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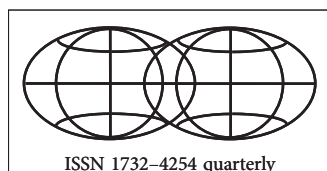MUZEUM HISTORII POLSKI

Spatial analysis of ethnopolitical mobilisation in the Caucasus in the 1980s and 1990s

Libor Jelen[CDFMR]

Charles University, Faculty of Science, Department of Social Geography and Regional Development, Albertov 6, Prague, Czech Republic; phone: +420 732 344 113, e-mail: libjel@email.cz

Abstract. The paper aims to create a set of indicators which could best explain the varying intensity of ethnopolitical mobilisation in the Caucasian region. Selected data on social indicators of individual Caucasian territorial units are examined with help of correlation and regression analysis. The analysis results also show relations among individual social indicators which can help understand social and ethnic processes within the units.

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1. Introduction

The Caucasus has always occupied and still occupies a special position within the political geographical research of former USSR. Political situation as well as security matters across the region has remained tense since the end of 1980s. This applies to the Northern Caucasus, where Russian forces are con-

stantly confronted with local nationalists and radical Islamic groups as well as to southern part of the region, where long lasting conflicts (Abkhazia, South Ossetia or Nagorno-Karabakh) remain unresolved. Even here, however, regions exist with more or less peaceful history, often little known to the outside world, for example Adygea in the North or Nakhchivan in the South. In other words, political situation in the Caucasus on one hand differs region by region, on the other hand, however, certain common features exist which makes the area especially attractive to political geographers.

Over a long period of time a unique area has arisen, which is often called 'Caucasian political-geographical complex' (Cornell, 2001). This region has a tremendous environmental and social diversity, a firm ground on which regularities of regional development and relations can be studied. However, the geopolitical matrix had been unified until the end of 1980s – the Caucasus as a whole was ruled by tsarist Russia and later by Soviet Communist dictatorship. The firm Communist control over the region had become weaker with the introduction of Gorbachev's reforms in the second half of 1980s when national revival occurred across the region and Soviet Union finally disintegrated. The Caucasus, together with the Baltic States, was in that time the main focus of nationalist tensions. Nevertheless, the impacts of ethnopolitical mobilisation were uneven in different Caucasian regions (Beissinger, 2002). These differences were conditioned by social and geographical inequalities and also by varied positions which individual nations occupied within the Communist system; different experiences with the Soviet rule and with neighbouring nations played a crucial role (Bremmer, Taras, 1993; Baar, 2005).

Thus, when examining the roots of nationalism and ethnopolitical mobilisation of the Caucasian nations, it should be treated as a process with common geopolitical background, but with diverse social conditions and consequently also of varying intensity. This fact has been already confirmed by a number of works dealing with historical reasons of conflicts in the Caucasus and their geopolitical and economical consequences (Goldenberg, 1994; Tishkov, 1996; Cornell, 2001; etc.). A number of researchers have also carried out spatial analyses of ethnopolitical processes in different post-Soviet regions using data from Soviet censuses (e.g. Dostál,

Knippenberg, 1979; Dostál, 1993; Kaiser, 1994; Beissinger, 2002) or from field research (Holland, O'Loughlin, 2010). These works, however, dealt either with the whole Soviet Union which inevitably led towards certain simplifications of regional distinctions, or studied a specific theme with respect to inter-ethnic relations (for example russification or Islamism).

This article uses the outcomes of previous quantitative and qualitative researches. It is based on regional spatial analysis of accessible socio-economic and demographic data coming from Soviet censuses of 1970 and 1989. These censuses have been chosen intentionally as the period corresponds to major changes within society that finally led towards important political events. Selected data on social indicators of individual Caucasian territorial units (1) are examined with help of correlation and regression analysis. The aim is to create a set of indicators which could best explain the varying intensity of ethnopolitical mobilisation in the Caucasian region in the late 1980's and 1990's. The analysis results also show relations among individual social indicators which can help understand social and ethnic processes within the units.

Three general premises can be applied when nationalism and ethnopolitical mobilisation in the Caucasian context are studied. The first one is based on the political and geographical situation in the region and stipulates that nationalism is strong in such areas where political and ethnical boundaries are not identical (Gellner, 2002). The second one claims that strong nationalism and high probability of conflicts magnifies national traumas which later become part of 'national history'. These traumas are often misused by politicians when it comes to territorial conflicts with a competing nation (Tishkov, 1996). The third premise is inspired by so called modernist theories and anticipates that nationalism is preceded by an intensive social modernisation, which is understood as economic, social, and demographic changes (Deutsch, 1969; Dostál, 1999).

2. Geographical and historical overview

Though the nations of the Caucasus mostly inhabit their historical regions, much of current states

and administrative units show multi-ethnical patterns. This is due to ethnic policy under Soviet Union when traditional geographical patterns were disturbed by administrative provisions (merging or splitting of nations into artificial political units) or by controlled migrations (large-scale deportations, immigration of Slavic peoples) (Simon, 1991; Pipes, 1997). With respect to the original population two basic types of 'problematic' regions can be outlined: (a) several competing nations (titular or not) inhabit the same area, or (b) one nation populates two or more states (administrative regions). The first example usually gives rise to separatist movements and it caused conflicts, among other, between Georgians and Abkhazians or between Chechens and Russians respectively. It also influences, for example, relations between the Karachays and Cherkesses or between Kabardins and Balkars respectively and is part of the national psyche of some peoples in Dagestan (Kumyks, Nogais). The latter type induces irredentism which was, as an example, at the root of conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh (between Armenians and Azerbaijanis) or North Ossetia (Ossetians vs. Ingush); within Azerbaijan, Lezgians form a potential threat to state integrity.

During political campaigns population is often mobilised through use of the so called national traumas. Typically, these 'mobilisations' are supported by academics who supply theoretical and empirical 'proofs' that acknowledge claims on certain territories (Tesař, 2007). 'Trauma' can be a historical or more recent conflict, usually an unresolved one; in the Caucasian context these are usually 20th century conflicts. Some national traumas have been purposely backed by the ruling Soviet power which was based on the principle 'divide and conquer' (Goldenberg, 1994). Among examples is delimitation of political boundaries which created numerous minorities or even bi-titular units or introduction of multi-tier federal administration (with the hierarchy Soviet Republic – Autonomous Republic – Autonomous Region).

Position of each nation (ethnic group) within the system played the key role. Only thirteen of Caucasian ethnic groups had their own political unit and thus were labeled as 'titular nations' (2). The status of respective units was equally important as there was a varying degree of autonomy. The latter was defined through cultural aspects (certain ethnic groups had the right to use their own languages; on the republic level official languages were defined; preferred languages were widely used in media, books, etc.) but had a crucial importance for economic and political development of the titular nations. Through autonomy selected ethnic groups were assured higher economic and social status; on the other hand, minorities appeared in subordinate position and often were suppressed (Kaiser, 1994; Suny, 1994; Tishkov, 1996; Cornell, 2001).

Though ethnic issues have always been approached on the base of Marxist principles (including 'societal development stages'), ethnic policies varied considerably during the seventy years of Soviet rule (Kaiser, 1994). Basically, two approaches – at first sight largely antagonistic – were adopted. The goal was clear, though to produce Soviet citizens who would be loyal to the Communist system but with no distinct ethnicity (Simon, 1991). Firstly, local elite was encouraged to create a new Soviet generation without nationalistic background. This policy, known as 'korenizatsiya' or 'indigenisation', preferred the titular nation to the immigrants and minority groups with no official status. It aimed to replace traditional social structures (often tribal ones) and also to minimise social and economic inequalities among ethnic groups (Kaiser, 1994).

The second approach was based on the policy of economic and social modernisation and on implementing Soviet principles in ethnic peripheries. This policy aimed to erode traditional ethnic structures through social and economic progress, to create a homogeneous (Russian-dominated) culture and to integrate various indigenous ethnic groups under the Soviet influence. Large scale industrialisation was seen as a crucial tool as it was intended – in line with Marxist principles – to produce masses of 'international working class' (Tishkov, 1996). To achieve this, government poured money into cities and industrial areas and also encouraged controlled migrations. The in-migrants were largely educated Slavic people and they were due to ensure more intensive interethnic contacts, so called 'sblizhenye' (drawing together). Ultimately, traditional ethnic structures were to be disrupted and citizens should have identified themselves with new Soviet culture ('sliyaniye', or merging). Russian served as lingua franca and consequently the whole

process led to massive use of Russian language in everyday life. Russification of individual regions was the final goal, in other words, non-Russian nationalities were pushed to identify themselves with the Russian language and Russian culture which were seen as more developed and more civilized (Dostál, Knippenberg, 1979; Suny, 1994; Tishkov, 1996).

Thus, the above described Soviet policies produced a sort of ethnic laboratory where competition among various ethnic groups becomes widespread. Such a competition can easily break out into ethnopolitical mobilisation, that means into organised action taken by one ethnic group against another one (Deutsch, 1969). Interethnic relations may be unequal which happens when one ethnic group politically and economically discriminates against another group and cultural assimilation is on the agenda – such a process is called internal colonisation (Hechter, 1975). Abkhazians, or Chechens are among examples; these ethnic groups became mobilised in order to protect economic sources and their own culture.

Some other ethnic groups, though not directly suppressed, experienced a fear that their current status may be challenged in the future. This was the case of titular nations in Soviet republics within the Caucasian region (Armenians, Azerbaijanis, and Georgians). In the Soviet context their living levels were at least average and in some aspects (education) these nations ranked even higher (Kaiser, 1994). In this very case nationalism is understood as an ideology that should ensure future standards to an ethnic group under circumstances of interethnic competition (Nielsen, 1985).

It should be underlined that in an unstable environment, for instance in times of political transformations, ethnopolitical mobilisation usually rises (Simon, 1991; Beissinger, 2002). Various national interests, often long neglected, are discussed again, as are national traumas, and solutions are demanded. The more national traumas and extreme past experiences exist, the more radical approaches are likely to be adopted. This may include demands for boundary changes, higher autonomy, or full political independence. Traumatic experiences from the past often lead to intensive mobilisation (Tesař, 2007). On the other hand, ethnopolitical mobilisation can also be softened through governmental oppression or when the respective ethnic group does

not necessarily share the ambitions of its political representatives (Deutsch, 1969).

Caucasian ethnic groups meet most of the criteria for high political mobilisation: (a) the Soviet system was politically and economically highly centralised for decades and all signs of ethnopolitical mobilisation have been brutally suppressed. The end of 1980s, however, brought attempts to reform the society which encouraged mobilisation of various ethnic groups; (b) in many regions political borders do not meet ethnic boundaries (Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and the Northern Caucasus); (c) many traumatic events occurred throughout the Caucasian region during the 20th century and these had negative impact on interethnic relations (conflicts 1918–1920, border delimitation, deportations, etc.); (d) Caucasian society has been exposed to intensive modernisation during the Soviet era; urbanisation process intensified and education level rose. Cities and towns became ethnically mixed, interethnic contacts grew and ethnic groups competed for economic resources (Kaiser, 1994); (e) the whole region has experienced a population boom since 1960s; some nations (mostly Muslims and Turkic peoples), however, grew faster than others due high birth rates and in-migration (Lewis, Rowland, 1979); (f) selected ethnic groups and their languages became dominant because of historical development and new political-administrative divisions. Universally, this was the case of Russian language; in the South Caucasus the Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijani languages were important, too (Tishkov, 1996).

3. Research methods

Spatial analysis aims to evaluate the influence of ethno-cultural, social-economic, and historic factors on the ethnopolitical mobilisation across the Caucasus, using various methods. It aspires to detect and consequently evaluate mutual correlations among selected social indicators. First, selection and qualitative evaluation of census data will be carried out. Emphasis is put on the definition of dependent variable which should reflect the intensity of ethnopolitical mobilisation. Second, correlation analysis (Spearman's rank correlation coefficient) is used to

find dependences among selected social-economic, demographic, and historic characteristics. The results of correlation test (selected variables are shown in charts) and its qualitative evaluation may confirm logical contexts of social events and social development. Next, linear regression analysis (stepwise method) is used to analyse mutual influence of numerous factors on the intensity of ethnopolitical mobilisation. This should increase the explanatory importance of individual variables and their mutual causality (Hendl, 2006).

There were some limitations that had to be resolved before the analysis. The used statistical data come from Soviet censuses of 1970 and 1989 and refer to ethnic composition, urbanisation rate, education, and ability to speak languages (Itogi vsesojuznoj perepisi naselenia 1970 g., 1974; Goskomstat, 1992). Some census datasets refer only to the former Soviet republics or autonomous republics (birth rate, fertility, housing, migration, etc.). As this analysis, however, deals also with autonomous regions (South Ossetia, Adygea, Karachay-Cherkessia, and Nagorno-Karabakh), a selection of topics had to be made. Furthermore, the 1989 census data should be interpreted with special care as this was already the time of ethnic clashes, namely in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Nakhchivan, and Nagorno-Karabakh. The census in Armenia was moreover disrupted by the devastating earthquake which hit northwestern Armenia just one month before the census. Census data from the above regions thus probably tend to be less accurate.

Selection and evaluation of independent (explanatory) variables. With respect to data availability and to theoretical background and aims of this work, four categories of variables have been defined. These variables characterise: (a) historical development, (b) ethnic composition, (c) ability to speak languages, and (d) socio-economic structure in each territorial unit.

Historical factors. This data set aims to quantify historical events which became bases for ethnic traumas (see Table 1). First, ethnic conflicts which took place during the turbulent period after the collapse of tzarism (1917–1922; the list excludes external conflicts, for instance with Turkey, and Russian Civil War) and ethnic deportations during World War II are taken into consideration (3). Figures refer to the number of ethnic conflicts which oc-

curred in respective regions. Of course, it is arguable whether to include some other conflicts or not – this is the case, for instance, of Armenian Genocide or Russian Civil War. The former happened outside the region studied; inclusion of the latter, though it affected the whole Caucasus, should not create any big statistical difference.

Table 1. Quantification of ethnic traumas

Territorial unit	A	B
Armenia	2	1
Azerbaijan	1	1
Nakhchivan	1	0
Nagorno-Karabakh	1	1
Georgia	2	1
Abkhazia	0	1
Adjara	0	0
South Ossetia	1	0
Adygea	0	0
Karachay-Cherkessia	1	0
Kabardino-Balkaria	1	0
North Ossetia	1	1
Chechnya-Ingushetia	2	1
Dagestan	0	0

Explanation: A - number of conflicts; B - number of political and territorial changes

Source: Author

Second type of ethnic trauma is based on experiences related to political and territorial changes which may have included loss of sovereignty, degrading of autonomous status, or partial territorial losses. Examples are numerous: Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan had been independent units in between 1918 and 1921, but later were 'integrated' into Soviet Union; Nagorno-Karabakh had majority of Armenian population but became administrative part of Azerbaijan (not Armenia); due to administrative border changes between Ingushetia and North Ossetia, the latter received a sizeable Ingush minority after their returning from the Stalin's ethnic deportations; and last but not least Chechnya-Ingushetia existed until 1934 as two separate regional units.

Ethnic composition. Ethnic composition of a territory (state) is generally regarded as an important indicator which may give rise to nationalism and ethnic tensions. This is especially true when political

and ethnic units are not identical (Gellner, 2002). So called titular nation territorial homogeneity is used as a general indicator of ethnic structure – it shows the percentage of population which identifies itself with the titular nation. In this analysis the share of three major ethnic groups in each territorial unit (1970, 1989) is examined. This includes titular nationality (even when it does not form a majority – see Abkhazia, Adygea), second major ethnic group (excluding Russians), second titular nationality (in case it does not form the second biggest group – see Karachay-Cherkessia, Kabardino-Balkaria). The share of Russians is put separately. Relative indexes of change (RIC) (4) between 1970 and 1989 were calculated for the above mentioned groups. These indexes show uneven population changes within the territorial units.

Use of languages. Identification of native language as well as passive knowledge of other languages is among the important indicators of interethnic relations. It possibly shows the degree of assimilation or at least a sort of affinity with the dominant cultural group. The ability to make oneself understood with neighbors also means the ability to understand their problems and it generally reduces the risk of interethnic conflicts (Lake, Rothchild, 1998). The share of population which considers a certain Caucasian language native or which is able to speak that language fluently is examined; people of the same ethnicity and language are not taken into account (for example population of Nagorno-Karabakh declaring Armenian as native or second language minus population of Armenian ethnicity). In the Soviet case Russian was naturally encouraged to become lingua franca; Russian was intended to be used as a communication tool among different ethnic and language groups living next to each other as well as across the whole Soviet Union. The degree of russification (assimilation) is examined separately; it equals the share of non-Russian population that declares Russian as native language (Dostál, Knippenberg, 1979; Dostál, 1993; Tishkov, 1996).

Social characteristics. Ethnopolitical mobilisation is assumed to result from social and economic processes, especially from urbanisation and education (Deutsch, 1969). Therefore two data sets will be examined in detail. (a) Data showing the process of urbanisation in territorial units, i.e. general level of urbanisation, urbanisation of individual eth-

nic groups, and ethnic structure in cities and towns. Changes between 1970 and 1989 were studied as well. (b) Data on education in territorial units (population 10+ in 1970, 15+ in 1989) were grouped into four categories: primary, general secondary, technical secondary, and university education.

Definition of dependent variable. Definition of dependent variable which should characterize the intensity of ethnopolitical mobilisation in individual territorial units is not an easy task. Demographic, social, and economic differences among the regions as well as different historic traumas resulted in diverse development and political patterns in the 1990s. Thus, four different levels of ethnopolitical mobilisation were created on the basis of two factors: (a) main goal of nationalist movements at the beginning of the mobilisation process in the late 1980's, and (b) peaceful or confronting way to achieve the given targets during the 1990's (see Table 2).

The first level includes territorial units where political movements aimed at higher level of autonomy within existing boundaries. Armed conflicts with the central power or other ethnic groups were absent. It can be concluded that such nations were not motivated enough to achieve higher goals or more intensive political mobilisation (intensive national identity, strong political elite or threats to national (regional) identity do not exist).

Multiethnic territorial units where titular nations claimed higher level of autonomy through separatism. To achieve this goal, however, confrontation policies were not adopted. Causes may have been similar as in the previous case. Some ethnic groups may have had realistic expectations and may have understood that confrontation policies could lead to losses rather than to profits (Cornell, 2001).

Nations in these autonomous regions aspired to higher level of autonomy or to irredentism and these aspirations resulted in armed conflicts (Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, North Ossetia). Strong nationalist feelings which led to political, economic, and cultural competition between two nations were dominant.

Strong nationalism of titular nations is typical. These nations aspired to achieve a full independence from Soviet Union (Russia) and also adopted a chauvinistic approach towards ethnic minorities. Armed conflict was seen as necessary to gain independence; however, fighting broke out in order to conserve ter-

ritorial integrity (Georgia, Azerbaijan) or to support irredentist claims of fellow countrymen elsewhere (Armenia). In the case of Chechnya-Ingushetia a reverse process occurred: Chechen people fought against Russians for independence but also allowed the Ingush to separate in a peaceful way.

Given the complicated structure of Caucasian societies, political development was much more complex than the above mentioned four categories can show. However, for the sake of statistical analysis the classification used should be sufficient as the dependent variable.

Table 2. Classification of Territorial Units by Ethnopolitical Mobilisation Intensity

Territorial unit	Goal of Mobilisation at the beginning of the ethnopolitical process	Ethnic Conflict in the 1990s	Intensity of Mobilisation
Armenia	Independence	yes	4
Azerbaijan	Independence	yes	4
Nakhchivan	higher level of autonomy	no	1
Nagorno-Karabakh	higher level of autonomy plus boundary changes	yes	3
Georgia	Independence	yes	4
Abkhazia	higher level of autonomy plus boundary changes	yes	3
Adjara	higher level of autonomy	no	1
South Ossetia	higher level of autonomy plus boundary changes	yes	3
Adygea	higher level of autonomy	no	1
Karachay-Cherkessia	higher level of autonomy plus boundary changes	no	2
Kabardino-Balkaria	higher level of autonomy plus boundary changes	no	2
North Ossetia	higher level of autonomy, retaining integrity	yes	3
Chechnya-Ingushetia	Independence	yes	4
Dagestan	higher level of autonomy plus boundary changes	no	2

Source: Author

4.   Results

Relations among dependent and selected independent variables. Relations between the dependent variable (intensity of ethnopolitical mobilisation) and individual explanatory factors is first tested using the pair correlation analysis (Spearman's rank correlation coefficient). The results only seldom show values of correlation coefficients higher than 0.5 on reliability level 0.01 (see Table 3). Ethnic traumas have the strongest influence on ethnopolitical mobilisation, both by the territorial changes with correlation coefficients and by past ethnic conflicts. This conforms to popular beliefs which consider the current Caucasian nationalism and interethnic conflicts to be greatly influenced by the results of post-World War I events and ethnic deportations in 1940s.

Table 3. Examples of the strongest correlations among dependent variable and selected independent variables

	Territorial changes	Conflicts	General urbanisation level (1970)	Urbanisation level of titular nation (1970)	Proportion of second nation (1970)	Change of russification degree 1970-89	Proportion of the Russians (1970)
IEPM	0.84**	0.71**	0.58*	0.59*	0.47	-0.44	-0.30

Explanation: **Correlation is significant at the 0,01 level (2-tailed), *Correlation is significant at the 0,01 level (2-tailed), IEPM – Intensity of ethnopolitical mobilisation

Source: Author

Regarding the other variables, the significance of general urbanisation level in 1970 and urbanisation level of the titular nation in 1970 can be accepted. This partially confirms the influence of modernisation on political mobilisation in ethnically mixed environment when contacts and competition among individual ethnic groups tends to be more intensive in urban areas (Deutsch, 1969).

Regarding the significance of the second most populous ethnic group or second titular nation, the value achieved is lower than that which had been expected – the interests of non-Russian ethnic groups challenged the titular nationalism most. Thus, the influence of ethnic polarization on ethnopolitical mobilisation is partially confirmed.

Interethnic tensions can also be successfully reduced by a third party, i.e. by the Russians. This fact is somehow reflected by the factor of russification change between the censuses. The Russian presence itself seems to have any important influence on ethnopolitical mobilisation. This fact reflects ambivalent attitudes of Caucasian nations towards Russians and Soviet (Russian) policies. In some regions the Russian presence is seen as a source of political stability and economic prosperity (Abkhazia, Armenia, Dagestan). However, there are also territories where the Russians are perceived as alien colonialists (Georgia, Chechnya) and in many regions the attitude towards the Russians is mixed.

Relations among selected independent variables. The pair correlation among selected independent variables reveals a number of relations among demographic and social phenomena in the Caucasian region. It allows assessing interethnic relations through historical changes of the ethnic structure with a special emphasis on the Russian nationality. Relations between urbanisation level and ethnic structure is also tested, especially the expected correlation between the Russian minority and level of urbanisation, as well as the influence of Russians on urbanisation of other nations.

Relations among urbanisation levels, share of Russians and other groups. The Russians form the most urbanised group in the whole Caucasus; Russian immigration and presence boosted the processes of urbanisation and social modernisation (Kaiser, 1994). This is, for instance, demonstrated by positive correlation between population change of the Russians and urbanisation level change in respec-

tive territories. The proportion of the Russians has greatly influenced changes of urban ethnic structure, i.e. the increase of titular group in urban areas. Also the statistical relation between relative changes of the Russian population and urbanisation level of the titular group within the intercensal period is highly significant (see Table 4).

Table 4. Pair correlation among urbanisation levels, share of Russians and other groups

	RU70	RIRU	CUL	CULTN	RCTNU
RU70	1.00	0.27	-0.06	0.42	0.91**
RIRU		1.00	0.60*	0.75**	0.17
CUL			1.00	0.72**	-0.02
CULTN				1.00	0.45
RCTNU					1.00

Explanation: *Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); RU70 – proportion of the Russians on the unit 1970; RIRU – index of relative growth of the Russians 1970-1989; CUL – change of urbanisation level 1970-1989; CULTN - change of urbanisation level of titular nation 1970-1989; RCTNU – index of relative change of the titular nation 1970-1989

Source: Author

Relations among urbanisation, the Russians, and other ethnic groups as described above, should be examined from a broader perspective. Caucasian societies have always been predominantly rural, with a few exceptions only (Armenians; Tbilisi and Baki) and urban areas started to grow and became modernised only as result of the Soviet policies and centrally planned economy. Controlled urbanisation was motivated by economic reasons (industrialisation) as well as by political and ideological purposes (increase of working class). Modernisation had been driven by mass Russian in-migration especially during the initial phase. Indigenous nations began to pour into cities and towns only later as a result of general economic progress and gradually joined (partially also replaced) Russian workers and white collars (Kaiser, 1994). This process was partially in line with the official policy; however, contacts between ethnic groups became more intensive as did the interethnic competition for power and sources. Local (tribal) patriotism and nepotism grew as well. Urban immigration of local people was fur-

ther stimulated and, on the contrary, out-migration of alien groups started (Goldenberg, 1994).

Interethnic competition was also reflected in demographic patterns. Urbanisation process and high birth rates eventually resulted in dominance of titular nation within the urban areas which in turn pushed the Russian out-migration (O'Loughlin at al., 2007; Jelen, 2009). However, in many urban areas, especially across the Northern Caucasus, titular groups formed minorities until the end of 1980s. Therefore, ethnical homogenisation of urban areas in favor of titular groups is still an ongoing process.

Relations among russification, ability to use Russian, and proportion of ethnic groups. Previous research (Dostál, Knippenberg, 1979; Dostál, 1993) confirmed positive correlation between the proportion of Russian nationality and degree of russification (acceptance of Russian as a native language) and our investigations indicate similar patterns. The higher is the proportion of Russian population in a territorial unit, the higher assimilation with Russian culture exists. On the contrary, the high proportion of a titular nation (especially in urban areas) usually implies the low degree of russification. The above correlations are valid also for changes over time: increasing presence of a titular nation led to weaker russification. Russification has also been positively influenced by urbanization, increasing urbanisation in general was accompanied by increasing russifica-

tion. Though the official policy stipulated that 'national cultures and languages should be encouraged' (some languages developed a written form as late as in 1930s), in reality the Russian language has been given priority since the dawn of Soviet era – partially as Russian was meant to serve as lingua franca (Kaiser, 1994).

Also important is the spread of individual languages within other groups (non-native speakers). The ability to speak and use Russian as a second language among non-Russian nations, in other words the use of Russian as lingua franca, seems to be statistically significant, too. In this case positive correlation is found with the second titular (or second most populous) nation, respectively, with its intercensal change (see Table 5).

The more non-titular population rose, the higher demand for Russian was. On the other hand the correlation between knowledge of Russian and the proportion of titular nation (its urbanised part) is a negative one. This seems to prove the hypothesis that different indigenous groups which lived in an ethnically mixed environment tended to communicate with each other using Russian rather than other languages (Tishkov, 1996). There is no doubt that practical reasons were important, for instance, the language of the 'other' indigenous group was not taught at schools, Russian was widely used in offices, at work, and also in private contacts with non-Russians.

Table 5. Pair correlation among Russification, Ability to Use Russian, and Proportion of Ethnic Groups

	TN89	RU89	RITN	RISN	CUL	PTNU89	LRU89	RUS89	CRUS
TN89	1.00	-0.78**	-0.20	-0.65**	-0.17	0.94**	-0.79**	-0.65**	-0.09
RU89		1.00	0.33	0.51*	-0.01	-0.89**	0.85**	0.82**	0.20
RITN			1.00	0.12	-0.45	-0.30	0.10	0.10	-0.57*
RISN				1.00	-0.02	-0.55*	0.79**	0.55*	-0.23
CUL					1.00	-0.04	0.16	-0.05	0.68**
PTNU89						1.00	-0.76**	-0.73**	-0.14
LRU89							1.00	0.71**	0.18
RUS89								1.00	0.10
CRUS									1.00

Explanation: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); *Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); TN89 – proportion of titular nation 1989; SN89 – proportion of second titular nation or second most populous nation, the Russians excepted 1989; RU89 – proportion of the Russians 1989; RITN – index of relative growth of titular nation 1970-1989; RISN - index of relative growth of second titular nation or second most populous nation, the Russians excepted 1970-1989; CUL – change of urbanization level 1970-1989; PTNU89 – proportion of titular nation on the urban population 1989; LRU89 – proportion of population able to speak Russian (native or second language), the Russians excepted 1989; RUS89 – degree of russification 1989; CRUS – change of russification degree 1970-89

Source: Author

Relations between ethnicity and education. Contrary to the expectations that the presence of the Russians as a modernisation factor should be related to better education, our research shows the complete opposite. There is a significantly positive correlation between the proportion of population with primary education and the proportion of Russian nationality, as well as relatively strong is also the correlation between the same group and secondary technical education. On the contrary there is a negative dependence between primary education and titular nations. Secondary general education correlates strongly positively with the proportion of titular population, but negatively with the proportion of the Russians. Positive correlation between university education and titular population has also been found (see Table 6).

It can be summarised that the Russians, though they formed a highly urbanised ethnic group in the Caucasus, had on average technical or lower education (training) compared to the urbanised folk of titular nations – undoubtedly a surprising fact. Possible explanation is the quota system introduced at secondary schools and universities: general secondary and higher education was primarily reserved for indigenous people and members of titular nations. That new national elite was gradually replacing the Russians in the tertiary sector and also became the driving element of ethnopolitical mobilisation in times of social and economic changes (Kaiser, 1994).

Table 6. Pair correlation among ethnicity and education

	TN89	RU89	PHSE89	PSGE89	PSTE89	PPE89
TN89	1.00	-0.78**	0.66**	0.81**	-0.48	-0.66**
RU89		1.00	-0.58*	-0.77**	0.60*	0.58*
PHSE89			1.00	0.76**	-0.01	-1.00**
PSGE89				1.00	-0.53*	-0.76**
PSTE89					1.00	0.11
PPE89						1.00

Explanation: *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); TN89 – proportion of titular nation on the unit1989; RU89 – proportion of the Russians on the unit 1989; PTNU89 – proportion of titular nation on the urban population 1989; PHSE89 – proportion of population with higher and secondary education 1989; PSGE89 – proportion of population with general secondary education 1989, PSTE89 - proportion of population with technical secondary education 1989, Proportion of population with primary education 1989

Source: Author

Regression analyses of dependent and explanatory variables. The pair correlation analysis revealed some correlations among independent explanatory variables and their relations to the dependent variable, i.e. to the intensity of ethnopolitical mobilisation. However, evaluation of mutual correlations and the impact of individual factors on the dependent variable should be seen only as an introductory analysis. First, possible false correlations should be taken into account plus the causal relationships connected with ethnopolitical mobilisation (ethnic conflicts) are much more structured. In spite of that the results of correlation analyses are important as they indicate possible significant variables. The understanding of mutual relations helps to select variables for the regression equation and to explain statistical results with regard to societal contexts.

As there are great many variables and the selected method of regression analysis (multiple linear with method enter) requires lower number of variables, a number of experiments has been carried out (Hendl, 2006). The variables selection for the analysis was driven by logical aspects, i. e. at least one predictor from each category of variables is present and the variables must not have a mutual correlation. This method aims to find an 'ideal' group of factors explaining the intensity of ethnopolitical mobilisation and to confirm previous results of the pair correlation analysis, i.e. the significance of individual entry factors. Important are above all: (1) coefficients of determination (R^2) and the degree of significance that rate the suitability of models used (selection of variables) for the explanation of dependent variable, i.e. of ethnopolitical mobili-

sation; (2) standardised β coefficients which rate the explanatory significance of each independent variable used in the respective models.

The final model (see Table 7) includes such variables which showed the highest correlation coeffi-

cients in the initial correlation analysis: number of conflicts, political/administrative changes, proportional change of Russian population between 1970–1989 (5), proportion of the second most populous ethnic group in 1970, and urbanisation level of 1970.

Table 7. Selected Results of Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	0.955[a]	0.912	0.856	0.436	0.912	16.497	5	8	0.000

Explanation: a. Predictors: (Constant), Number of political/territorial changes within a given territory (boundary or autonomy changes), Proportion of second titular nation or most populous nation (Russians excepted), %, 1970, Index of relative growth of the Russians, 1970-1989, Number of ethnic conflicts and other ethnic traumas during the 20th century, Urbanization level, %, 1970

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
CONF	0.854	0.213	0.542	4.004	0.004
UL70	0.026	0.016	0.236	1.637	0.140
SN70	0.042	0.014	0.397	3.057	0.016
RIRU	-0.957	0.748	-0.150	-1.280	0.236
PTC	0.647	0.402	0.292	1.610	0.146

Explanation: Dependent Variable: Intensity of ethnopolitical mobilization; CONF - Number of ethnic conflicts and other ethnic traumas during the 20th century; UL70 - Urbanization level, %, 1970; SN70 - Proportion of second titular nation or most populous nation (Russians excepted), %, 1970; RIRU - Index of relative growth of the Russians, 1970-1989; PTC - Number of political/territorial changes within a given territory (boundary or autonomy changes)

Source: Author

Statistical results show that the model as a whole has both a strong explanation value (coefficients of determination 90 %) and significance. The number of ethnic conflicts and traumas has the highest relevance of all and proves the fact that historical reminiscences are on the top of the political agenda across the Caucasus. The proportion of 'second' nation in 1970 has a high relevance, too; it reflects how polarised relations between two indigenous nations are. The higher proportion of the 'second' nation is, the more intensive interethnic contacts exist and the more likely a conflict can be expected. The importance of historical factors is underlined by the variable showing boundary (status) changes in the past which accentuates the territorial aspect of nationalism.

Urbanisation level as a sign of 'modernity' seems to be much weaker factor within this group of predictors, but it still confirms that ethnopolitical mobilization requires an urban environment. Proportional changes of Russian population should reflect the influence of Russians on the advance of nationalism. The centralised Soviet policy aimed to keep nationalism under firm grip through controlled migrations. The existence of Russian communities in the Caucasus on one hand could reduce tensions among alien indigenous ethnic groups, on the other hand could also encourage the anti-Russian nationalism. That is why the presence of the Russians has lower explanatory coefficient.

5. Conclusions

The above analyses allow creating an imaginary Caucasian territorial unit with favourable conditions for ethnopolitical mobilization which could eventually develop into an armed conflict: (a) such a unit has experienced political and spatial changes (boundary, status changes) in the past. These changes were forcibly ordered; (b) the ethnic structure consisted of one dominant titular nation and one sizeable indigenous minority (share on population at least 10 %). Past mutual relations between the two include a historic trauma; (c) the urbanisation level was around 50 %. Most of the urban population belongs to the titular nation which has a well educated folk; (d) Russian ethnic group is present. However, the proportion of Russian population decreases as does the Russian influence on interethnic relations and modernisation.

In the Caucasian context, Azerbaijan and Georgia stand closest to the above described model. Other territorial units differ in some aspects: Nagorno-Karabakh, Chechnya-Ingushetia and Abkhazia have lower urbanisation levels of the titular nation; in South Ossetia the proportion of the Russians has increased; in North Ossetia and Armenia the 'second' nation did not form a sizeable minority.

Furthermore, the results of statistical analyses, of course, cannot be understood as the only possible ground for an evaluation of ethnopolitical mobilisation and ethnic conflicts. The results can also serve as a useful base for further qualitative analysis of regional specificities as they provide a detailed insight into social processes and their conditions. The research brought the following results which confirm a validity of the above mentioned theoretical assumptions: (a) ethnopolitical mobilisation naturally appears when a totalitarian (autocratic) regime enters a transformation phase. The environment should be ethnically mixed with a certain degree of social and economic level; (b) the intensity of ethnopolitical mobilisation depends much on historic relations among the ethnic groups and on the character of past ethnic traumas. In case of unresolved historical disputes between competing ethnic groups, further political excesses should be expected; (c) ethnopolitical mobilisation mostly occurs in urban environment which serves as a 'melting pot' of various ethnic groups. More intensive mobilisation is likely when one ethnic group holds political and economic privileges; (d) in case there is a third ethnic group (the Russians) with strong cultural and economic position, it may on one hand contribute to ethnopolitical mobilisation of an indigenous group; on the other hand it may help to accommodate competing indigenous ethnic groups. Departure of the Russians may consequently boost political turmoil; (e) for the sake of future peaceful relations between the competing ethnic groups the mutual relations should be based on democratic and decentralized principles (federation or great autonomy) since the very beginning of ethnopolitical mobilisation. If this is not the case, separatist and irredentist movements usually arise and can result in armed conflicts.

The Caucasian region will remain a highly unstable territory. First, unresolved ethnic conflicts are present there and these recently became new national traumas. None of the competing groups claiming the disputed territories is prepared to compromise; given the strongly primordial character of local nationalism the ethnopolitical mobilisation is likely to go on.

Second, modernisation processes will probably continue and these will stabilise and consolidate Caucasian nations which are still much fragmented into tribal and clan structures (Souleimanov, 2006; Jelen, 2009). Especially the population of Muslim nations is likely to grow; this growth will produce a higher pressure on limited economic sources and also contribute to a more intensive interethnic competition. The role of Islam is growing in the Caucasus; religion has already become the base of national identity and may also boost the mobilisation of Caucasian societies against the Russian policy (Holland, O'Loughlin, 2010).

Third, the 'revived' Russian nationalism and Russian geopolitical interests, traditionally based on centralism, are important in the Caucasus. It is highly interesting that the Russian approach towards the Caucasus does not show any changes over the centuries (Pipes, 1997; Souleimanov, 2006). Russians have repeatedly adopted the imperial policy of divide et impera (divide and rule). The most recent lesson can be taken from Chechnya, another example is the effort to reduce the powers of local ethnic groups through administrative reforms (so-called Caucasian federal territory with a president's

envoy as a head supreme to local authorities has been created recently). Russia, however, did not give up the Southern Caucasus either. Russians have currently adopted a very active policy towards Georgia and Georgian separatist territories and have placed itself into an arbitrary position in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict – all those can be seen as a return of former superpower (Baar, 2005). On the other hand, weaker Russia in the future would inevitably encourage the emancipation of Caucasian nations and new hostilities against each other and also against Russia may occur – something to be taken into consideration by Russian politicians and also by the international community in order to prevent future ethnic conflicts.

Notes

(1) Altogether 14 Caucasian territorial units, until 1989 constituent parts of Soviet Union, have been examined: Soviet republics Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia; autonomous republics Nakhchivan, Adjara, Abkhazia, Kabardino-Balkaria, North Ossetia, Chechnya-Ingushetia, and Dagestan; autonomous regions Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, Adygea, and Karachay-Cherkessia.

(2) 'Titular nation' labels an indigenous ethnic group which gave name to the respective territorial unit. This term, used exclusively on the former Soviet territory, has been introduced as part of new the political-administrative organization. Ethnic groups which qualified themselves to receive an autonomy (population and territorial concentration were the crucial criteria) formed the cultural and linguistic base of Soviet republics and autonomous republics (regions). Sometimes two or more titular nations coexisted within a single territorial unit (Karachays and Cherkesses; Dagestan). It also happened that titular nation formed just a minority within its territorial unit (Dostál, 1993; Kaiser, 1994; Pipes, 1997).

(3) Includes conflicts between Armenians and Georgians (1918), Armenians and Azerbaijanis (1918–1920), Georgians and Ossetians (1918––1920), uprising in Chechnya (1940–1944) and deportations of Chechens, Ingush, Karachays and Balkars (1944).

(4) Relative index of change RIC = (N2 x C1) / (N1 x C2). It shows whether the population of one ethnic group increases faster than the population of the other group and relates the increase to the population changes within the whole territory. N = population of respective group; C = total population of given territorial unit; 1, 2 = census years (1 – 1970, 2 - 1989).

(5) Change of russification rate which reached a higher correlation coefficient in the pair correlation was replaced by the proportional change of Russians as the russification rate and its change was very low in most Caucasian regions. Proportional change of Russian population is closely related to russification rate change, its regional distribution is more varied and serves better for explanations.

Acknowledgement

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