

Georgian Conflicts - Abkhazia

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Structure

- Soviet ethno-federalism
- Political landscape in Georgia
- Abkhazia

Soviet ethnofederalism

- Central in content, federal in form.
- The communist Party - main instrument of rule.
- The new Soviet state was an asymmetrical federation - ethnoterritorial units.
- **Union republics** - Soviet Socialist Republics, SSRs.
- **Autonomous republics** - Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics, ASSRs.
- **Autonomous oblast** - autonomous regions, AOs.
- Autonomous okrugs.

Soviet ethnofederalism

- Union republics were instituted for the Georgians, Armenians and Azerbaijanis.
- Inside Georgia: The South Ossetian Autonomous Oblast, the Abkhazian ASSR and the Ajarian ASSR.
- The Nakhichevan ASSR.
- Nagorno-Karabakh AO.

Soviet ethnofederalism

- In April 1990 a new law - ASSRs and AOs had the right, by means of referendum, to decide whether they would secede together with SSR or remain in the Soviet Union.
- Between April 1990 and August 1991, the law provided considerable incentives for the ASSRs and AOs to intensify their separatist intentions from the SSRs.

The demography in Georgia

| • Ethnic group | % of total population |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| • Georgian | 70.1 |
| • Armenians | 8.1 |
| • Russians | 6.3 |
| • Azeris | 5.7 |
| • Ossetians | 3.0 |
| • Greeks | 1.9 |
| • Abkhaz | 1.8 |
| • Ukrainians | 0.9 |



Abkhazia



The political landscape in Georgia

- Mikhail Gorbachev - perestroika and glasnost.
- National independence movement in Georgia - slogan of independence from the Soviet Union.
- 9 April, 1989 - the moral death of the Communist regime in Georgia.

The political landscape in Georgia

- In May 1991, Zviad Gamsakhurdia was elected as a president with 86 per cent of the vote.
- This period defined Georgia's political agenda, its public discourse and the character of its political institutions. The agenda was dominated by two ideas: **nationalism and democracy.**

The political landscape in Georgia



- Gamsakhurdia's rule embodied a paradox typical of many young and immature democracies: it had a strong popular mandate but was very soon denounced as authoritarian. The fact that Zviad Gamsakhurdia was a strong ethnic nationalist who openly called the slogan „Georgia for Georgians“ greatly fuelled the tensions.

The political landscape in Georgia

- Adding to the difficulties in achieving political pluralism was the problem of ethnic pluralism.
- The Georgian national liberation movement lacked a clear idea about how to deal with the issues of the autonomies.
- Radicalism and aversion to compromise were as widespread among the Abkhaz and Ossetian nationalists as among their Georgian counterparts.

Abkhazia

- 45% Georgians, Abkhaz made 17.8%, 14% were Russians and 14% Armenians.
- Abkhazian language is different from Georgian, it belong to the North-Caucasian linguistic family and is akin to Chechen-Dagestan group.
- You can find both Orthodox and Muslim believers among Abkhazians.
- Abkhazia was one of the wealthiest regions of the Soviet Union and enjoyed a far higher standard of living than the rest of Georgia.

Abkhazia

- In 1921 Abkhazia received the status of a Soviet Republic allied with Georgia by a special treaty.
- In February 1931 - autonomous republic within Georgia.
- Declaration of Lyckhny 1989 - secession from Georgia.
- The intention of Georgian government to divide the University of Sukhumi into two parts, one of which was to become a branch of Tbilisi state university - 16 people were died and hundreds were injured.



Presidents of Abkhazia

1. Vladislav Ardzinba
November 26, 1994-
February 12 2005

2. Sergei Bagapsh
February 12, 2005- May
29,20122

3. Alexander Ankvab
May 29, 2011 – nowadays



Abkhazia

- In August 1990 to the declaration of sovereignty by Abkhazia.
- After Gamsakhurdia's overthrow in January 1992 the situation in Abkhazia deteriorated further.
- The war which broke out in 1992-93 was the peak of the conflict between Abkhazia and Georgia, characterized by the aspirations of the Abkhaz to secede from Georgia and by the desire of the Georgians to achieve territorial integrity.



The Georgian Civil War (July-October)





The Georgian Civil War (October-December)





Abkhazia

- The peace negotiations were held in the Russian Sochi, in the summer of 1993.
- 27 July 1993 signed a document called the Agreement on a ceasefire in Abkhazia and the mechanism to ensure compliance. Only on the basis of the interruption of firing, a Russian - Georgian - Abkhazian monitoring group to supervise the ceasefire, the return of Abkhazian parliament in Sukhumi and an agreement on the deployment of UN observers in the region. In August of that year, then the UN Security Council Resolutions No. 849 and No. 854 has been deployed in Abkhazia, the UN Observer Mission - UNOMIG, active on its own territory of Georgia. Its mandate was renewed several times until June 2009, when Russia blocked a further extension.



UNOMIG

April 2007

- HQ UNOMIG Mission HQ
- HQ Gali Sector HQ
- HQ Zugdidi Sector HQ

BEFORE WAR

RUSSIA

North Ossetia Chechnya

South Ossetia

Tskhinvali

Tbilisi

GEORGIA

South Ossetia

Iukhumi

Abkhazia

Black Sea fleet

Russian forces

Batumi

Adjaria

GEORGIA

Azerbaijan

Turkey

Tbilisi

Armenia



Georgian army



Russian peacekeepers



South Ossetian forces

