-party intervention continue to develop in constructive directions. Also, the utility of unofficial methods directed more toward the subjective and relational aspects of ethnic conflict is increasingly acknowledged (Fisher, 2007). A contingency model of third-party intervention articulates the potential complementarities of such an unofficial approach as problem solving workshops with more traditional official methods, such as mediation, in pursuit of resolution (Byrne &

Keashly, 2000). Fisher (2005, 2008) and Mitchell (2003, 2008) stress the necessary interplay between official and unofficial interventions in order to effectively address intractable ethnopolitical conflicts. They also discuss the development of a theory of practice because a number of different theorists have studied the essence of dialogue, conflict analysis, and problem solving. Fisher (2005) further argues that interactive conflict resolution needs to be documented and conceptualized in order to develop a body of knowledge and theory to guide further practice. Consequently, practitioners should write about their work, indicating which principles, strategies, and skills led to successful outcomes. Also, in this way similarities can be induced toward a consensual theory of practice (Fisher, 2008, 2005).

Christopher Mitchell (2005) discusses the problem solving processes related to the confrontation between Indonesia and Malaysia/Singapore that took place during the winter of 1965–66 in London in what appears to be the first documented case of the use of interactive conflict resolution (ICR). A large number of social scientists led by John Burton created an ICR approach as they facilitated several informal discussions with mid-level diplomatic representatives of Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore who were participating in an unofficial capacity. Although the meeting was unofficial, the participating diplomats were in constant communication with their leadership. As a result of this informal meeting, the misperceptions were corrected, the reassessment of the motives of the enemy took place, as well as the new policy options that were developed were directed toward the resolution of the problem (Mitchell, 2005). In our times when almost a half century passed since the first use of interactive conflict resolution, it is quite feasible to form a similar setting of unofficial meeting or a problem-solving process

related to the Chechen case. Conflict resolution efforts by an international body of peace scholars and activists together with Russian and Chechen peace advocates to direct the transformation of the Russo-Chechen conflict would be fruitful.

In general, ICR is a technique to respond to a conflict, the primary aim of which is to change the views of the middle tier elites involved in some conflict interaction. Using this technique in the Chechen case would bring nothing other than benefits. Since it is an unofficial, academically based, third-party approach, this intervention model would bring dynamic discussions to all aspects of the conflict among Chechens and Russians. The main purpose for designing workshops to enable the parties to explore each other's perspective and to generate a mutually acceptable solution to their conflict would not disturb either the Kremlin or the Chechen nationalists. Transferring the ideas acquired in the problem solving workshops to the political debate in the conflicting communities must be the ultimate goal of these workshops.

Moreover, five assumptions identified by Herb Kelman (2000) about the nature of conflict and conflict resolution, which are derived from a social-psychological analysis may assist third parties to formulate the structure, content, and the process of problem solving workshops for the Chechens and Russians.

First, for many aspects of international or interethnic conflict such as the Russo-Chechen case the individual may represent the most appropriate unit of analysis because key conflict resolution processes such as empathy, learning, creative problem solving, among others take place on the individual level. If individuals are to be considered as a basic unit of analysis, then individual-based problemsolving processes should always be an integral part of peace initiatives, in addition to formal conflict resolution efforts. Even

international conflicts may be reduced to individual needs and fears to be addressed in the workshops, which then are fed back into the political level (Kelman, 1997, 2000). Any creative ideas and new insights that emerge at the workshops can be transferred into the political debate at a later stage.

Second, international conflict must also be viewed as an intersocietal or interethnic phenomenon, which suggests a broader view of diplomacy as a complex mix of official and unofficial processes, thus displaying the important role of interactive problemsolving workshops for any interethnic conflict including the Chechen case. Third, conflicts are dynamic, interactive and self-perpetuating processes. Therefore, conflict resolution efforts require an interaction capable of reversing the escalatory and self-perpetuating nature of conflict, which is not possible by official diplomacy alone. People from different layers of both societies should actively participate in informal conflict resolution processes to break the vicious cycle of violence in Chechnya and major Russian cities against the Chechens. Fourth, constructive conflict resolution requires a change in influence strategies based on threats and refinement of strategies fed by promises and positive incentives. Brute force and oppression is not a successful means to resolve any conflict. Human-based approaches addressing the needs and rights of people are necessary to bring about a positive change. Finally, the expanded conception of influence processes is based on the assumption that ethnic conflict has a dynamic nature. Hence, conflict resolution efforts are mobilized to discover possibilities for change, to identify conditions for change, and to overcome resistance to change. It is very likely that the Russian authorities and the local Chechen government may try to preserve the political status quo in Chechnya, thus maintaining negative peace in the region, and

forcing vital identity problems into dormancy. In fact, problem-solving workshops could provide the Kremlin with a good basis for formulating new strategies for handling the Chechen conflict.

Interactive problemsolving workshops as a new setting for dialogue between Russians and Chechens may be fruitful in a number of ways. Mitchell (2003, 2008) highlights some key principles underlying problem-solving approaches that would be productive if applied to any case. The first principle he terms as *negative misperception*, which means that in conflict situations adversaries become the victims of negative stereotyping, dehumanization, and other strong psychological tendencies. Thus, one of the basic duties of problem-solving workshops dedicated to the Russo-Chechen conflict should be in providing a setting in which representatives of both sides can talk and listen to each other in order to eliminate or reduce that misperception.

Second, the principle of *problem redefinition* is one the main principles of the problem solving approach by third parties who provide the adversaries with opportunities to re-conceptualize their situation should also take place. If the Russians and Chechens manage to redefine their problems as, for example, problems in education, children and women rights, health issues, reconstruction of the devastated villages, transparent elections, conflict prevention, rapprochement, etc. and focus on the ways of resolving these problems, it would put Chechnya on a new track of development reducing tensions.

Third, another important principle is a *no-fault* principle, which means avoiding the whole issue of blame or fault for either side. If parties in conflict free themselves from the heavy psychological influences, reaching a common ground will be easier. Anyone adopting a problem solving approach needs to devise a blame-free language to

describe past events. Keeping the adversary responsible for the conflict is not compatible with the problem solving approach. Blame language is not compatible with collaboration. However, to transform the Russo-Chechen conflict the collaboration and cooperation of both Chechens and Russians is necessary. A blame-free language would make the workshop participants concentrate on the existing problems to invent creative and mutually acceptable common grounds to handle urgent issues important to both sides.

Another principle that Mitchell (2003, 2008) defines is *unrecognized entrapment*, which also influences and informs a problemsolving approach. This principle is connected with two “unrecognized” processes. First, decision makers mostly fail to recognize how they are entangled in complex and exacerbating course of action. Second, decision makers are simply unable to escape the entrapment (Mitchell, 2003; 2008).

The *unrecognized entrapment* principle is one in which leaders become more and more committed to a particular course of action, and investing a considerable amount of resources in this course of action, becoming less and less able to find alternatives that can be discussed in problemsolving workshops. In fact, Russian and Chechen official leaderships as well as the Chechen separatist leadership renew their commitments to struggle with each other until victory is reached. Their commitments and declarations bind them publicly, and keep the doors closed to talks. One way of dealing with this psychological entrapment is discussing the situation in interactive problemsolving workshops, finding methods to stop it, and recommending creative alternatives to both sides. If the sides or one of the sides would be reluctant to comply with the recommendations fully or partially, this will assist in shaping public opinion against that party.

Moreover, problemsolving approaches may reveal through *evaluative dynamism* that different people can evaluate the same issue differently. In this situation, “log rolling”—“each party concedes on issues that are of low priority to itself and high priority to the other party” (Rubin, Pruitt, & Kim, 1994:176)—may take place. This may be useful especially where conflict is not perceived as zero-sum in nature (Mitchell, 2003; 2008). Problemsolving workshops are necessary to figure out many important points related to the sides of the Russo-Chechen conflict that really would not hurt the other, if conceded.

Finally, ICR in the forms of dialogue, conflict analysis, and problem solving would have an informative and training character to teach Chechens and Russians to approach each other with more respect and fewer suspicions. The leaders from different layers of both societies—grassroots, mid-range, and top leadership—would come together in an informal setting to discuss their differences, to discern the priorities of each party in order to transfer the findings into the political leadership for formulating constructive policies.

Implications for Chechnya

ICR may bring about some positive change in terms of applying conflict resolution processes to the Russo-Chechen conflict. Its unofficial nature would especially encourage the parties and sub-parties to come together to discuss their differences, since official meetings are rejected by the Russians. As discussed above, especially on the eve of the first Chechen war despite the urgent necessity for negotiations to avoid violent battles the Russian officials refused to meet with the Chechen leadership. Any form of ICR would

be largely remedial in that and similar situations. In fact, the history of problem solving processes displays considerable success. The informal format of problem solving creates promising conditions for nurturing positive change in the process of Russo-Chechen talks that should replace violent forms of interaction. Bringing the advocates of the Chechen and Russian positions together would also be of a great importance for future positive change through increasing awareness of the problems of the other side. Moreover, the shifts of the parties' priorities that may take place over time can best be learned in informal interactive problemsolving workshops.

Peacemaking through Storytelling

Storytelling is another informal means of conflict resolution. The importance of personal stories and their sharing among conflicting parties for conflict resolution is immense (Bar-On, 2002). In fact, storytelling was mentioned by a number of study participants, especially those who now reside in the United States and Canada. One of the primary venues of transforming conflict between the Chechens and Russians might be through the storytelling process with the grassroots that may take place through workshops, theater performances, and especially story collections and storytelling festivals, which assist in building relationships between people.

Storytelling may be both destructive and constructive (Senehi, 2002). Narratives generate or reproduce prejudicial and antagonistic images of other groups, mask inequalities and justice, inflame negative emotions, and misrepresent society (Senehi, 1996). However, narratives may also enhance peace when they involve a dialogue characterized by shared power, increased mutual recognition, the promotion of

consciousness raising, and serve to resist domination, as well as teach conflict resolution strategies (Senehi, 2008, 2009).

Senehi (2000, 2009) discusses how storytelling can be used as a means to transform conflicts constructively. She argues that story and social structure are interrelated. The production of meaning is an important process in social life, and storytelling addresses it. Stories are the source of local knowledge that is necessary to be included in the application of conflict resolution projects so as not to reproduce colonial, oppressive, or coercive policies in the interventions (Senehi & Byrne, 2006). Moreover, storytelling is a type of process that contributes to people empowerment.

Storytelling may be productive for peace making because people think of it as a way of speaking together. The emphasis of stories is powerful, as is their emotional force. In fact, in terms of peacemaking and conflict resolution the creation of storytelling festivals can also be very helpful. The organizers of storytelling workshops and “transcultural festivals” are always committed to peace, therefore they can inform and prepare people at the initial stage about cultures’ through these events (Senehi, 2000; 2008; 2009).

The effects of storytelling on peacemaking are essential. It also might be seen as complementary to interfaith dialogue and interactive problem solving workshops. It really has to do with getting people to meet in a non-threatening space to discuss their concerns and problems. Sharing stories about their experiences and culture with other people is a method of peacemaking, at least because it may remove one’s prejudice about the other.

For the sake of the success of storytelling events, organizers need to take into consideration the mentality and culture of people who take part in such transcultural events. Sometimes it might be important to find a common ground within the stories. Long-time Russian and Chechen co-existence might be such a common ground. The fact that Russians and Chechens have been in conflict for over two hundred years also means that they have simultaneously co-existed together. Their social interaction has not been limited only to conflict and war. They have had economic and cultural interactions as well as lived together in peace for centuries. The subjects of this study told many stories about how they lived with Russian families as their roommates while working in different parts of Russia. Their familiarity with the Russian culture's simplicity and richness were reflected in the stories that made them feel compassionate for the Russian laypeople.

Consequently, it may be important to go back in time to reconsider what has happened to these people. Under Soviet rule, the Chechens were deported from their motherland, and under the same Soviet rule (although the leadership was different) the historical mistake was corrected and justice was restored. Also, during the first and second Chechen wars, it was the Russian government that committed human rights crimes in Chechnya. At the same time, Russian civil society and human rights institutions and people defended Chechen rights more than anyone else. All of these stories and other important issues can be conveyed to the people of both communities through storytelling events such as festivals that can increase people's knowledge of, and trust in each other. On a number of occasions, I witnessed that neither Chechen, nor Russian laypeople were aware of the activities of Russian civil society organizations who were defending the rights of Chechen people against the Russian state. When I discussed this issue with

them, some Chechens displayed surprise while others were delighted by the news. A storytelling festival would offer people an opportunity to elicit the information useful for constructive dialogue between Chechens and Russians.

Storytelling as a source of knowledge and information may also make people aware of the situation and inform them about opportunities to avoid imminent dangers for the peace, encouraging them to block new oppressive policies (Senehi, 1996; 2000). The rehumanizing and remoralizing effect of storytelling on victimized Chechen people would be immense. Stories as a means of bridging people's differences may also be exchanged by professionals during seminars or round tables in Chechen and Russian towns. Stories about the human tragedy in Chechnya may contribute to peacemaking at least because they assist people in seeing the other side from a different point of view. Furthermore, these kinds of constructive stories would enable people to also vent their negative experiences so that the other side can understand how prejudice or discrimination has affected people's lives.

Implications for Chechnya

Storytelling seems to be one of the most promising innovative peacebuilding practices to assist in addressing the Russo-Chechen conflict. Its philosophy stems from the ability of people to share their personal experience through telling their own stories to find common ground, which helps them to hear and understand, and overcome mutual fear and prejudice. Personal stories may help to initiate reconciliation between the Chechen and Russian people through bringing them together to listen to each other, and possibly to develop respect, sympathy, and empathy toward the other, which could contribute to the

entire process of social change. Healing and reconciliation, which are the goal of storytelling as a conflict transformation approach, is discussed in the following section. Moreover, storytelling festivals may inspire lay people in their struggle and search for truth and justice. An alliance of people from different parts of Russia and Chechnya would contribute to the peacebuilding process.

Peacemaking through Reconciliation and Forgiveness

Morton Deutsch defines forgiveness as “giving up rage, the desire for vengeance, and the grudge toward those who have inflicted grievous harm on you, your loved ones, or groups with whom you identify” (Hawk, 2007:298). It also implies willingness “to accept the other into one’s moral community so that he or she is entitled to care and justice” (Hawk, 2007:298). Forgiveness has emotional, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions that overlap. Cognitive restructuring and reimagining the offender are crucial for initiating the forgiveness process, which is both spiritual and psychological (Cioni, 2007).

The definition of forgiveness differs from person to person, however all definitions display commonality in orientation (self and other), direction (passive letting go of negative experiences and active enhancing positive experiences), and form (emotion, cognition, and behavior) (Lawler-Row, Scott, Raines, Edlis-Matityahou, & Moore, 2007). Forgiveness is typically defined by scholars as the process of concluding resentment, indignation, or anger as a result of a perceived offense, difference, or mistake, and/or ceasing to demand punishment or restitution. The *Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* defines forgiveness as “to cease to feel resentment against an offender”, and the *Oxford Canadian Thesaurus* presents such equivalents for it as

“absolution, exoneration, remission, dispensation, indulgence, clemency, mercy, reprieve, amnesty” (Barber, Fitzgerald, & Pontisso, 2006; Mish, 2000). The concept and benefits of forgiveness have been explored in religious thought, the social sciences, and medicine.

Forgiveness does not dismiss an event and it is not indifferent about justice but it means that carrying out justice as revenge is not an appropriate behavior (Hawk, 2007). Also, it is not about an obligation, rather it is about a choice, and human nature is the major reason for forgiveness (Garrard, 2002). In some contexts, forgiveness may and should be granted without any expectation of restorative justice, and without any response on the part of the offender (for example, one may forgive a person who is dead) (Pettigrove, 2004). In practical terms, it may be necessary for the offender to offer some form of acknowledgment, apology, and/or restitution, or even just ask for forgiveness.

Most world religions include teachings about the nature of forgiveness (Athar, 2010; Lauritzen, 1987). Some religious doctrines or philosophies place greater emphasis on the need for humans to find some sort of divine forgiveness for their own shortcomings, others place greater emphasis on the need for humans to practice forgiveness of one another, yet others make little or no distinction between human and/or divine forgiveness. In fact, studies show that forgiveness is positively correlated with religious problemsolving styles and religious duty (Lauritzen, 1987; Webb, Chickering, Colburn, Heisler, & Call, 2005).

Reconciliation has a number of varying meanings, which sometimes lead to different understandings of it (Meierhenrich, 2008). In general, however, reconciliation is the process of repairing a broken or depreciated relationship. It helps to restore reengagement, trust, and cooperation after a transgression or violation (Hawk, 2007).

Shriver sets forth four main aspects of reconciliation: truth, forbearance, empathy, and a commitment to remain in a relationship due to the interdependence (Shriver, 1995). The role of truth in the process of reconciliation is essential (Gibson, 2006a, 2006b; Lerner, 2007). If truth and justice are denied, movement toward conflict resolution seems impossible (Staub, 2006). Sometimes this may create an obstacle for reconciliation because the parties believe in a different “truth”. Therefore, genuine truth should be acknowledged by the parties before moving forward. The truth or its details may also necessitate in-depth research in some instances (Gibson, 2006b).

Shriver (1995) defines forbearance as refraining from revenge or punishment. It is also an important aspect of reconciliation because otherwise the devastating consequences of revenge make reconciliation impossible. Revenge may always be a ground for justifying counter revenge, which would perpetuate the conflict. The third aspect of reconciliation Shriver discusses—empathy—may be developed, if the first two aspects—truth and forbearance—take place. Expressing empathy would demonstrate that the offender has some understanding of the needs and motives of the offended (Shriver, 1995).

Shriver (1995) sees commitment to the relationship out of awareness of the interdependence as the most important aspect of reconciliation. This interdependence is not based on economic motives alone, while the psychological or relational elements in reconciliation are also important (Bar-Tal, 2000). In addition to the global economic web that binds people and nations to each other, the network of relationships brings them closer to each other. The process of integration in many parts of the world shows that nations need one another for their common benefit.

Currently, the Russian government does not seem supportive of reconciliatory efforts due to its relatively stronger political and strategic position in Chechnya. The imbalance of power between Russia and Chechnya's rebels makes the former apply oppressive policies vis-à-vis the latter, rather than trying to formulate new methods to handle the problem. However, given some attention, reconciliation might be a potential tool for peacemaking in the region. Perhaps the most important point relating to reconciliation is the recognition of the truth behind the Russo-Chechen war. Instead of using propaganda and war besides existing structural and direct violence against the Chechens, both parties must recognize the truth of the Chechen crisis that would contribute to the process of leading to reconciliation. Identifying the truth is not always easy due to the possibility of different perceptions. However, at the very least, the facts and events of both Chechen wars speak for themselves. Recognizing the truth of Chechen and Russian policy in respect to Chechnya would emotionally empower people affected by the war, and assist them in healing from their psychological wounds. The recognition of the truth and the promotion of justice would also bring about institutional and relational changes in Chechnya and Russia. Reconciliation in the context of acknowledging past injustices and historical events and attitudes that brought suffering to the Chechens would contribute to the process of conflict transformation in Chechnya. In the same way, acknowledging the damages to Russian people because of Chechen violence would significantly change the views of Russian people about the Chechens. The following case, although not discussed in detail by the study participants, is worth mentioning since it deals with the lack of reconciliation in this conflict.

As already outlined in the historical context chapter the Chechens were exiled in 1944 to Kazakhstan and Siberia where many died because of poor living conditions. The deportation process itself was quite difficult to survive, and thousands of people lost their lives. On the other hand, the Chechen people fell victim to character assassination, since they were collectively accused of being enemies, criminals, separatists, and traitors. Defamation campaigns were staged against the Chechens. Unfortunately, the legacy of this campaign is still felt in attitudes of some Russian people toward Chechens.

Ruslan Roman, a subject of my study, is a Chechen refugee born in exile. He came to Chechnya with his parents in 1956 when the Chechens were officially allowed to return back to Chechnya. He knows a lot about the deportation from listening to the stories of his parents.

As of today, official Moscow has not acknowledged, regretted, or excused the wounds that have been caused to Chechen people. The forgotten deportations are the key to understanding what is happening in Chechnya today. That is why we need to commemorate the 23d of February as Deportation Day. We will mark that day until Russia will repent.

Reconciliation efforts in Russia toward the Chechens have not been very successful. In fact, there have not been any public acknowledgments of the responsibility of Russia toward the fate of the Chechens. The main reason for this lack of acknowledgment about past wrongs is that Russia perceives the injustices inflicted on the Chechens as the fault of the Soviet Union. Paradoxically, however, Russia at least implicitly considers itself as the successor state of the Soviet Union.

Since reconciliation is considered as the capacity of people to bring the experience of the past to bear constructively on the present, considering the simple and

obvious historical issues relating to the Russo-Chechen conflict would bring about positive change. In fact, considering Chechnya's history after 1991, few Russo-Chechen interactions affected one group alone. The degree of a sense of separation or difficulty, once it becomes obvious, starts to diminish when mutual empathy is established. The mutual empathy, however, cannot be established where lies and injustices are omnipotent, that is why the primary task of Russians and Chechens must be the recognition of the truth.

Malik Shenol, a subject of this study, thinks that while it is very important to remember what happened in the past and talk about it, it is equally important to go beyond past grievances and look toward future relationships:

Sometimes, past grievances create and feed new ones. I think if we lost our memory about the past, we wouldn't have new issues of offence. We build on the past, but we never know how accurate the description of our past is. We simply don't question that.

If the majority of people admit that they are also responsible for peace, and that it is useless to reproach each other regarding who did what to whom, the change would be reached easily. Forgiving is not about forgetting, rather it is about acknowledging past mistakes to receive necessary lessons from them. To put it simply, looking for the solutions acceptable to both sides requires forgiveness, which includes confessions. For example, Malik Shenol discusses the importance of truth recovery:

But it doesn't work without the information. If you hide the truth, other kinds of "truths" will emerge exacerbating the situation. It is necessary to search for the truth, and tell people who the Chechens are, and what had happened to them, and what they would need.

Reconciliation as a process of conflict transformation can be an important intervention in improving Russo-Chechen relationships. Evidence shows that the people of both Chechnya and Russia are friendly to each other, as they feel a certain degree of empathy toward each other. The problem is with the Russian government who needs to demonstrate conciliatory gestures toward the Chechen community. Peace education, and storytelling intervention, as well as the use of other informal conflict transformation approaches together with positive personal contact, are important in this respect, because they help change attitudes and transfer the focus from the group to the individual.

Some believe that all indigenous cultures are warlike, and exclude any options for peaceful resolution of differences (Fry, 2006). However, these arguments either do not reflect the realities fully or focus on the cultural assets of indigenous peoples only partially excluding their conflict resolution traditions. In fact, indigenous cultures are especially rich with the traditions of teaching in order to heal (Fry, 2006). First Nations communities view a wrongdoing as a misbehavior that requires teaching. Navajo culture, for example, approaches justice processes with different values and procedures from mainstream American society, thus making First Nations peacemaking different from Western approaches (Lewton & Bydone, 2000). The Navajo Tribal Court is recognized as a leading justice body while Navajo society copes with a coercive law that makes individual acts criminal rather than trying to restore them to harmony with others. Moreover, in indigenous cultures, peacekeeping is generally not concerned with such notions as punishment, revenge, control, or determining who is right, etc. (Pinto, 2000). Rather, they are concerned with mechanisms that assist people mend relationships, and return to harmony (Ross, 1996). Indigenous cultures and knowledge should be taken into

account by conflict resolution practitioners because they explain the shared origins of life, the integrity of ecosystems, and bonds of kinship with non-human species (Byrne & Senehi, 2009). However, is all this applicable to the Chechen people who are renowned for being warlike? When I made this point, Tekin Alper shared his ideas with me in the following manner:

Chechens are peaceful people; Russians also are peaceful people! The Russian youth had sympathy with us. Russian young sportsmen and educated people were in solidarity with us, and they demonstrated this on a number of different occasions. All nations are alike. Good and evil exist everywhere.

Also, the notion of forgiveness is important for the conflict resolution processes in any context, at least because it relates to human development. The power of forgiveness in conflict transformation is discussed by many scholars (Ehrlich, 1994). In this sense, the role of the family in human development beginning with early childhood is important. Ian Harris (2003) discusses the role of morality, pointing out that educating for peace is related to the development of human character. The foundations of peace are established in the early years of a person's development (Harris & Morrison, 2003). Education is a process of crafting human beings to become who they are (Boulding, 1989). Hence, to avoid hatred and future conflicts, Chechen society today should be given all the necessary opportunities so that people can live a normal life. However, opportunities are not formed, rather they should be created by the government through a number of socio-economic and political reforms to affect people's life deeply and directly.

The feeling of forgiveness is strong in the Chechen culture. It is so strong that the members of the Chechen community sometimes blamed themselves for all that happened to them. Nabeel Mere describes this process in the following way:

It is our own fault that we suffer so much. We don't have to blame anybody else but ourselves, because we are ready to forgive quickly. We forgive them [the Russians] after all that they have done to us. But we are punished for it again, and then we wake up. We don't learn a lesson from our past. Tomorrow they [the Russians] will come to us [for forgiveness], and we will forgive them again. They kill us, they bomb us, they destroy our homes and villages, and when they stop to rest a bit, our people take food to feed them. We are like this.

It is likely that there is some exaggeration in Nabeel's story. However, it reflects a simple reality of peoples' forgiveness of their assailants, whom the Chechens likely do not hold responsible for their troubles. This example is also a tangible evidence of Chechen readiness to forgive and to reconcile, therefore, all these opportunities should be used constructively.

The collective memory of the past and the process of forgiveness paradoxically are fused together in Chechen culture. The remarkable thing about most of the Chechen people is that even in the worst historical moments of their suffering they feel compassion for their antagonists, and wish to forgive them. Some think that Chechen believers are prone to the values of mercy, tolerance, and forgiveness. Others think that this behavior is part of the Chechen culture, with deep roots going back many centuries beyond the introduction of Islam (Gammer, 2006). Although this is beyond verification, it is probable that the Chechens' qualities of tolerance and forgiveness are not a product of recent history.

Implications for Chechnya

Reconciliation and forgiveness is a powerful informal tool for conflict transformation that can be effectively used in the case of Chechnya to bring about some positive change. The conditions for using this tool are ripe in the republic besides the Chechen culture that is also supportive on moral grounds to lead to reconciliation. In order not to miss opportunities for reconciliation in Chechnya, the Russian government must act quickly and decisively to introduce political, social, and economic reforms to empower and encourage Chechen people toward long-lasting peace in the region. Russia's confession of the truths about its role in the escalation of war and violence in Chechnya would also add to the sense of forgiveness among Chechen civilians. Also, the Russian state's efforts to facilitate the participation of civil society activists and free journalism in Chechnya would ensure the process of reforms in the republic and its transparency enhancing the process of reconciliation and forgiveness.

Peacemaking through Nonviolence

Decades of war and violence in Chechnya have proved that to reach peace in the region a new strategy is needed. The use of war and violence not only failed to resolve problems in the region but exacerbated relations inflicting heavy losses on civilians as well as on their local cultural heritage. On the opposite side the situation is not so different. In order to reach their objectives Chechen fighters also employed violence frequently using terror methods. The Moscow Nord-Ost Theater and the Beslan hospital takeovers, the Moscow metro and airport blasts in 2002, 2004, 2010, and 2011 respectively had terrible

consequences, including enormous Russian civilian casualties. So, as an alternative method of struggle nonviolent strategies should be put in place.

A nonviolent movement is not necessarily a powerless movement. Power and nonviolence have a direct linkage to each other. Thomas Hobbes (1668), a great philosopher of power, argued that any power would lose its meaning when faced with the disobedience of the targeted people. Those who hold power always strive for more power in order to keep what they have gained. However, one may have power only if others are ready to defer to him (Hobbes, 1668). The core of the logic of nonviolence lies in this argument. Perhaps, the recent events in Egypt are a good example for the powerfulness of nonviolent movements.

Gandhi, for example, argued in the early 1900s that it would be impossible for the British to rule India by physical coercion alone. Instead, the British ruled India because enough Indians cooperated with them to make their rule possible. He argued that if the Indian people would withdraw their consent, British power would disappear. It would happen nonviolently because British physical power was based on obedience, which if withdrawn would cause Indian independence (Gandhi, 1986). It is possibly unfair to claim that nonviolence can be applied to different settings equally successfully, however it is legitimate that its main idea and strategies do not change according to different circumstances. Hence, strong and zealous leaders of nonviolence in both Chechnya and other parts of Russia would organize peaceful yet overwhelming civil society movements to pressure the governments in Moscow and Grozny to change their oppressive and inhumane policies.

The history of nonviolence has two traditions: the pacifist and the pragmatic (Johansen, 2007). The pacifist tradition includes ideas and views from religions, philosophies, ethics, and lifestyles. The pragmatic school, however, regards nonviolence as an effective and important political tool for communication—a social movement as well as a system of defense (Johansen, 2007).

The central premise of a principled nonviolence philosophy in contrast to a pragmatic one is that the use of violence is morally wrong (Burrows, 1996). Principled nonviolence prohibits any kinds of physical and psychological harm to human beings. Some expand the scope to include not only human beings, but all kinds of living creatures, and even the whole global ecosystem (Lyons, 2007). Nonviolent action is an agent of social change and a way of life as people strive to achieve positive peace (Vellacott, 2000).

The pragmatic tradition of nonviolence has its roots in those segments of society who have advocated with peaceful means for freedom, human rights, and democracy (Ackerman & Duvall, 2000). People use nonviolent techniques in most modern social and political movements related to women's networks, trade unions, environmental groups, solidarity movements, and other segments of civil society (Johansen, 2007). In the same way, nonviolent techniques can be used in a variety of movements in Chechnya related to such realms as human rights, women rights, freedom of speech, and the like.

Nonviolence as the antithesis of violence, which Galtung (1996) defined and categorized as direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence, should be adopted by people and institutions to be applied to every aspect of life in Chechnya, and Russia. Direct violence- harming people with intention- should cease terrorizing and

intimidating people and civil society organizations in Russia and Chechnya. Structural violence that refers to the harm done by socioeconomic and political structures should also be stopped to empower, inspire, and enable people and organizations to participate in peaceful activities in Chechnya. Cultural violence, explained as the cultural justification of direct and cultural violence, can be mitigated through constructive interpretations of cultural codes as discussed in previous sections. Besides Galtung, others such as Johansen (2007) also discuss direct, structural, and cultural nonviolence regarding nonviolence as the antithesis of violence detailing multiple dimensions of violence and nonviolence. Direct, institutional, and cultural nonviolence strategies can best work on multiple levels and spheres of life, and this should be the case in Chechnya as well.

Direct nonviolence refers to using nonviolent techniques to influence conflicts peacefully (Burrows, 1996). The nonviolent methods and strategies used to directly confront decisions, laws, and systems that do not treat all human beings equally are integrated parts of direct nonviolence. Structural nonviolence, on the other hand, involves the structures in a society that promote cooperation, recognition, reconciliation, openness, equality, and peaceful actions in conflict situations (Burrows, 1996). Civil society organizations and other democratic institutions are examples of such structures. Cultural nonviolence, however, includes those parts of the culture that transmit traditions of nonviolent behavior, and highlight nonviolent values and qualities (Burrows, 1996). Nonviolent traditions can be found in all cultures, religions, and philosophies including those within Russia and Chechnya.

However, many leaders of the Chechen movement believe that a pragmatic nonviolent struggle can be successful only if it is introduced into Russia to develop and

take hold there. Even Basayev, one of the most belligerent Chechen leaders, applied the pragmatic nonviolent method with some success when he handed captive Russian soldiers into the hands of their mothers, thus winning their hearts and support.¹³ However, Basayev's effort was a once-off intervention in the long conflict and did not yield much long-term Russian reciprocation or good will.

Implications for Chechnya

The use of nonviolence in Russia, including Chechnya, is not a dream. As a strategy, it successfully worked in different parts of the world to transform a variety of conflicts (e.g. Serbia, see Sharp, 2005), and similarly it may work in Chechnya and other parts of Russia to transform conflicts. It can be used as a conflict resolution tool in conjunction with other strategies to bring about positive change in the region. Nonviolence is not a means to be employed only by non-state actors. In fact, its contribution to regional peace may be enhanced by the institutional reforms introduced by both the Kremlin and local Chechen government. A nonviolent approach by both governments to regional issues would play a positive role in changing local peoples' views about the situation in the republic thus weakening the position of those who see the resolution of the problem largely through a violence prism. Losing any degree of local people's support would force Chechen fighters to search for nonviolent or at least less violent methods of struggle.

If employed by political leaders as a conflict transformation method and used in conjunction with other peacemaking methods, nonviolence could make a serious contribution to constructive peace in the region. A nonviolent movement in the region

¹³ This point was discussed previously in Chapter 2.

could be supported by people in solidarity from different regions of Russia. It is true that application of nonviolent methods differs across cultures and regions, and neither Russia nor Chechnya is with rich traditions of nonviolence. Nonetheless, starting strong nonviolence traditions in the region does not seem perplexing due to the Russian pacifists such as late Viktor Popkov who sacrificed his own life for nonviolence in Chechnya.

Peacemaking through Empowerment

Weak, intimidated, belittled, wounded, traumatized, sick, tired, hungry, homeless, vulnerable, and desperate people cannot make peace. Above all, empowering people in Chechnya to secure their own basic human needs requires democratic governance that entails characteristics such as openness and responsibility. Empowerment requires representation for all people at every level, in the institutions of national as well as global governance. However, it also means governance with the capacity to have good effect— to provide the necessities of human security for all people that in its broadest sense embraces far more than the absence of violent conflict. It encompasses human rights, good governance, and access to education as well as health care. All of these elements have been absent for many years in Chechnya and in the refugee camps where many Chechens live.

The people of the region are tired, weakened, and intimidated by the long-lasting war and the miserable social and economic conditions caused by it. In order to reach a positive change people need to be empowered with knowledge, self-esteem, skills, and resources, as well as by directly engaging in peacebuilding efforts in Chechnya. Empowerment has a direct relationship with human security, which consists of physical

safety, economic well-being, social inclusion, and the full exercise of human rights (Ogata, 2003). One of the best ways to protect human security is by having a democratic state—open, responsible, and effective (Wilson, 2006). However, human security is never achieved by the state alone; rather it is achieved in collaboration with government, civil society organizations, communities and businesses in partnerships of common purpose. Hence, there is a need for multi-track dynamic collaborations of governments, civil society organizations, communities, and businesses acting in partnerships of diverse interests and common purpose. To achieve human security the necessary conditions needed to meet basic human needs should be created in the republic. Empowering people to secure their own health is also necessary.

The main responsibility of every state is to protect its citizens. In Russia's Chechnya, the government has failed to meet its responsibility to its citizens, thus necessitating others' involvement in protecting the rights and safety of the Chechen people. Usually the least powerful members of any society—the poor, women, the elderly, and children, as well as marginalized people—are at highest risk from human security threats. The democratic empowerment of people would reduce human security risks, and make everyone safer.

Grave crimes against humanity were committed against women in Chechnya during the wars. Today, Chechen women are not safe even in the current relative stability in the region. Hence, empowerment for women must be perceived as a central issue in Chechnya. Much of the current literature on women and peace focuses on empowerment through women's equal participation in political decision making (Snyder, 2009). In this sense, one way of empowering Chechen women would be including their representatives

in the decision-making apparatus of the republic, instead of abducting and killing Chechen women peace activists such as Estemirova. Obviously, it is not in the interest of the Chechen government to have independent active women working in the name of human rights and democracy in Chechnya. Foreign assistance is needed for people to achieve some success in civil society establishment, or NGO development in Chechnya as well as in Russia in general (Sundstrom, 2005). The foreign aid programs, however, are not always supportive, since they sometimes ignore the large diversity of local civil societies and political actors having a rather odd effect in empowering local people (Pouliny, 2005). It might be useful to channel national and foreign aid to Chechen women to empower and unite them in political parties and NGOs with a coordination center in Grozny or Moscow. Elite Chechen women united in a political party and/or NGOs would significantly contribute to positive change in the republic.

As a result of two Chechen wars, many Chechen women became single parents and their difficult life conditions require them to work hard to look after their children. Chechen women are subject to oppression because of government policies directed at them, and need to be empowered more than any other segment of society. Advancing the power of women to end the injustices and disadvantages they face in Chechnya requires the institutionalization of their power. In this regard, besides women organizations, special and immediate policy reforms are needed to remove gender inequalities in today's Chechnya.

Children are another victimized category of people living in Chechnya (Seierstad, 2008). Naturally, it was impossible to improve the conditions of children in Chechnya during both wars with its own harsh rules. They grew up in a state of fear and anxiety,

and in many cases, even without parents. The psychology of new generations has been poisoned by hardships and violent atrocities of both wars. For many years, many Chechen children could not attend schools, and many survived in refugee camps. To protect their rights now and empower them physically, emotionally, and psychologically the enforcement machinery of national and regional human rights law is needed. The issue should first be addressed at the federal level in Moscow to ensure its immediate followup in the Chechen parliament.

The Chechen case reflects the bitter face of armed conflicts' impact on children as well as their parents' powerlessness in the face of violence. It is not a coincidence that most victims in the Chechen war are children who are, after all, among the least powerful group in any society. The war in Chechnya ensured that civilians were not just incidental casualties but are also targets of war. This is where political and criminal violence merges into terrorizing local communities, the plundering of local resources, and the cultural recruitment of child soldiers.

It is not a secret that many Chechen children died during the armed conflict because of malnutrition and preventable diseases. The death toll was especially high when the Russian government used the denial of access to food and medical aid as a tactic of war. If thousands of Chechen children survived the mercilessness of both Chechen wars, it is because of the Chechen women's extraordinary efforts to save their children. Outstanding examples previously discussed in this study also testify to the power of women even in the most difficult public struggles for peace.

As Lederach (2005, 1995) argues, one of the key peacemaking functions that can move a society toward change is education, since it empowers people to improve their

own well-being. Education empowers people to know and assert their rights in defense of human security for themselves and their communities. Simultaneously achieving human security creates conditions in which education can flourish. Empowering Chechen people may assist in correcting their human security deficits through enabling them to protect their own rights. Human security, in turn, would empower people to pursue their own democratic and sustainable development. Therefore, empowerment, human security, and democratic development are interlocked. This is why Chechen children should have access to normal education opportunities, which necessitates federal government care and consideration in addition to the the Chechen government's.

Today in Chechnya, there is a plethora of people with disabilities, and many people are sickened by virulent diseases such as tuberculosis. The elderly, women, and children are at particular risk. Oruj Osman identified tuberculosis as the “national disease of Chechens.” Poverty, just like conflict, contributes to epidemics of infection and blocks people's access to health care. Failing health, in turn, contributes to family poverty and negatively affects national development by keeping people from participating in social life properly. These are the vicious circles ruining the lives and livelihoods of tens of thousands of people in Chechnya. Breaking these vicious circles is important to set up normal life conditions needed for peaceful change in Chechnya. To this end, a new health policy for Chechnya should be adopted at the federal government level to be implemented by the local Chechen government. Tangible governmental aid aimed at improving the Chechen health care system may affect people's minds and bodies.

In Chechnya, women suffer the invisible violence of domestic abuse as well as political violence (Banner, 2008). During wartime—along with the public harms and

humiliations that women endure—much of their pain and many of their lasting injuries were inflicted on them as they suffered in silence. On the other hand, Chechen women also took on the role of suicide bombers, because of their oppression, as an expression of their political engagement (Banner, 2008). In the current relatively stable political milieu the lives of Chechen women are not much better.

If a woman runs around and if a man runs around with her, both of them are killed, Kadyrov told journalists in the capital of this Russian republic. ...Kadyrov describes women as the property of their husbands and says their main role is to bear children. He encourages men to take more than one wife, even though polygamy is illegal in Russia. Women and girls are now required to wear head scarves in schools, universities and government offices (Cline, 2009).

The prevention and punishment of violence against women during both wars—including the crimes of sexual violence, exploitation, and trafficking—demand their own category of state responses. However, neither the Chechen local government, nor the Russian federal government in Moscow feel obliged to protect women against domestic violence specifically by prosecuting the perpetrators. Addressing this issue requires that stronger pressure from global civil society organizations is placed on the governments of Russian and Chechnya.

History has witnessed that women have played crucial roles in peacekeeping and nonviolence in different parts of the world. Declaring peace is not enough to end war and violence. Rather it entails initiating fundamental social changes, where women who are also excellent negotiators have the opportunity to bridge insurmountable divides (Hunt & Posa, 2001). In the Russian case, Soldiers' Mothers, the Russian civil society organization of women, has played a significant role in protesting Russia's wars in

Chechnya. However, stronger nationwide civil movements are needed to promote peace and prosperity in Chechnya. Coordinating the cooperation of Russian civil society organizations with those that function abroad would yield better results. Moreover, a coordinating the work of Russian civil society organizations would assist in resisting Moscow's oppressive policies.

Securing the protections to which every Chechen woman is entitled means mobilizing the self-empowering capacity of women themselves. Humanitarian agencies— intergovernmental and non-governmental—must work in Chechnya towards making women's recovery from wartime violence a critical and consistent priority. Chechen women are especially vulnerable in refugee populations and internally displaced persons. Consequently, to get better results women should be specifically included in the management of refugee and displacement camps, in rebuilding education systems, in training for de-mining, in support for war widows, and in all post-conflict reintegration programming. Children also have the right to receive education even in wartime emergencies—a right that is seldom enforced. The Chechen wars lasted for over fifteen years, with an entire generation of children lost to any schooling whatsoever. Evidence indicates that education contributes to self- protection it empowering the young to assert their own rights more effectively (Christopher, Dunnagan, Duncan, & Paul, 2001). However, the right to education is meaningless where it cannot be exercised.

Children may play a critical role in organizing society in the aftermath of war—with a voice in negotiating the peace and arranging disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. In Liberia, for example, where young people made up a sizeable number of the combatants, their exclusion from the peace processes was a factor in the resumption

of bloody conflict. Every postaccord peacebuilding process must also reflect the reality that girls suffer conflict differently than boys, and are entitled to specific measures to assist them in recovering from the experience of conflict and to find their own human security.

Thus, the non-governmental initiatives and alliances against the recruitment of child soldiers, the use of landmines, and the proliferation of the small arms trade all should be supported by religious leaders, governments, NGOs, and businesses. Thus, the machinery of enforcing human rights law must be strengthened. Reporting and reversing breaches of the Convention on the Rights of the Child should work through well-developed mechanisms.

Accomplishing these necessary reforms means addressing the roots of human insecurity: poverty and marginalization, social and cultural disadvantage, legal inequities, and the risks of violent political unrest. Empowering people at risk addresses the human security imperative by directing corrective policy and action to those whose security is most severely threatened. These are the poor and the disabled, the excluded and the marginalized, including indigenous people, women subjected to the injustices of gender discrimination, children suffering abuses of violence, migrants enduring danger and exploitation, and populations victimized by political and criminal bloodshed.

Implications for Chechnya

Empowerment has a number of implications for the people of Chechnya. Above all, the NGO movements in Russia and Chechnya should be given international support to develop stronger roots. NGOs could support different layers of the Chechen population

especially children, women, and people with disabilities to protect their own rights and meet their own needs.

Second, creating a unified political party would increase Chechen women's power to take active part in the legislation and executive processes. These women would be able to create their own political tools to create their own security and prosperity, which would also significantly contribute to peacebuilding and to the overall well-being of the Chechen people.

Third, Chechen women should also actively participate in dealing with refugee issues at the displacement camps, as well as rebuilding education systems, addressing critical and sensitive issues, and supporting war widows, etc. Chechen women's participation in all post-conflict reintegration processes would contribute to the positive social change in the country.

Fourth, empowering the Chechen people requires the cooperation of international and national, as well as governmental and non-governmental actors on a program of action and policy to promote human security in Chechnya. Bringing together actors as diverse as the Federal Russian and local Chechen governments, local and international NGOs, local communities, global networks, business enterprises, labor unions, and scholars to consider human security issue in Chechnya may appear difficult, but it is not impossible. As with any foreign involvement in Chechnya, Russia's consent and willingness to cooperate is a key to success.

Fifth, development assistance in war-prone Chechen society should concentrate resources. The true value of human security in Chechnya both as a concept, and as a program for policy and action may be reached through integrating a coherent framework

of cooperative action in alliances of the Federal Russian and local Chechen governments, NGOs, local communities, global networks, business enterprises, labor unions, scholars, and all the other productive collectivities of human achievement. Consequently, the prevention of new conflict in Chechnya would be more effective than trying to stop a war after it has started and repairing all the damage afterward. Therefore, conflict prevention activities should be initiated in the republic on different levels. More importantly, they should always be an integral part of state policy vis-à-vis Chechnya.

Moreover, preventing a new wave of war in Chechnya would be more effective than trying to stop a war after it has started. Therefore, conflict prevention efforts in the republic should be multi-modal and multi-level, and an integral part of the Kremlin's policy that would also entail a number of immediate political, social, and economic reforms.

Negotiating for Mutual Gains

There have been a number of failed negotiations between the Russians and Chechens that have not brought about a long-lasting peace mainly due to the parties' perceptions of the conflict as zero-sum. All the negotiations that took place between both sides were competitive with each party not caring much about each other's goals. The parties need to employ collaborative negotiation recognizing their interdependence if they are to reach peace through a constructive process (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007). At the very beginning of the negotiations, both the Chechens and Russians should adopt a policy of finding reciprocal creative grounds for negotiations for the sake of the both parties.

Whether a collaborative negotiation is possible after all these Russian military and defamatory campaigns against Chechens may be debatable. The Russian authorities have not protected the physical security or identity of Chechens who are continuously named terrorists. However, a well-organized pre-negotiation phase may prepare the parties to come to the negotiation table. Barsky (2008, 2000) discusses a capacity building approach to conflict resolution that entails premediation, trust building, and conflict assessment. This capacity building approach is relatively new to the PACS field. It is designed to prepare parties for a dialogue or negotiations by enhancing their motivation, skills, and resources. A capacity building approach is especially needed in cases when parties to a conflict do not want to meet for any reason (Barsky, 2000, 2008).

In addition, Ross and Rothman (1999) have pointed out that while addressing ethnic conflicts governments consider developing early warning systems, preventative diplomacy, training special negotiation and mediation teams, and multinational rapid reactions teams to intervene in ethnic conflicts. NGOs, however, seek in a variety of ways to transform ethnic conflicts in constructive ways. Ross and Rothman (1999) argue that these efforts are less visible, less expensive, faster, more flexible and focused, as well as far less politically complicated than governmental efforts. NGOs have the ability to create special institutional structures valued by all sides to deal with the conflict, and are able to create contexts in which parties can explore options without the risks of committing themselves to any outcomes (Ross & Rothman, 1999).

The non-binding contexts include informal discussions in interactive problem solving workshops at which parties learn about each other's positions and priorities. In one way or another, the Russians and Chechens should learn how to negotiate with each

other for their mutual gain, rather than seeing their conflict as nonnegotiable with a win-lose or zero-sum perspective that assumes that what one party wins the other loses. Many creative options can be developed by the negotiators. Above all, collaborative rather than competitive approaches to negotiations should be preferred by both sides, at least because the collaborative negotiation process can result in both parties' gaining something. Assumptions of collaborative or integrative negotiations are that creativity can transcend the zero-sum aspect of competitive negotiations (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007).

Fisher and Ury use the term "principled negotiation" as an alternative to the hard and soft positional bargaining strategies (Fisher & Ury, 1991). In tough negotiations, the parties take hard positions in order not to lose. This may bring about some impasse to the negotiation process, thus delaying the outcome, returning to earlier phases of negotiations, or totally terminating the process itself (Holmes, 1992). If the process ends up with a product because of the concessions of one of the parties, it may not be a wise outcome. The outcome of the negotiations that took place between the Russians and the Chechens resulting in the Khasavyurt Accord was not healthy. The subsequent events that took place in 1999 that renewed the armed hostilities prove that point.

A choice of a new strategy somewhere between hard and soft positional bargaining would change the game that necessitates focusing on inventing options for mutual gains (Fisher & Ury, 1991). Parties, therefore, may become more collaborative and inclined to problem solving tendencies. In fact, successful negotiation results in parties moving toward a collaborative process (Holmes, 1992; Wilmot & Hocker, 2007). If collaborative tactics cease to be used by the parties, the negotiation process may break

down. Therefore, collaborative negotiation tactics might be helpful in leading the parties toward integrative negotiations.

Implications for Chechnya

The parties to the Russo-Chechen war need to create and implement a new set of constructive talks. Keeping the two aforementioned preconditions in mind—abandoning demands for the full independence of Chechnya by the Chechens, and Russian’s identifying Chechen rebels as terrorists- the parties may develop a collaborative approach to negotiations.¹⁴ Unlike the 1996 negotiations, the negotiation Chechen party can and should be represented by a group of people from different Chechen interest groups and formed after serious discussions on the principles and strategies that should be followed up. At the current historical moment it may appear impossible to hold a new set of negotiations because the Russian-backed Kadyrov government of Chechnya, and Moscow’s short-term gains in the region. However, the foundation for constructive negotiations should be laid out now when the Chechens are more prone to resolving the problem within the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation. Obviously, the Chechen resistance in the region is still too strong and organized as it tries to develop its borders. Recent terrorist events in Moscow, Ossetia, and Dagestan indicate the strength of Chechen separatists (Hurriyet, 2010a, 2010c, 2010d).

During the negotiation process, the role of an effective mediator is essential. The history of the Russo-Chechen war and the efforts of the OSCE to transform it demonstrate that its role as a mediator was not successful. Consequently, the format of

¹⁴ This does not necessarily mean that there are no terrorists in Chechnya. The argument is that labelling all Chechen rebels as terrorists automatically closes doors for rapprochement.

the mediation process between Russia and Chechnya as well as the mediator should also be changed. A new group of committed mediators including some Western and Islamic countries would prepare better proposals for the Chechens and Russians to discuss.

Giving up imperial ambitions would ensure that Russia was respected in the region. Russia's policy of democratization and liberalization would also facilitate the solution of many socioeconomic and sociopolitical conflicts existing in the country, including Chechnya. However, nothing should be taken for granted; rather, whatever autonomy Russia gives to Chechnya should be negotiated for the mutual benefits of both sides. Any outcome reached through negotiations should be sustainable and long-lasting, satisfying not only both parties to the conflict, but also the in-group Chechen opposition.

Discussions

This chapter proposes a community-based problemsolving approach that offers a multilevel system to design a lasting peace by including the participation of top leadership, middle-range leadership, as well as grassroots leaders. The peacebuilding process is most productive when it takes place on a variety of levels at the same time (Lederach, 1998). For example, see Lederach's conceptual framework for peace building.

It is important to examine the entire system to figure out how best to fit together various conflict resolution processes and the specific needs of the parties to conflict (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007). Employing a combination of conflict resolution methods to the Russo-Chechen case depends on its particularities that may yield a better product. This chapter presents an overview of a number of transformational resolution methods—peace education, interfaith dialogue, interactive problem solving, forgiveness and

reconciliation, negotiations for mutual gain, empowerment, storytelling, and nonviolence—that can be coordinated together in a multi-track peacebuilding system. They all are tied to each other organically, since the successful application of any of these methods may contribute to the success of the other in the same context. However, the number of Track II methods is not limited to those mentioned and discussed here.

Almost all of the aforementioned methods, except for negotiations, are informal. The purpose of using those methods is to transform the conflict elements, thereby allowing conflict resolution to materialize. The argument is not to resolve the Russo-Chechen conflict entirely and instantly; rather, it is necessary to transform this conflict from an intractable stage to a tractable one in which new opportunities emerge to enable both parties to move forward.

There are two basic and core preconditions for peacemaking in the region. First, Russia must sincerely agree to the use of conflict resolution in Chechnya, ceasing to identify its Chechen counterparts as terrorists. This change in behavior would contribute to fostering a long-lasting cease-fire in the region, which is necessary for successful negotiations. Second, the Chechens should declare that they intend to resolve the Chechen question within the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation.

An overwhelming majority of the Chechens who participated in this study expressed the belief that reaching the goal of self-determination through military means is easier as they expressed their approval of the use of arms in the conflict. Then a legitimate question arises: why do Chechens criticize Russia's use of force? Certainly, there are answers pertaining to such notions as *self-determination*, *just war*, *self-defense*, *identity preservation*, and *historical justice*, etc. However, such notions as *revenge*,

retaliation, and *eye to eye*, etc., cannot be excluded. Moreover, at some point the vicious cycle of violence must be broken. This chapter, therefore, focuses directly on conflict resolution and conflict transformation approaches that could be used to transform the Russo-Chechen conflict.

As discussed in previous chapters, the long and complex history of the Russo-Chechen conflict is full of grievances and violent interactions that shaped the hostile attitudes and behavior of both sides to each other. However, there have been too few efforts to transform this deep-rooted, intractable conflict. Although a number of international and regional organizations, Russian civil society organizations, and grassroots organizations took a number of steps toward transforming this conflict, their activities were insufficient to bring about considerable change. In fact, as Byrne (1995) articulated, many protracted ethnic conflicts previously described as irresolvable have taken dramatic steps toward possible resolution. Peace processes are dynamic; therefore, they can change any time both in positive and negative ways. However, all possible efforts should be used to transform the Russo-Chechen conflict into a more favorable and peaceful condition in which another more durable step may take place. In this sense, the Russo-Chechen conflict also needs positive and constructive attention in the hopes of searching for new innovative and creative ways to transform it.

The Russo-Chechen conflict started to de-escalate in the mid-2000s, providing a ripe context for a successful intervention to bring about a permanent and sustainable peace in the region rather than in suppressing the existing problem into a new latent state. Hence, if used effectively this historical moment might prove to be very fertile for long-

term gains for both parties. In that sense, the parties' constructive position is needed so as not to miss this opportunity.

The historical moment should be used wisely. The political climate is ripe for a win-win solution. In many cases today, governments try to find a better solution to their territorial integrity problems through political initiatives. Turkey, for example, has recently initiated a number of programs to resolve the Kurdish question thereby eliminating PKK-related armed attacks on Turkey. Russia, however, has accelerated its military campaigns to eliminate individual Chechen leaders residing in different foreign countries. This new violent strategy would by no means bring about a resolution to the conflict; at least because leaders are replaceable let alone the psychological aftermath that stimulates people's feelings for revenge.

The Russian government's political initiatives have not satisfied all Chechens. Russia's efforts to create a loyal Chechen government that colors Russian policies vis-à-vis Chechnya have been successful. However, this Russian government strategy may bring about other plentiful and serious problems in the future. The Russian government should formulate a better program to address the root causes of the conflict rather than by cutting off all of its branches.

The current political conditions in the region are convenient for conflict resolution, at least because Chechnya has never been so stable since the early 1990s. The targeted assassinations of Chechen leaders abroad do not assist in the transformation of conflict at all. It is not possible to resolve this conflict rapidly. Rather, the resolution process requires steady, persistent, and patient work toward building a new system that offers people peace, security, and trust. The step-by-step resolution of the conflict would

forge a more durable and sustainable peace, since the first step would prepare reliable conditions for the next step.

Moreover, there is a need to acknowledge that the Chechens have a number of political, economic, and social problems that should be resolved by the federal government. Those problems are related, but not limited to, political status, the education system, the development of cultural institutions, and full economic freedom. The creation of structural and psychocultural incentives in Chechnya may create a fertile ground helpful in mitigating peoples' dissatisfaction with being a part of the Russian Federation. The participation of different layers of both societies in the peace process may raise a sense of control over the outcome of the principled negotiations between the Chechens and Russians. The conflict can be transformed from an intractable to a tractable form by means of the multimodal and multilevel peacebuilding approach discussed above.

Conclusion

This chapter presented a model of conflict transformation that can be applied to the Russo-Chechen conflict in order to bring about some positive change. The peacemaking methods presented in this chapter are primarily unofficial and involve all layers of the society, including grassroots, middle-range, and top leaderships, in the peacebuilding processes. It is argued that official track one diplomacy alone is not sufficient to transform this intractable conflict, rather track two diplomacy may be more effective in bringing about positive peace to the region. The following chapter concludes the thesis by presenting the key findings and outlining the limitations and future recommendations of the study.

Chapter 11

Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

Chapter 11 concludes the thesis by summarizing the key findings of the research and addressing the significance of the study. It also highlights the main premise of this work and discusses its limitations. Recommendations for future research follow.

It is generally accepted by PACS scholars that successful conflict resolution requires a thoughtful and accurate analysis. This study, therefore, has given importance to analysis as well as resolution of the conflict at hand. A number of existing PACS theories are presented and discussed in Chapter 4 to the extent that they are relevant to this work. Also, those theories inform the research, analysis, and resolution parts of this study.

To see the full picture of the Russo-Chechen conflict a course of its historical development is described and discussed in Chapter 2. The political developments in the Russian provinces in 1990s are presented in Chapter 3 to make some comparisons. The importance of Russia's Chechen question is better understood by looking at the entire system. The methods are outlined in Chapter 5.

A number of themes related to the interrelationship of human needs and employment, war and psychocultural issues, war and gender issues, etc. are discussed in Chapters 6 and 7. Chapter 8 discusses the role of story and metaphor in the conflict's discourse. Each chapter discusses the problems raised based on the research data, and each section presents the findings.

Chapter 9 discusses the OSCE's failed conflict management. First, it outlines the conflict resolution practice in the region by discussing the activities of some civil society

organizations in Russia. Then, in Chapter 10, a comprehensive, holistic, and organic method of conflict transformation is presented. Conflict resolution approaches such as peace education, empowerment, storytelling, interfaith dialogue, interactive problem solving, forgiveness and reconciliation, nonviolence, and negotiating for mutual gains are presented and discussed. The importance of peacemaking efforts made on different levels involving a variety of actors is also stressed.

Key Findings

This section presents key findings and discusses them briefly. All the findings discussed in this chapter are important for either the analysis or resolution of the Russo-Chechen conflict. Some are logical conclusions that this study has arrived at, others are arguments that were formulated when the research started that are supported by the research data and discussions made in this thesis.

Key Finding 1

Integrity of Conflict Analysis and Resolution: Reflexive Praxis

To think of conflict analysis and resolution as two separate fields would be misleading and unproductive. Instead, the first should inform the latter. It is true for any conflict case, including the Russo-Chechen conflict.

Diagnosing conflict always has an implication for formulating resolution methods and processes. Whereas the first deals with such variables as sources, types, dynamics as well as contexts, the latter is about an intervention in which a third party enters the

conflict situation with the goal of bringing about some positive change. Intervention is fed by diagnosis; hence, the more accurate diagnosis, the more successful cure.

This thesis is an attempt to link conflict analysis and conflict resolution arguing that they are organically interconnected. The analysis of sources, types, dynamics, and situations is critical in informing effective interventions that are dependent on multiple dimensions of a conflict.

Key Finding 2

A Systemic and Multimodal Approach to Conflict Transformation

The research participants raised a number of issues of a structural nature and a psychocultural nature (including identity), which contribute to conflicts between Russians and Chechens. Implicit in this thesis is the argument that a holistic multilevel and multimodal approach is required to transform the conflict. Therefore, it can be said that one of the main conclusions of this study is the need for conflict resolution practitioners to acknowledge the interplay and interconnectedness between the different issues related to structure, human needs, culture, psychology, and economy that escalate conflict and the need to approach these issues within a comprehensive, multimodal, and multilevel framework. Assessing the workings of the overall system together with the recurring patterns inside the system contributes to the assessment of the case, thus providing third parties with the data for formulating constructive interventions.

A multimodal and multilevel approach to conflict analysis is needed, as well as an organic and multilevel approach to conflict resolution in order to reach the objective of constructive conflict handling. In this sense, a number of conflict resolution approaches

must take place simultaneously on different levels as the positive influence of one on each other is powerful.

Key Finding 3

The Use of Conflict Resolution Efforts

Conflict resolution practices in Russia took place primarily within civil society organizations. The complexities of the Russo-Chechen conflict entail employing effective conflict transformation practices, which requires different conflict areas be addressed simultaneously.

Regional organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), NGOs such as the Soldiers' Mothers organization, and Memorial, and individuals such as Politkovskaya and Estemirova extensively used conflict transformation in the context of the Russo-Chechen conflict, even though most efforts have not brought about any positive change. However, not all avenues that conflict transformation provides have been sufficiently explored, nor have conflict transformation values been discussed extensively and directly by Russians who work with the Chechens. Another finding is related to the ability of the Chechen leadership to involve Russian grassroots organizations as well as laypeople, in addition to some political and media elites, in the conflict resolution process. The release of Russian prisoners to their mothers by Chechen leaders not only enhanced the reputation of Chechen fighters in Russia but also created a new venue for civil involvement in the peacebuilding process.

Key Finding 4

The Russo-Chechen War is Interest-based and Political

The Russo-Chechen war is not a religious- or culture-based war. However, both religion and culture have a strong motivational role in this war. In other words, the war between the Russian state machine and the Chechen freedom fighters is not a clash of cultures or religions, although there are a number of cultural and religious motives informing the behavior of both groups.

Moreover, there are many culture/religion-based declarations on both sides intended to justify one group's policies or atrocities against the other. On many occasions, religion has been used by both parties as a political tool to manipulate peoples' feelings. It is apparent that in today's Chechnya, where a pro-Russian government is in power, *shariat* is stronger than before the early 1990s, which doesn't bother the Moscow government.

Key Finding 5

Most Chechens do not Feel Hatred Towards the Russian People

Another finding is that despite the severity of violence, and the loss of human lives in Chechnya, most Chechens do not harbor hatred towards the Russian people. Rather, their problem is with the Russian government's use of its political power. Nevertheless, the Chechen people don't lead a liberal way of life; rather, they prefer to live a more conservative lifestyle, especially in terms of family life. These tendencies multiplied within the Chechen community especially after the first Chechen war started in 1994.

Many research participants related stories about the humble lifestyles of Russian

people, and portrayed them as a hard-working and just people. No research participant in my study held the Russian people responsible for the Chechen wars. Instead, many mentioned that the people of Russia have demonstrated solidarity with the Chechens in many ways. For example, Russian sportsmen in sports tournaments expressed their empathy with the Chechen movement, as well as the burgeoning solidarity rallies in the streets of Moscow.

Key Finding 6

Conflict Vitality and Track II Diplomacy

Psychocultural and historical memory help sustain historical narratives and images reproduced and reframed contributing to conflict vitality. Although old images and narratives are sometimes questioned, there is no real exercise of significant effect to change the collective memory. However, propaganda may affect the natural flow of stories from generation to generation negatively. Therefore, the boundaries of myth and truth are sometimes blurred. Paradoxically, while questioning past and present brutal events, the Chechens do not express any hatred toward Russians. This, in fact, constitutes one of the key premises for the possibility of using constructive conflict resolution in Chechnya based on Track II diplomacy. Evidence shows that relying on traditional diplomacy for effective mediation between both parties to the Chechen conflict was not the right choice, and alone it will not forge any long-lasting success in the future.

Key Finding 7

Diversity of the Parties

Naturally, both of the parties to the Russo-Chechen conflict have diverse and incompatible goals. However, the diversities are so controversial and omnipresent that entering a reconciliation process or breaking negotiation impasses are very difficult, which also adds to the intractability of the conflict. The diversity of the parties' goals led to diverse means to reach them.

One of the key findings of the study is the diversity of both the Russian and Chechen political elites, which poses challenges to the conflict resolution practices. The Chechens have a deep mistrust of the Russian political leadership formed by the Kremlin's historical practice that is full of relevant precedents. The Russians, in turn, do not desire to concede anything to the Chechens because they are not the only ethnic group in the Russian Federation with political aspirations to full independence.

The aspirations of a majority of the Chechen people for Chechen self-determination have created impasses during political negotiations between the Russians and Chechens. At the same time, many other Chechens adhere to membership of the Russian Federation, leading to in-group clashes within Chechnya. The current president of Chechnya, Ramzan Kadyrov, for example, is considered by Chechen opposition leaders to be their most dangerous and merciless enemy.

Key Finding 8

Power Asymmetry

In addition, power asymmetry, in-group rivalry, and discontinuity in negotiations are

important factors in the unsuccessful negotiations of the Chechen conflict enabling both sides to manipulate the situation when necessary. At different points in the war, this power asymmetry had two effects on Russia's Chechen policy: (1) Russia was genuinely unable to find a power in Chechnya to rely on; and (2) Russia used the *divide and rule* policy when necessary.

Moreover, at this particular historical stage of the conflict, most Chechens perceive the pro-Russian Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov and his government as a primary rival. This perception has two main implications: (1) Russia has successfully managed to apply the *divide and rule* principle in Chechnya, and (2) Russia has gained more legitimacy in its struggle with the Chechen fighters. In other words, the current pro-Moscow government in Grozny is recognized by the Kremlin as the only legitimate power in Chechnya. All other entities are declared as illegitimate and illegal subject to treatment in line with federal law.

Key Finding 9

Two Major Preconditions

There are two preconditions for the successful transformation of the Russo-Chechen conflict. It is necessary that Chechens abandon their claims for full political independence, and Russians stop labeling their Chechen rivals as terrorists to successfully transform the conflict. Meeting these two conditions would necessitate a paradigm shift in the perceptions and policies of both parties to the conflict to remove the legal and moral as well as institutional and imagined borders to the conflict. Both parties would also be free from pressures coming from different layers and circles of society including

the political and military elite, which would also facilitate the negotiation process adding impetus to its progress.

However, it is not necessary to wait until the fulfillment of those preconditions to commence peacemaking efforts. Those preconditions may never come about or may be delayed for a long time. Therefore, simply waiting for the conditions to materialize does not make any sense in terms of conflict resolution. Also, the peacemaking efforts may contribute to changing overall conditions that may bring about the necessary environment to change. Although important, both of these major preconditions are not absolute.

Key Finding 10

The Tatar Model

It is incorrect to say that there is no political model that would be accepted by Chechens within the Russian Federation, although it is absolutely correct to assume that most Chechens desire and demand independence. Even the most radical subjects I interviewed for this study displayed some regrets that Chechnya did not follow the path of Tatarstan in the early 1990s.

The Chechen admiration of the Tatarstan model was related to me in the interviewees' stories. Although the heavy price paid by Chechen civilians during the first and second Chechen wars makes the problem more irreconcilable, a number of Chechen leaders' acknowledged that the adoption of the Tatarstan model could have avoided the tragic events that occurred in and around Chechnya highlighting a mutually acceptable and reachable common ground. It may be challenging, yet radical Chechen leaders can be reconciled about the status of Chechnya within the Tatarstan model.

The Tatarstan model includes economic independence as well as a strong and local internal sovereignty. However, Tatarstan relies on the Russian federal government in Moscow on foreign affairs.

Key Finding 11

The Chechen War- a National Liberation Movement

There were many autonomous republics or oblasts in the Russian Federation with secessionist aspirations in the late 1990s, but as of today, only one-Chechnya- remains. The secessionist movements once were scattered around different parts of Russia such as the Far East, the central Volga region and the northern Caucasus. Some of the movements, especially those in Tuva, Tatarstan, and Bashkortostan were very strong and well-organized. However, the Chechen ethnic movement is the only one that escalated into armed conflict. Also, after Grozny declared its independence from Moscow, the Chechnya conflict has become the longest, bloodiest as well as the most destructive conflict in the Russian Federation.

The Russo-Chechen conflict is quite distinct from all the other ethnic conflicts in the Russian Federation. Its root causes differ from its other ethnic conflicts to a significant degree. However, all of these differences do not necessarily mean that the bloody course of the conflict in Chechnya was unavoidable. The mistake of the Russian government and its leader Boris Yeltsin in using armed force to suppress the Chechens as well as the hasty and radical decisions of the Chechen leaders in the early 1990s made conflict escalation and grave consequences inevitable that kept the Russo-Chechen conflict in a dynamic mode. Today, the Russo-Chechen conflict is the only ethnic conflict

in which armed struggle takes place. It is true that the intensity of the war has declined drastically. However, it is hard to anticipate that it will continue in this way.

The nationalist character of the Chechen struggle against Russian armed forces, the motivation of the entire people of Chechnya to become independent, and the length of the struggle, among other factors, indicates that the purpose of the war for Chechens is the national liberation of Chechnya. The majority of the people of Chechnya want to see their country as an independent state because they have sacrificed so much in both wars.

Key Finding 12

The Effects of the War on the Russian Government

While the first Chechen war demonstrated the weakness of the Russian state, the second Chechen war resulted in the increased power of the Russian state. Moscow's fiasco during the first Chechen war provided the political leadership of Russia the chance to recreate a powerful central government to restore Russia's power in the region.

The consequences of the first Chechen war reflected the problems evident in Russian political leadership, its military, and economy. The first Chechen war became a driving force for the Russian political elite to invent new political policies to bring back the military as well as economic power of the country, which was necessary to keep the country together, let alone to regain its lost prestige due to its military failure to subjugate the Chechens.

Ironically, the military fiasco ensured that secessionist ethnic movements in different parts of the Russian Federation were addressed carefully with more accurate and sophisticated political approaches to keep them in check. Russia's relatively loose

democratic climate under Yeltsin was replaced with the more authoritarian rule of Putin who adopted more uncompromising policies regarding the political unity of Russia.

Key Finding 13

Violence is not a Solution to the Problem

Neither the Russian nor Chechen parties have been successful in reaching their objectives despite more than a decade of fighting. Russia's claims that the war is over is not supported by the data. As long as the parties construct their political strategies with violent efforts, it is hard to claim that the war is over. As the hostilities continue, the political, economic, and social problems in Chechnya remain ongoing as well. The only positive development that has emerged is that the conflict is in a current phase of de-escalation. However, this de-escalation is not being used wisely to address existing political problems in the republic, as the conflict may escalate at any time in the near future.

It is obvious that the application of violence for over ten years has not brought any benefits to the warring parties. Rather, civilian casualties are enormous, and the destruction of Chechnya's cultural heritage as well as its schools makes the conditions even worse. The constructive stage of the conflict requires that the parties return to a commitment to not use force, which was an integral part of the Khasavyurt peace accord signed by both parties in 1996. However, the use of violence against the civilian population by the pro-Russian government in Grozny as well as the targeted assassinations of Chechen leaders living abroad by the Russian secret service is also of concern.

The use of violence in and around Chechnya has destroyed human lives and the psychology of children was gravely impacted by the trauma of both wars and the resulting violence. Young generations in Chechnya also grow up illiterate. Thus, people bear grievances against the Russian government as well as the pro-Russian Chechen government. A new wave of violence may always emerge as a result of Chechen grievances.

Key Finding 14

Multilevel and Multimodal Approach to Conflict Resolution

Today, PACS scholars generally agree that the state-centered traditional diplomacy is not an adequate and effective instrument for conflict resolution; rather human-centered methods that include Track II diplomacy- may bring both conflicting parties together for peacebuilding and reconciliation (Byrne, 2001a; Diamond & McDonald, 1996; Moffat, 2007). There is no reason not to apply a number of informal conflict resolution methods on different levels to the Chechen case as well.

Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

It is nearly impossible to find a single completely finished social research project (Rozlívková, 2007). Since social reality is a dynamic phenomenon (Diamond & McDonald, 1996), one could return to the same research topic after a while and find that a number of new and interesting developments have taken place. At the same time, no social research can cover all aspects of the case entirely. Many research issues, such as the size of the sample and the choice of the locations as well as the research subjects,

represent the primary limitation of this study. It is possible to expand the number of research subjects as well as the choice of locations and number and quality of research questions in order to enrich this research project.

It is noted in the description of the methodology section that the overall majority of the participants of this exploratory case study are Chechen refugees living abroad in Azerbaijan, Canada, and the United States. A few Russian nationals were interviewed too. Future research should also include more Russian people, more women and children, and Chechen people who support pro-Russian policies to gain a more comprehensive perspective on the issues discussed in this study. Moreover, including government officials among the research participants would also shed new insights on this research. Hence, future research should attempt to explore the perspectives of national policy makers and compare them to people working primarily at the grassroots level.

The scope of the study and related security concerns of the majority of the research participants did not permit me to discuss a number of issues in more detail. More time devoted to collecting data would also have provided richer information to explore other aspects of this case. Thus, future research should focus on certain other aspects of the relationships between the Russians and Chechens. The roles and functioning of separate conflict resolution methods should also be discussed in more detail such as traditional indigenous models. However, this study can provide a starting point for further research on conflict resolution in Chechnya.

The academic literature written about the Russo-Chechen conflict is rich. However, the complexity of the conflict requires more research. Although my study utilized the existing literature on this subject it is also unique and innovative in a number

of ways. The study comprehensively applied PACS theories to analyze the causes of the conflict to capture the complexities (Sandole, 1999), and to create a disputes systems design so that it could be transformed constructively (Byrne, 1995; Wilmot & Hocker, 2007). Also, despite some minor biases on my behalf, it is hoped that this research project has explored the research questions in an objective way, without taking any particular side.

Conclusion

The Russo-Chechen conflict has deep roots, yet the interactions between Russians and Chechens also have a long intimate history given the fact that conflict and war is a form of functional interaction between both groups. In that sense, the relationship is not only about three hundred years of conflict, but is also about three hundred years of interaction and cooperation in one form or another. This point is mostly ignored by those who study the Russo-Chechen conflict. In fact, the Russo-Chechen conflict can be transformed into a new stage favorable to further constructive talks between the Russian government and the Chechen leaders. Not all conflict resolution efforts are used in this regards, nor has the necessary research been applied in this respect.

Unlike many research projects that praise the Chechens' boldness as a warlike people, this study has depicted Chechens as a very peaceful people who desire peaceful coexistence. A serious and well-stated peace treaty negotiated with the Russian authorities would be a giant leap forward in resolving the problem. The work of civil society organizations, with Chechens and Russians, would facilitate such a political process. Peace education and similar peace-related programs (for example, storytelling

interventions) would also contribute to a lasting peaceful co-existence in the region. By enjoying better political and economic autonomy Chechnya would continue to be an integral part of the Russian Federation with some devolved power.

The historical moment is ripe for constructive negotiations (Zartman, 1985). Ignoring the rights and needs of Chechens would not bring about any positive change in the long run. Russia's short-term expedient gains may appear to be long-term losses in the future. Therefore, the historical moment must be used wisely and constructively. If unsatisfied, the Chechen fighters may continue the armed struggle because they are nurtured by the local culture and the local people. Eliminating separatists entirely is impossible as long as local people continue to resist and exist. Moreover, the organized Chechen diasporas abroad are likely to bring a new dimension to the Chechen political and military struggle in the future as North American Tamils and Irish nationalists did for the conflicts in Sri Lanka and Northern Ireland respectfully.

Healing the wounds of Chechnya is necessary to build a long-term sustainable peace. It is not easy, and comprehensive government-sponsored federal programs are needed. An immediate and well-organized policy would assist the central government to win the trust of the local people to a large extent. Supported by political and economic autonomy, as well as freedom in the Chechens' social and cultural life, this policy would bring mutual gain to both Russia and Chechnya in a win-win outcome.

Finally, this research offers some answers to some of the questions researchers and practitioners in the PACS field are asking. Concepts such as conflict resolution, conflict transformation, peace education, empowerment, non-violence, and storytelling are not elements of a typical vocabulary in the Russo-Chechen conflict. This does not

necessarily mean that they are not practiced in the context of the Russo-Chechen conflict. In fact, both communities share some ideas and practices of conflict transformation, such as mediation, negotiation, and restorative justice principles that “have become part of the universal human repertoire for dealing with conflict” (Zartman, 2000:230). The necessity of nurturing peace and reconciliation in the region should encourage researchers and practitioners to focus on the good practices of their world experiences to provide inspiration for the future and to deepen a discussion on the relevance of conflict transformation in Chechnya. I hope to contribute in some small way to the peace in the region with this study, as well as with my own personal efforts in the PACS field.

Appendix 1

GLOSSARY

Adat	Custom, tradition, traditional law
Aul	Mountain village
Bushlat	Military coat
Dobrararmiya	Volunteer army
Gazavat	Holy war, <i>jihad</i>
Gubernia	Administrative division in Russia
Gusul	Shower
Qadiriya	Sufi <i>tariqat</i>
Iftar	The event of breaking fasting
Imamate	Religious centralized state
NKGB	People's Commissariat for State Security
Imam	Religious leader/interpreter
Khasavyurt	Town in Dagestan
Kolkhoz	Collective farm
Marsho	Freedom (in Chechen)
Namaz	Prayer
Naqshbandia	Sufi <i>tariqat</i>

Nokhchi	The Chechen term of “Chechen”
Oblast	Region; administrative unit
Okrug	Autonomous area within oblast
Oruj	Fasting
Ramazan	Month of the moon calendar
Spetsnaz	Special secret forces
Mu’min	A true believer
Zakat	Amount of money or goods given up
Majlis	Council
Naibs	Deputies
Sharia	Islamic law
Shinels	Military coats
NKVD	People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs
Smert Shpionam	Death to Spies
Shura	Council
Sufism	Form of Islamic mysticism
Tariqat	Sufi brotherhood
Teip	Chechen clan
Vainakh	‘Our people’ in Chechen

Wahhabi

Radical Islamic *tariqat*

Wahhabism

Follower of Wahhabism

Appendix 2

MAPS OF CHECHNYA AND THE REGION

(Used with permission from John Moen on January 6, 2011)





Source: <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/europe/chechnya.htm>



Source: <http://www.colorado.edu/ibs/waroutcomes/pics/ethnicMap.jpg>

Appendix 3

LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPANTS

My name is Ali Askerov, and I am a doctoral student at the University of Manitoba. I am planning to conduct a short-term study related to the perceptions of the Chechen and Russian people with regards to the Russo-Chechen conflict. I would like to ask you for assistance in the following manner.

I am currently working on my dissertation titled “The Russo-Chechen Conflict: Analysis, Impact, Transformation”. In order to find answer the research questions, I use qualitative research, primarily interviews with representatives of the both Russian and Chechen communities.

I am planning to interview interested participants about how they think about and understand this conflict, and what are their future hopes and fears for themselves and for their country. I will tape record the interviews and later transcribe them. I will also take notes. Therefore, I would like to invite you to participate in my dissertation research and to talk with you about the topics mentioned here. Your participation consists of an interview, taking between half an hour to one hour (the length of the interview will depend primarily on you).

The interview will be strictly confidential and its conclusions will be used, anonymously, only in my dissertation. I will use pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality of the participants, even though you may wish your names to be publicly known. Pseudonyms will also be used in any written notes, and transcriptions of the data. The names of the individuals, places and organizations you mention will also be coded to

ensure confidentiality. You may refuse to answer any questions, end the interview, or withdraw from the study completely at any time.

I will be happy to share my research results with you if you are interested. To give you an opportunity to respond, a summary of the initial analysis of the study will be sent to you. You may respond within two weeks of receipt of the analysis.

I would like to note that there would not be problems associated with language, as I may conduct the interviews in Russian, if and when necessary. Therefore, please, don't be afraid to participate as there will not be any difficulties. I would like to conduct an interview with you in August, September and October 2009. I would come to see you at the place where you wish and suitable for you. If the date is not acceptable to you, and you are interested in a different one, I will be happy to discuss other alternatives.

If you are interested in sharing your knowledge and experience, please, let me know at your earliest convenience. You can contact me by e-mail, or telephone (addresses and phone numbers are at the end of this letter).

If you are not interested in participating in the interview, but would like to share materials which highlight the objectives and principles of your work, I will be happy to receive them. You can also pass my request for an interview to other people from your or another organization or office who may be interested in participating in my dissertation research.

I hope you will be able to participate in this study. Thank you in advance for your willingness and cooperation. Your participation in this research will assist me in completing my doctoral work. Please feel free to contact me at x-xxx-xxx-xxxx (before

August); or e-mail me at xxx_xxx@gmail.com, if you have any questions. My phone number in Baku will be: xxx-xx-xxxx.

Sincerely,

Appendix 4

RESEARCH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Opening Questions

- Q1.** Can you give me some information about yourself?
- a. What education do you have?
 - b. What is your marital status?
 - c. How old are you?
 - d. How many family members do you have?
 - e. What is your occupation?
 - f. Where do you come from?

Transition Question:

- Q2.** When and why did you leave your home country?

Key Questions:

Impacts:

- Q3.** How have you been affected by this conflict?
- Q4.** How has the war impacted your life?

Analysis:

- Q5.** How do you understand this conflict?
- Q6.** What is the metaphor of this conflict for you?
- Q7.** What are your fears for future for yourself?
- Q8.** What are your fears for future for your country?
- Q9.** What are your best hopes for future for yourself?

Q10. What are your best hopes for future for your country?

Ending Question:

Q11. Would you like to add something else to this discussion?

Appendix 5

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Gender
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. Nationality
 - a. Russian
 - b. Chechen
 - c. Other _____

3. Age level
 - a. 18-30
 - b. 31-40
 - c. 41-50
 - d. 51-60
 - e. 61-70
 - f. 71 and more

4. Educational level
 - a. Completed primary education
 - b. Completed secondary education
 - c. Completed university education

Appendix 6

THE KHASAVYURT TRUCE AGREEMENT in ORIGINAL (translation follows)

Хасавюртские соглашения

от 31 августа 1996

СОВМЕСТНОЕ ЗАЯВЛЕНИЕ

Мы, нижеподписавшиеся,

учитывая достигнутый прогресс в реализации соглашений о прекращении военных действий,

стремясь создать взаимоприемлемые предпосылки для политического урегулирования вооруженного конфликта,

признавая недопустимость применения вооруженной силы или угрозы ее применения при решении спорных вопросов,

исходя из общепризнанного права народов на самоопределение, принципов равноправия, добровольности и свободы волеизъявления, укрепления межнационального согласия и безопасности народов,

изъявляя волю к безусловной защите прав и свобод человека и гражданина независимо от национальной принадлежности, вероисповедания, места жительства и иных различий, пресечению актов насилия в отношении политических оппонентов, исходя при этом из Всеобщей декларации прав человека 1949 года и Международного пакта о гражданских и политических правах 1966 года, совместно разработали Принципы определения основ взаимоотношений между Российской

Федерацией и Чеченской Республикой, на основе которых будет строиться дальнейший переговорный процесс.

А.Лебедь

А.Масхадов

С.Харламов

С.Абумуслимов

Дата 31.08.1996 года

Место подписания Хасавюрт

В присутствии Главы Группы Содействия ОБСЕ
в Чеченской Республике. Т.Гульдиманн

ПРИНЦИПЫ

определения основ взаимоотношений

между Российской Федерацией и Чеченской Республикой

1. Соглашение об основах взаимоотношений между Российской Федерацией и Чеченской Республикой, определяемых в соответствии с общепризнанными принципами и нормами международного права, должно быть достигнуто до 31 декабря 2001 года.
2. Не позднее 1 октября 1996 года формируется Объединенная комиссия из представителей органов государственной власти Российской Федерации и Чеченской Республики, задачами которой являются:

осуществление контроля за исполнением Указа Президента Российской Федерации от 25 июня 1996 года N 985 и подготовка предложений по завершению вывода войск;

- подготовка согласованных мероприятий по борьбе с преступностью, терроризмом и проявлениями национальной и религиозной вражды и контроль за их исполнением;
- подготовка предложений по восстановлению валютно-финансовых и бюджетных взаимоотношений;
- подготовка и внесение в правительство Российской Федерации программ восстановления социально-экономического комплекса Чеченской Республики;
- контроль за согласованным взаимодействием органов государственной власти и иных заинтересованных организаций при обеспечении населения продовольствием и медикаментами.
3. Законодательство Чеченской Республики основывается на соблюдении прав человека и гражданина, праве народов на самоопределение, принципах равноправия народов, обеспечения гражданского мира, межнационального согласия и безопасности проживающих на территории Чеченской Республики граждан независимо от национальной принадлежности, вероисповедания и иных различий.
 4. Объединенная комиссия завершает свою работу по взаимной договоренности.

Опубликовано: Независимая газета, N163, 3 сентября 1996.

Retrieved October 31, 2009: <http://www.chechenews.com/world-news/breaking/1024-1.html>

**THE KHASAVYURT TRUCE AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHECHEN REPUBLIC,
25 AUGUST 1996**

Joint Statement

We, the undersigned,

taking into account the progress achieved towards the ending of the warfare;

endeavoring to create a mutually acceptable basis for a political solution of the armed conflict;

recognizing that it is prohibited to use armed forces or to threaten the use of force as a means towards the resolution of the issue under dispute;

embarking upon the universally recognized right of nations to self-determination, upon the principles of equality, freedom of choice, free expression of will, strengthening of international accord and security of all nations;

exercising the will towards the defense of human and civil rights regardless of his or her nationality, religious affiliation, place of residence and other differences, towards the ending of acts of violence in the relations of political adversaries, while at the same time embarking upon the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1949 and upon the International Pact on Civil and Political Rights of 1966,

have jointly worked out the Rules for Clarifying the Basis for Mutual Relations between the Russian Federation and the Chechen Republic according to which the further peace process shall be developed:

**RULES FOR CLARIFYING THE BASIS FOR MUTUAL
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND
THE CHECHEN REPUBLIC**

1. The treaty regulating the basis for mutual relations between the Russian Federation and the Chechen Republic, to be governed by the universally accepted principles and norms of the international law, shall have been reached prior to 31 December 2001.
2. No later than on 1 October 1996, a Joint Commission shall have been formed, constituted by the representatives of the state authorities of the Russian Federation and of the Chechen Republic, the duties of which shall be as follows:
 - to assume control over the implementation of the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation issued on 25 June 1996, under no. 985, and to prepare proposals concerning the completion of the withdrawal of the armed forces;
 - to initiate joint undertaking directed towards the combat of crime, terrorism and nationalistic and religious prejudices, and to control their implementation;
 - to prepare proposals for the reconstruction of currency, fiscal and budgetary mutual relations;
 - to prepare for the enactment by the Government of the Russian Federation of the programs for the rebuilding of the socio-economic infrastructure of the Chechen Republic;
 - to control over [sic!] the agreed forms of cooperation of the state authorities and other relevant organizations concerning the supply and distribution of food and medical aid among the population.
3. The legal system of the Chechen Republic is based upon the respect for human

and civil rights, upon the right of nations towards self-determination, upon the principles of equal rights of nations, of the priority for civil accord, international peace and security for citizens residing on the territory of the Chechen Republic regardless of their nationality, religious identity and other differences.

4. The Joint Commission shall end its work upon mutual agreement of the parties.

Signed by

A. Lebed

A. Maskhadov

S. Kharlamov

S-Kh. Abumuslimov

Date of signing 25. 08. 1996

Place of signing Khasavyurt, Republic of Dagestan

In the presence of the Head of the Special Task group of the OSCE for Chechnya, Mr. T. Guildemann

Appendix 7

PEACE TREATY AND PRINCIPLES OF INTERRELATION BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE CHECHEN REPUBLIC OF ICHKERIA

12 May 1997

The esteemed parties to the agreement, desiring to end their centuries-long antagonism and striving to establish firm, equal and mutually beneficial relations, hereby agree

1. To reject forever the use of force or threat of force in resolving all matters of dispute.
2. To develop their relations on generally recognized principles and norms of international law. In doing so, the sides shall interact on the basis of specific concrete agreements.
3. This treaty shall serve as the basis for concluding further agreements and accounts on the full range of relations.
4. This treaty is written in two copies and both have equal legal power.
5. This treaty is active from the day of signing.

Moscow, 12 May 1997

signed

B. Yeltsin
President of the Russian Federation

A. Maskhadov
President of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria

Source: Gammer (2006)

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NOTES:

¹ This point was highlighted by the research participants during the interviews.

² I learnt about Imam Shamil's surrender to David Chavchavadze from Dr. Tchantouridze who referred to the Georgian sources.

³ When the Russo-Georgian war broke out in August of 2008, some Chechen units were leading the Russian troops. Chechen President Kadyrov also confirmed that Chechen units and paramilitaries fought with Russians against Georgians. See: Bridget Kendall, *BBC News*, "US provoked Russia-Georgia" Grozny, September 10 2008 (Accessed 03.14.2010
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7609557.stm>)

⁴ The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 revived the hopes of people of the Caucasus to restore their independence, thus giving rise to a number of "independent states." For example, see: Andrew Andersen, "From Russian Empire to the USSR: 1917-1989"
http://www.conflicts.rem33.com/images/The%20Caucasus/chech_xx.htm (Accessed April 23 2010).

⁵ See, for example: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Population_transfer_in_the_Soviet_Union

⁶ Quoted in Gammer, 2006, p. 168.

⁷ http://en.allexperts.com/e/f/fi/first_chechen_war.htm (Accessed April 24 2010).

⁸ Cherkesses are Muslim people of the North Caucasus who neighbor with Chechens.

⁹ See, for example: <http://www.economicexpert.com/a/Russian:Apartment:Bombings.htm> (Accessed: March 21 2010).

¹⁰ Also see: <http://www.kavkazcenter.com/eng/> (Accessed: March 31 2010). In his video statement Dokka Umarov said that the attacks were retaliation to the massacre by the Russian forces of the poor people of Chechnya and Ingushetia who were picking wild garlic in Arshty village on February 11, 2010 to feed their families.

¹¹ See, for example: <http://www.kavkazcenter.com/eng/content/2007/11/19/9103.shtml> (Accessed: March 21 2010).

¹² In the summer of 2009, I was visiting the Chechen center frequently. In the course of interviewing process, the leader of the Diaspora received a phone call. After speaking in Chechen on the phone, he said to the Chechens in the room that 'he' has nothing to eat and needs help. Then people started to let him know with what they could help. The leader asked them to collect the entire product at one place. Abdul said that he can help with transportation. Later, I met Abdurrahmanov in person.

¹³ The Nabucco pipeline is a proposed natural gas pipeline from Turkey to Austria diversifying the current natural gas suppliers and delivery routes for Europe. The project is seen as rival to the planned Gazprom-led South Stream pipeline project of Russia.

¹⁴ See: <http://www.departments.bucknell.edu/russian/const/constit.html> (Accessed 03.16.2010).

¹⁵ See: <http://www.regione.taa.it/biblioteca/minoranze/russia3.pdf> (Accessed 03.16.2010).

¹⁶ National Intelligence Council's Conference Report, February 1999:
http://www.dni.gov/nic/confreports_federalrussia.html (Accessed 02.22.2010).

¹⁷ <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter1.shtml> (Accessed: March 18 2010).

¹⁸ <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm> and <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cescr.htm>
(Accessed: March 18 2010).

¹⁹ <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/> (Accessed: March 18 2010).

²⁰ It is a Dandy Films release.

²¹ The story is about an old Chechen man who captures two Russian soldiers and takes them to his mountain village. His intention is to trade them for his son held by the Russians. If the deal falls through, he will have to kill the Russians.

Perhaps, one of the most important books on this topic that appeared lately is *The Broken Olive Branch: Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict and the Quest for Peace in Cyprus* by Harry Anastasiou. The book examines the dynamics of ethnonationalism, the logic of nationalist thinking in Cyprus, as well as assesses the rise of Greek and Turkish nationalism in the country since 1960. He explains how the ethnic rivalry was largely engineered by the leaders of each ethnic community. See: Anastasiou, Harry. (2006) *The Broken Olive Branch: Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict and the Quest for Peace in Cyprus*. Bloomington: Author House.

²² The famous song starts with these words: "We are wolves, compared to dogs, we are few...we have survived, even though we are banned." See Gammer, 2006:1-2.

²³ In many cases, the Chechen citizens of Russia have been a subject to attacks by the Russian police and nationalistically motivated people in Russian cities. See, for example, Chechnya: Russian Racism <http://www.tjetjenien.dk/baggrund/racism2.html> (accessed 02.20.2008)

²⁴ Of course, there are some exceptions, as, for example, Stalin, Beria, and Shevardnadze of Georgia, Mikoyan of Armenia, Nishanov of Uzbekistan, Khasbulatov of Chechnya, and Aliyev of Azerbaijan among some others occupied very high positions in the Kremlin. But this doesn't challenge the validity of the theory.

²⁵ The watershed principle is based on the water flowing along the Continental divide. On the one side, water flows toward the Atlantic, on the other side it flows toward the Pacific. A few feet difference causes enormous effect.

²⁶ External ethnoguarantors (EGG) is a term that refers to the powers that sign a special agreement with other external power/powers to guarantee security of all people in a given country. See, for example, (Byrne, 2006)

²⁷ Also, for example, see: German (2003), 58.

²⁸ All these cultural crews, especially the Vainakh troupe have restored their activities as today, late December, 2009. On 25 December 2009, Chechen airline 'Vanyah Avia' restored its direct international flights. The first flight from Grozny to Istanbul was accompanied by the 'Vainakh' troupe that performed in Istanbul Ataturk airport (Yeni Safak, <http://yenisafak.com.tr/Gundem/Default.aspx?t=25.12.2009&i=230960> accessed 12.25.2009).

²⁹ See, for example: Caucasus: OSCE closes Chechnya mission with little protest RFE/RL, 5 January 2003

³⁰ All these numbers are approximate. They are presented by the subjects of the study and checked and verified by the author in various sources.

³¹ The monument to Yermolov in Grozny was demolished by the Chechens in 1991.

³² Hall in his *Beyond Culture* (1976) explains that high context communication is one where very little is explicitly stated; rather most of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person. A low context communication, however, is the one that contains most part of the information in the explicit code.

³³ See: Maya Eichler, Russia's Post-Communist Transformation. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 2006, 486–511. Eichler argues that Russian authorities' "masculine" policy of war was resisted by the Russia's "feminine" movements. For example, the antiwar activities of the soldiers' mothers have undermined the Russian state's ability to wage a war.

³⁴ The Staromromyslovski massacre occurred in the late December of 1999 and early January of 2000 in a district of Grozny. Eyewitnesses claim that about 50 people were deliberately shot by Russian at close range. Most of the victims were women and elderly.

³⁵ Khattab was famous for the ambushes of Russian military convoys and setting up a number of paramilitary camps in the mountains of Chechnya where he trained Chechen and foreign fighters. He was held responsible for the Moscow apartment explosions in September 1999 which he objected to. According to the Chechens, Khattab died in a natural way in March 2002. But also there are claims that he was poisoned by the Russians. He was succeeded by al-Walid.

³⁶ See, for example, Marcus Warren, "50 bodies point to Chechnya war crime", March 06 2001.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/1325228/50-bodies-point-to-Chechnya-war-crime.html> (Accessed Monday 25 January 2010).

³⁷ See: Conor Humphries, "Head of children charity shot dead in Chechnya" Reuters, August 11 2009.

³⁸ See: "Russia's MP's death sparks storm" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2958997.stm> (Accessed Monday 25 January 2010).

³⁹ See: "Agent Neizvesten" (The Agent is not Known), Novaya Gazeta, 30.10.2006.

<http://2006.novayagazeta.ru/nomer/2006/82n/n82n-s05.shtml> (Accessed Monday 25 January 2010).

⁴⁰ See: "He died for his ideas," *The St. Petersburg Times*, June 22 2001.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² See: Jamestown Foundation's publication: *North Caucasus Analysis*, "Human Rights Activist Dies", Vol. 2, Issue 23, June 12 2001.

⁴³ Article 23 of the Istanbul Summit Declaration of the OSCE sounds: "In connection with the recent chain of events in North Caucasus, we strongly reaffirm that we fully acknowledge the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation and condemn terrorism in all its forms. We underscore the need to respect OSCE norms. We agree that in light of the humanitarian situation in the region it is important to alleviate the

hardships of the civilian population, including by creating appropriate conditions for international organizations to provide humanitarian aid. We agree that a political solution is essential, and that the assistance of the OSCE would contribute to achieving that goal. We welcome the willingness of the OSCE to assist in the renewal of a political dialogue. We welcome the agreement of the Russian Federation to a visit by the Chairman-in-Office to the region. We reaffirm the existing mandate of the OSCE Assistance Group in Chechnya. In this regard, we also welcome the willingness of the Russian Federation to facilitate these steps, which will contribute to creating conditions for stability, security, and economic prosperity in the region". http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/osce/text/summit_declaration.htm (Accessed August, 16, 2010)

⁴⁴ OSCE Newsletter, vol. 9, No 2, February 2002, 17.

⁴⁵ OSCE Chairman-in-Office Jaap de Hoop Scheffer cited in "OSCE Chairman Regrets end of OSCE mandate in Chechnya", OSCE Press Release, 3 January 2003.

⁴⁶ See, for example: Caucasus: OSCE closes Chechnya mission with little protest RFE/RL, 5 January 2003

⁴⁷ A joint assessment mission of the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) and the Council of Europe's Secretariat made a preliminary statement on March 3, 2003, in which the mission expressed its concerns. The preliminary statement included such statements as "...While some citizens did not seem aware of the provisions of the draft constitution and simply wished that the political process of the referendum should replace the status quo, others had evidently read the draft constitution provisions and were already demanding their rights spelled out in the draft. The mission also took note of the deep skepticism that some members of civil society have about the referendum... No groups have registered to campaign against the referendum. Consultative membership on election commissions is limited to Initiative Groups and a few other political organizations. As no such organizations have been registered in the Chechen Republic, the membership of election commissions may not be balanced... While federal and republic authorities are not allowed to take part in the campaign for or against the referendum, there is evidence to suggest that this prohibition is not enforced strictly... No group has been able to campaign officially against the referendum in the mass media or distribute literature arguing against the referendum. However, individuals representing political and other forces against the referendum have occasionally appeared on the Russian Federation as well as the Chechen Republic mass media to argue for non-participation or a vote against the referendum... In the absence of civil society organizations in the Chechen Republic able to deploy observers, the Chairman of the Central Election Commission appealed to all political parties in the Russian Federation to send observers to monitor the referendum on 23 March." http://www.osce.org/documents/odihr/2003/03/1448_en.pdf (Accessed August 17, 2010)

⁴⁸ OSCE Handbook http://www.osce.org/publications/sg/2007/10/22286_956_en.pdf (Accessed August 18, 2010).

⁴⁹ The Chechens left Budyonovsk in buses provided by the Russians. They were accompanied by one hundred volunteers, nine of whom were Russian Duma deputies who were released in Chechnya. In this crisis, 124 people lost their lives.

⁵⁰ Russian negotiators were V. Mikhailov, a nationalities minister, A. Volsky, former head of Special Rule in Nagorno Karabakh, and generals Kulikov and Romanov.

⁵¹ For example, S. Basayev told that if Chechen delegates made to many concessions, he would have them shot. See, "Mixed Signals From Both Sides Stall Chechen Talks," *Associated Press*, 26 July 1995.

⁵² Larisa Romanova, the general's wife, said: "He could see the war from the inside, was sick and tired of it, and wanted to end it as soon as possible, was telling me that he was close to doing so, but that someone was not allowing him to" (Quoted in Yablokova, 2003).

⁵³ Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev succeeded Johar Dudayev after he was killed by the Russians with a rocket on April 21 1996.

⁵⁴ For Khasavyurt accord see attachment 6 as well as see: *Fortnight in Review*, vol. 1, issue 5, September 6, 1996.

⁵⁵ For how situation affects negotiating behavior see: Druckman, D., "Situations" in Cheldelin et al.

⁵⁶ Quoted in the Special Report 99 of the United States Institute of Peace, February 2003.