A.Gunya

Preserving stability in the Northern Caucasus: procedures for the containment of conflict in Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai-Cherkessia

1. Methodology

This work has for an object the study and description of the institutional mechanism that is responsible for the conflict development within the Post-Soviet space. We have chosen as test areas two regions in the Northern Caucasus that have similar institutional, geographic and ethnic features but different ways of the conflict development: relatively successful overcoming of tensions that arose in early 1990s – in Kabardino-Balkaria, and a risky development of the conflict in 1999 – in Karachai-Cherkessia.

The methodology is based on comparative analysis of those two regions that is aimed at:

1. Elaboration of common principles and approaches to the study of trajectories of the conflict development in those similar regions;

2. Development of a model of the institutional mechanism accounting for different ways of prevention or exaggeration of conflict situations in the regions.

The explanation of conflicts that took place in the Northern Caucasus used until now the principles left by the Soviet ethnography and also, to some extent, by Soviet geopolitics. Anthropological and socio-anthropological methods were applied a lesser degree. Until the last time such concepts as nation, ethnos were unshakable. The division of the peoples of the Northern Caucasus into nationalities and ethnic groups performed and fixed in the Soviet period remained a basis for the study of the present-day processes. This fact put the brakes, to a great extent, on the revelation of real processes, real ethnic and cultural diversity within the whole Post-Soviet space. A constructivist approach and the study of real processes began to be applied to a large extent only recently, due to the efforts of anthropologists in the conflict research (Tishkov, 2003). The stereotypes of nations and ethnoses as a certain «forced identity» inherited from the Soviet period were largely criticized. A great importance was attached and is attached now to the ethno-cultural distinctions, up to their official registration and statehood construction (Tishkov, 2003).

The paradigm of ethnos and nation gives not enough possibilities to a researcher for the study of the origin of conflict and violence. «The process of recruitment into a group and their characteristics constitute a result of historical, economic and political conditions and situational effects» (Tishkov, 2003, P.105). The policy of ethnic business undertakings and the mobilization of the members of the ethnic group to collective actions from the part of

leaders that purpose their political aims represent a dominant factor in the construction of ethnicity (Idem, 1994).

Some other forms of social business undertakings aimed to the mobilization of the members of social groups under cover of the ethnic factor could be also mentioned. The *market of identity markers* that is very manifold, but predictable at any specific socio-historical moment, is of a great importance. Showing up of probable markers gives the possibility to reveal also possible limits of mobilization, as well as scenarios of development of the conflict. Several types of markers can be singled out:

1.   Markers of socio-cultural identification (ethnic group, familiar association, religious affiliation). The familiar association is of the greatest importance (marriages are very often contracted by the representatives of different ethnic groups). Family and cognate ties play a dominant role in the usurpation of power, organization of business, political business undertakings.

The affiliation with religion takes the second place. Russians that adopted Islam become at once «no strangers» for the indigenous population of the Caucasus. The contrary is also right, Kabardinians that adopted Christianity are much more closer to the Russian-speaking population. The ethnic affiliation takes only the third place. In the context of study of conflicts and violence the ethnic affiliation represents a mean of mobilization of the population for the leaders of ethnic groups. A good financial support can often render assistance with the rise of a new ethnic group that was not shown before and was considered as a part of another, more numerous ethnic groups. The procedure of classification, the mechanism of population census, the state bureaucracy define frequently the range of nations and even determine it officially. Thus, the ethnic identity is a struggle for taking control of the definition, for that which constitutes distinctions from other groups (Tishkov, 2003). On the assumption of an adequate moneyed and organizational assistance the leaders (historians, intellectuals) of two kindred peoples – Karachai and Balkarians – could train the public opinion for the next population census such a way that many Karachai and Balkarians would rank themselves among the ethnic group of Alans. Struggling for the place in the parliament of Dagestan, where a mechanism of ethnic representation subsists, gives rise to ideas of the detachment of small ethnic groups from more numerous ones.

The Communist Party, which regional sections are formed by representatives of different ethnic groups, should also be picked out as one of forms of political identity. The solidarity of members of the Communist Party of Russian Federation (C.P.R.F.) is often so close that religious and ethnic identity fades into the background. Probably, this fact proves the reality

of the category of the Soviet people arisen in Soviet ideological constructs. In national Republics the Communist Party represents a specific religion for such Russians that, being atheists, are obliged to look for additional markers of their own self-identification. In the context of conflict development it is very important to notice that Communist organizations play frequently a role of ethnically neutral tribunes that can criticize, publish and, in such a way, relieve to some extent certain social stresses.

2.   Space markers. Space markers have a complex resource and identification nature. The space and the area constitute a basis for the existence of different socio-cultural and ethnic groups. Two basic properties of space markers can be singled out:

a.   Localized kernel, center of origin or local homeland. The spatial localization underlies the identification of cultural centers, patrimonies, tribal (clan) ancestral lands. In this case only one specific ethnic or family-cognate group holds control and monopoly of resources (material resources as well as socially conditioned and non-material ones). The intrusion of strangers into the center is practically impossible.

b.   Transition and border areas and zones. They are, as a rule, zones of interaction of a number of social groups. At that, three types of boundaries may be singled out: strict borders-barriers (for instance, the river Kuban separates the Abazinian village Psyzh from the city of Cherkessk), relatively narrow seam zones characterized by an active interaction (for example, regional capitals Nalchik and Cherkessk) and relatively wide zones of co-habitation – ethnotones, where a conflict-free co-existence and resource use is also possible. Two ethnic groups can co-exist in the same territory for an arbitrarily long time without any serious conflicts, if they occupy different econiches by virtue of specific character of their traditional economy and nature management. For this reason they do not compete with each other for the control on the access to their means of subsistence (Yamskov, 1998). In Kabardino-Balkaria borders between Balkarians and Kabardinians have a pattern of seam zones, whereas in Karachai-Cherkessia they represent ethnotones.

The study of socio-cultural and space markers in Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai-Cherkessia has shown that different markers co-exist simultaneously in everyday and ordinary interaction of people: 1) strict and well assimilated markers that determine, control and regulate the behavior of different social groups (showing up and analysis of such markers is a task of primary importance for the research of conflicts); 2) there is an important number of examples-exceptions when compromises are made and strict markers fade into the background. So, the matter concerns different levels of organization of mass and personal

behavior. Real situational types of behavior are at the turn of institutionally legalized and some new, not formalized yet.

The main *methodological deductions* being of a great importance for the subject of research of conflicts and violence and playing a role of *hypotheses for the next stage of the work* are the following:

1. We should distinguish an artificial identification imposed from the heads and often strengthened that results in an a priori given classification of ethnic and other social groups. The predominance of such an approach being in the arsenal of state organization was conductive to striking of conflicts in the Northern Caucasus[1].

2. The real identification and its markers revealing the development of conflict situations has a complex nature and includes both institutionally legalized and situational elements. The dual nature of identity determines the forms and the character of mobilization in the course of conflict and violence development.

2. Model of the institutional mechanism accounting for different ways of prevention or exaggeration of conflict situations in the regions: institute of tandem

The reproduction and fixation of markers of social identity is ensured by the activity of a specific class of social institutes based on symbiotic, hybrid forms of interaction. Thus, symbiont relations or cultural polyformism represent a form of ethnic interactions widespread in the human history (Arutiunov, 1993). Taking into account a dual nature of different forms of social identity it seems reasonable to speak about a tandem character of functioning of the institutes ensuring the reproduction and fixation of markers. In this way, *the institute of tandem is a functional type of institute that ensures a relationship between formal and informal, old and new, higher and lower institutes reproducing different (formal and informal, old and new) markers of identity*.

State of study

There are three main sources concerning institutional tandem that this research draws on:

1) Sociology and anthropology. Analysis of institution-building during periods of transition and transformation of society is found in mainly empirically-based literature from the last decade (Bunce, 1999; etc.). Of particular importance are investigations, which describe syncretic relationships and connections between past and present, formal and informal institutions during transitional periods (Zürcher, Koehler, 2003). These relationships have a particularly important role in ensuring institutional legacy and avoiding difficulties during transitions.

---

[1] On account of a cosmopolitan nature of the Caucasian civilization, rearrangement of the region according to exclusive ethnic lines and administrative outlining of territories the conflict became there more than possible (Tishkov, 2003).

Contemporary sociological works in Russian on the local level are rather rare, especially in the North Caucasus. In contrast with ethnographic sources, Russian sociological investigations have mainly been concentrated at the regional and interregional level (e.g. Bulleten' seti etnologicheskogo monitoringa, 1996-2002, etc.).

2) *Soviet and Russian ethnography.* Soviet and Russian ethnography was usually connected with the study of the traditional ethnic and social institutions that existed within and were related with society. As a result of the co-existence of traditional and state institutions this literature provides a number of examples of tandem or symbiosis institutions such as laws (used in rural areas) that are based both on traditional (e.g. adat or shariat) and official norms (e.g. Kagharov, 1994; Babich, 1999; etc.)[2]. These tandem institutions play an important role in connecting local and state levels.

Different non-ethnographic sources are shown that the institution of the kolkhoz was also often based both on traditional and formal rules.

3) Social geography. Social geography deals with those institutions, which can be represented and depicted spatially[3]. A momentary snapshot of institutional structures allows one to analyze both formal and informal institutional elements and markers of identification. One example of this is the present administrative-territorial division of the Caucasus, which has both formal and informal boundaries and units. Another institution, transhumance, is a typical example of horizontal tandem institutions that include both mountainous regions and plains.

As an example is TI built at the turn of formal and informal institutions:

1. *Informal institutions.* Most important features of the informal institutions are: they are non state and they have behavior rules which a) repeated automatically (often on the subconscious level), b) transmitted from generation to generation, c) connected with existential base. Most markers, which are reproduced by informal institutions, don't have the rational function. They usually have irrational functions connected with symbols, rites, etc.

2. *Formal institutions:* a) they are tied with the state; b) legalize some informal functions; c) reduce the diversity of the traditional institutions.

Two main classes of TI are possible (Figure):

A) Formal (e.g. traditional) institutions reproducing markers, which can be formalized and legalized in the society. Such markers can be labels or masks (council of elders in the villages), partially embedded (adat rights), completely formalized by state and embedded (traditional distribution of land between different ethnic groups).

B) Institutions organized by state in different ways: forcedly, obligatory and without any alternatives (e.g. administrative and ethnic division during the Soviet time); alternatively

---

[2] Non-ethnographic sources which concern this theme in Russia are: Solomon, Peter H. Jr (ed.), 1997, Reforming Justice in Russia, 1864-1996: Power, Culture, and the Limits of Legal Order. New York: M.E. Sharpe; Koehler, Jan, 1999a, Die Zeit der Jungs. Zur Organisation von Gewalt und der Austragung von Konflikten in Georgien. Münster: Lit ; etc.).

[3] E.g. Werlen, B. 1995. Sozialgeographie alltäglicher Regionalisierungen – Band 1: Zur Ontologie von Gesellschaft und Raum. Concerning the present situation in the Caucasus it is worth mentioning such social-geographical publications as Rasselenie…2001; Beloozerov, 2000;etc.

(e.g. kolkhoz); formally, e.g. in order to reduce tensions (council of elders). These institutions can be nominally accepted by people or deeply internalized by way of adaptation. Sometimes these institutions continue existing even after the change of the policy (kolkhoz, administrative division etc.).
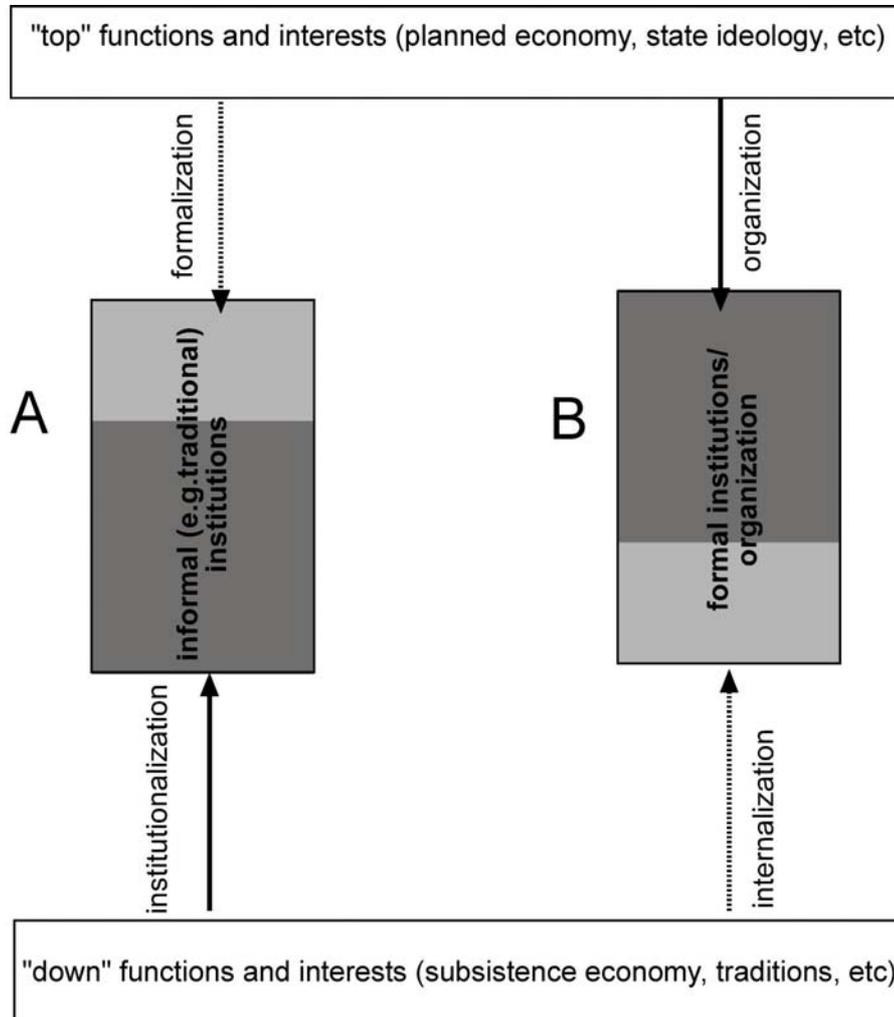
What roles do tandem institutions play for the conflict preventing and conflict reducing? They are responsible for:

1. strengthening of the power (vertical function);

2. reducing of contrasts and tensions between ethnic or social groups (horizontal function);

3. ensuring of the graduality of the development (time-function).

Thus, tandem institutions are characterized by high adaptability to any changes, sustainability to the external influence, and high capacity. E.g. the tandem institution has the ability, capacity and sustainability to contribute to the transformation of tensions into a peaceful procedure. Thus, in answering the main question about the institutional mechanisms of conflict avoidance it is important to research these **"tandem" or "symbiosis" institutions –**

and this will be the goal of the project. Further testing of the tandem institution model will be carried out during the next step of my fieldwork.

At present time in Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai-Cherkessia the mechanism of distribution of resources and power comprises the elements of the Soviet system, some market regulations, as well as traditional norms in the form of common law, for instance (generally, at a local level). Relationships between local and regional, formal and informal, old and new institutes is realized on the basis of institutional hybridization that guarantees compromise conditions for uniform and conflict-free development. The following spheres of hybridization within which the regulation of distribution of power and resources in Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai-Cherkessia takes place are the most important:

1) *Official authorities in the region* represented by a combination of old executive personnel of the Soviet-time Communist Party electorate and national and family-cognate informal elites that are, as a rule, strongly attached to local business activities. Some of regional leaders were members of the Communist Party in the past. There is a separation of powers between federal and regional authorities. Some positions (for example, Ministry of the Interior, Federal Security Service (F.S.S.), taxation service, national bank, etc.) are controlled and approved by Moscow.

2) *Official and shadow business* that is partially intertwisted with the authorities or is in process of intertwisting with them and rests upon family-cognate ties and relationships of compatriotism as well.

3) *Institutes of resource management* (generally, land tenure) affecting existential foundations of human living conditions. This is a potential for mass mobilization as well as an object of manipulation of people's mass behavior.

The preliminary analysis of results of the research carried out in Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai-Cherkessia has shown that in Kabardino-Balkaria the reproduction of markers of the type B is predominant, whereas in Karachai-Cherkessia – the reproduction of the type A. This preliminary conclusion will be verified later, during the next stage of the work.

3. Approaches and methods

3.1. General proposal structure

This investigation of the institutional mechanisms of conflict avoidance will be based on research of tandem institutions and will move from local mechanisms and local tandem institutions to their regional analogues and finally to interregional comparisons and generalizations. For this reason the project will involve the use of various methods, and the choice of key institutions at interregional, regional, and local levels of study (table 1).

stage	Pair of regions	Main objectives	Approaches and methods	Field time distribution
Local	Mountain (Balkarian and Karachai people) and plain (Kabardian and Chircassian people) parts of Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai-Cherkessia	**Primary identification** of tandem institutions and description of their features and functions	Social (interview), social-geographical (statistical, interview, mapping)	65%
Regional	North Caucasus: Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai-Cherkessia	**Comparison of regional analogues** of tandem institutions	Comparative, interdisciplinary, social, ethnographical	25%
Interregional	Central Asia and Caucasus	**Generalization** of interregional information about tandem institutions, their comparison in an interregional context	Comparative, comparative-geographical and interdisciplinary approaches	10%

Table 1. Distribution of power, time, methods, and key institutions at interregional, regional, and local levels of study

3.2. Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai-Cherkessia: approaches and methods of the field work

Two ethnic regions, which are "twins" of national state system - Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai-Cherkessia, are cases of different levels of resolution of rising contradictions in the North Caucasus. Kabardino-Balkaria is a successful example of conflict-free development, which has overcome difficulties of the 1990's, while Karachai-Cherkessia has hardly avoided a conflict (e.g., opposition during the last elections of the president of Karachai-Cherkessia). The institutions of both areas are similar at the formal governance level as well as at the level of traditional and informal institutions. Hence this pair for comparison allows identification of

possible trends both for relatively negative (Karachai-Cherkessia) and positive (Kabardino-Balkaria) scenarios, so as to highlight the role of any actors and institutions.

Ethnic group	Language	Population, % within republic (1989)	Main traditional form of land use
Kabardinians	Adyg group (Caucasian family)	49	Arable agriculture
Chirkassians		10	
Balkarians	Turkic group (Altaic family)	9	cattle-breeding
Karachai		34	

Table 2. Some geographical data of Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai-Cherkessia

Fieldworks are planned to pay more attention to the identification markers and core points (conflict centers and zones, points of interaction of conflicting parts): power (government), business and settling and land use.

Methodological approach in the field of power:

The role of power institutions in the appearance, development and resolving conflicts are analyzed in several aspects. The methodological core is a model of the tandem institution. There are three key institutions of this kind in the power structure, which play a decisive role in present-day conflicts:

1. Institute of nomenclature as a combination of highest official positions and clans with family and national cores

2. Postism as an institution of the middle state-bureaucratic apparatus which combined with personal, including family, relations

3. Interrelations between the power and business

To understand better the mechanisms and role of the *power* institutions in conflicts, I conducted a special investigation of the structure of the ruling elite which was in both Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai-Cherkessia Republics in 1989, i.e. before the conflict period, and at present. It is based on interviews with former executives of the communist party and new top officials.

The comparison of both periods and both systems of the power is based on the following notions which let us better understand the mechanisms of the power institutions:

1. Hierarchic levels of the power – stratification

2. Influence of Moscow

3. Ratio of positions held by different nations.

4. Sustainability of the power structure at the pre-conflict and post-conflict periods.

The major methods are interviews, graphic presentation of positions and ratio between various nations in different periods (1989-now)

Methodological approach in the field of business:

The study of the business institution should include the following aspects, which are important for conflict analysis:

1. Specialization, informal bans accepted by parties.

2. "Agreement" between nations for dividing functions, goods and services.

3. Role of the authorities in adjusting relations.

4. Role of the present-day economic relations – do they take into account traditional relations and structures or, vice verse, destroy them.

5. Persistent features.

6. *Potential conflicts.*

As a symbiosis business institution long ago, including formal and informal sides of life, has been market. The basic issue is the study of the existing market and its mechanism. Is it polyethnic yet or already based on pure economic laws? The objectively irregular distribution of natural resources throughout the region has originated institutions for exchanging animal products (Balkarians and Karachai) and agricultural products (Kabardinians, Chirkassians, Russians). The major exchange places are capitals (Nalchik and Cherkessk). The micropolitical study of the Nalchik market in the autumn of 2003 included microinterviews, discussions with market managers, micromapping of the main zones of national competence. An important study concerns the comparison of the present-day market and the market of the soviet time.

Methodological approach in the field of settling and land use:

Studying spatial markers and distribution of major nations, i.e. the Kabardinians, Balkarians and Russians in Kabardino-Balkaria, based on settling and land use. This stage of the study is focused on zones of nation interaction, including a zone of joint settling and use of villages. The findings of the fieldworks are:

1. Spatial analysis of the settling and land use system at the Republican level (Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai-Cherkessia). The main results were maps of the settlement structure of different ethnic groups as well as maps of the land use. On the base of these maps were identified areas, where ethnic groups have strong interaction and where potential conflicts are possible.

2. Micropolitical study of the villages where nations dwell (Jankhotheko and Novaya Balkaria in Kabardino-Balkaria, several villages in Karachai-Cherkessia – Teberda, Kosta Hetagurova, etc.).

Different social and ethnic dates were taken from household books (pokhosyaystvennye knigi): family structure (age, number of the generation, children, etc.), nationality, education, occupation, property (animals, land, cars, etc.).

Interview

Several types of interview are taken during the research.

1. Micro- or the situational interviews occupied from 20 to 40 minutes. Those were the interviews, which should have been taken very quickly not to influence general social atmosphere in the situation, the interviewing worked. The interview, which lasts for more than 40 minutes attracted attention at once (for example, in the market), the interviewing noticed the attention of others and his sincerity and willing to answer were extremely reduced.

2. Meso-interviews lasted for about 1 or 1.5 hour and, as a rule, were connected with lonely, (far from collective) people (shepherds, retirees, satellites in buses of long-distance trips or in trains). Meso-interview is always a chance; it is difficult to select the interviewing in them.

3. Macro-interviews could last for several hours. Usually such interview is strictly planed depending on qualities of the person, about which it is already known (in general). Frequently such interview is taken, when an interviewing invites an interviewer to his place. Therefore I call macro-interviews "guest".

4. The biographic interviews which last for several days. It is necessary to approach to the interviewing person again and again.

In the table is shown the distribution of interviews made during my field work:

Type of interview	Main institutions	Using of the interview date
Micro-interview	Market, village, business	Analysis of the market and business institutions
Meso-interview	village, business	Analysis of the land use institution
Macro-interview	village, social and political institutions	Analysis of the formal and informal village institutions as well as leaders of the political movements
Biographic interview	power	Analysis of the government institutions

4. Further hypothesis: conflict factors and scenarios of development

A brief comparison of different conditions in two close republics allows picking out the following main groups of factors that resulted in different levels of conflict situations in these republics:

1. *Strategy and tactics of the ethnic elites activities* (actually, ethnic elites played and are playing now an important part as an original institute in all national regions of Russia) (Drobizheva, 2003). One of the causes of a more stable situation in Kabardino-Balkaria was power-keeping by Soviet-Communist Party structures composed of Kabardinians for the most part. Forming of a ruling elite was accompanied by a quick adaptation to the new situation, a demonstration of loyalty to the federal center. All Balkarians' appearances under the banner of rehabilitation of the people that was a victim of expulsion, entirely evicted to the Central Asia together with Karachai and some other North-Caucasian peoples, could not disturb a relatively stable socio-political situation in the republic. More powerful demonstrations in early 1990-es issued from Kabardinians national and democratic movements. But all leaders of these movements, as well as leaders of Balkarian ones were neutralized or co-opted very quickly.

In Karachai-Cherkessia, where Karachai make up about 35% of the population (according to some data of the last population census, Karachai make up about 40%) ideas of rehabilitation were largely exploited for the mass mobilization. The Soviet system showed itself not reliable and very vulnerable to be criticized being directly concerned with repressions against the Karachai people, and then with distortion or concealment of the truth. A sequence of replacements in the government of the republic that took place in 1990-es reflected an instability and weakness of the authorities.

2. *Attitude toward actors from outside.* Kabardino-Balkaria restricted the influence of leaders from outside, reinforced the censorship of the internal mass media and adjusted channels of influence to the central press as well, on purpose of barring any leakage of any unwanted information concerning the republic to the central papers. An artificial image of this republic as the most peaceful one in the Northern Caucasus was designed and encouraged. Activities of nongovernmental organizations in the republic are strictly limited up to now.

Karachai-Cherkessia, on the contrary, remained open for mass media, and sometimes it turned against it. A number of papers present unfairly Karachai-Cherkessia as a hearth of instability and Vakhabism in the Northern Caucasus.

3. *Attitude of predominant ethic groups to the authorities.* One of important reasons of a relatively strong local power in Kabardino-Balkaria and a rather poor one in Karachai-

Cherkessia is the attitude to the authorities of predominant ethic groups: Kabardinians in Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai in Karachai-Cherkessia. The attitude to the authorities of Kabardinians, that had a rather developed class society during the historical period, is institutionalized. At the same time, the attitude of Karachai to the authorities is largely based on emotions, and that is why the possibilities for mobilization are much larger.

Business
Business activities in both republics are interested in stability. However, taking into account close relations of national business with the regional authorities and poor development of democratic mechanisms, the involving of business as a powerful mean of posts distribution and elections control is expected. Especially, it is a case of Karachai-Cherkessia, because a power centralization is not so strong there and it admits a struggle of different elite groups.

Since any positions are bought and sold, rich people have access to power and vice versa. It is basically related to the fact that main revenues of these republics depend on federal subsidies that appear later at hands of local authorities and officials and are distributed by heads of departments. Such a link with business takes place at a middle level of the power. The large business has grown together with the power while small business remains still international.

Existential foundations as a potential factor of population mobilization
Karachai and Circassians, Kabardinians and Balkarians lived together on the same territory during the centuries. Objective stresses related to the competition for the access to resources did not develop into conflicts.

The land use organization in Kabardino-Balkaria remained the same as in the Soviet period. Collective farms (kolkhozes and sovkhozes) as a typical result of institutional hybridization remained per se the same having changed only their names. Their functioning is based on land use mechanisms that combined traditional informal institutes and formal ones. Farmers are deprived of property to the lands they are laboring, (the same as it was in the Soviet time), despite of a formal lands separation in early 1990-es. Local authorities have no sufficient proxies of lands distribution, because the President of Kabardino-Balkaria interposed a veto of lands of collective use delivery into private hands.

The situation in Karachai-Cherkessia is quite another. Last time, apportionments of land pairs from collective farms are rather frequent. Some individual collective farms were destroyed at all. This fact gave an impulse, from the one hand, to the development of farmer-based economy, but, from another hand, made preconditions for lands redistribution, between ethnic groups as well. Some national leaders are afraid of the fact that single farmers would not be

able to hold themselves and would sell their lands to rich people representing other ethnic groups.

The stratification of the society to rich and poor englobes the countryside of Russia as a whole. People having profitable ties in the city (through relatives, business on the market, etc.) become more and more rich. Elementary foundations of subsistence being accessible to everybody (food, inhabitance, pensions, etc), the level of real unemployment in the countryside is rather high (up to 80% in some regions). That's why a potential for mobilization of unemployed and indigent population that was already realized through a series of social conflicts in late 1990-es is enormous (Stepanov, 2002).

Risks and development scenarios to be proved during the next stages of the fieldwork

1. «Proletarionization» (population pauperization as a result of the constriction of rights to resources, education, medical care, etc.) and ethnic depersonalization. At that scenario a decrease of interethnic and an increase of socio-political tension is possible. Two versions of proletarionization are probable:

a) quick and relatively uniform «proletarionization» of all ethnoses and their association into a single group in contrast to rich people and power-holders;

b) earlier proletarionization of highlanders, being the most vulnerable to the market economy – Balkarians and Karachai that have the least possibilities for the equality in their development. In this case a disbalance between ethnic groups can arise, that can result in interethnic stresses.

2. Change of political policy. This scenario presumes a change of existing balance of power between different ethnoses towards either a parity representation of all peoples (practically, as it was in the Soviet period), or authority formation on the basis of democracy, without regard to ethnic representation. The first variant assumes a decrease of influence of major ethnic groups (Kabardinians in Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachai in Karachai-Cherkessia), increase of the part of Russians in the government and in the parliament. Nowadays the part of Russians in parliaments of those republics is understated: Russian deputies have about 20% of votes in the parliament of Kabardino-Balkaria (Russians making about 30% of the population in the republic) and 18% in the parliament of Karachai-Cherkessia (Russians making about 40% of the population in the republic).

Today's socio-economic and political conditions in the Northern Caucasus could hardly allow for the second scenario to be realized. A conservatism of positions in the authorities conditioned by a need of maintenance of a certain ethnic balance results in a slowed-down

elite circulation (Kisriev, 2003), and this fact lies in the origin of the economic stagnation (Kabardino-Balkaria is a striking example).

However, why did Kabardino-Balkaria, after the U.S.S.R. disintegration and state subsidies reductions, escape any large-scale conflicts, whereas Karachai-Cherkessia could hardly escape violence? Kabardino-Balkaria had more improved and reliable institutes-hybrids at the level of: a) elite, b) management and distribution of resources. The authorities proceeded little by little from the Communist Party and Soviet system to the actual nationalistic-oligarchic one. Activists of political movements had been persuaded by means of instruments of neutralization well tested before, including instruments of bribery and co-optation. A conflict-free situation was in favor of the authorities.

Some important politic figures representing the center were interested in a tense socio-political situation in Karachai-Cherkessia. One of the most powerful figures was Berezovsky, who was Karachai-Cherkessian candidate for the State Duma. His role in the socio-political situation in the whole Northern Caucasus is not quite clear up to now.

Conditions of mobilization in Karachai-Cherkessia were more favorable, because Karachai make up more than a third of the population of the republic, and a lot among them went through the eviction of the whole people to the Central Asia. In Kabardino-Balkaria a people that was also subject to repressions – Balkarians – make up only 10% of the population and inhabits mostly the mountain areas.

On the whole, the prevention of a conflict scenario in Kabardino-Balkaria is related to a successful takeover, retention and distribution of power and resources at a regional level, neutralization of local leaders and non-admission of leaders from outside (such as it was Berezovsky in Karachai-Cherkessia).

In Karachai-Cherkessia representing an example of subsisting tension, authorities could not achieve a fast concentration of power and resources, and allowed a co-existence of several leaders unable to agree between each other. Moreover, it showed itself as very vulnerable to the impacts from the actors from outside.

5. Bibliography

1. Bunce, Valery 1999, Subversive Institutions. The Desing and the Destruction of Socialism and the State, Cambridge (Cambridge UP).

2. Idem. Enduring and Emerging Issues in the Analysis of Ethnicity//The Anthropology of Ethnicity. Beyond "Ethnic Groups and Boundaries"/Ed. H.Vermeulen, C.Govers. Amsterdam, 1994. P.11-32.

3. Koehler, Jan, 1999, Die Zeit der Jungs. Zur Organisation von Gewalt und der Austragung von Konflikten in Georgien. Münster: Lit

4. Zürcher, Christoph and Koehler, Jan. 2003. Potentials of Dis/Order. Explaining Conflict and Stability in the Caucasus and in the Former Yugoslavia. Manchester: Manchester UP;

5. Solomon, Peter H. Jr (ed.), 1997, Reforming Justice in Russia, 1864-1996: Power, Culture, and the Limits of Legal Order. New York: M.E. Sharpe

6. Tishkov, Valerie, 1997, Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union. The Mind Aflame. London;

7. Werlen, B. 1995. Sozialgeographie alltäglicher Regionalisierungen – Band 1: Zur Ontologie von Gesellschaft und Raum – Erdkundliches Wissen 116. Stuttgart.

8. Арутюнов С. А. Адаптивное значение культурного полиморфизма. ЭО. 1993. № 4.

9. Бабич И. Л. Эволюция правовой культуры адыгов.(1860-1990). М., Институт этнологии и антропологии РАН. 1999.

10. Белозеров В. С. Этнодемографические процессы на Северном Кавказе. Ставрополь; СГУ. 2000.

11. Бюллетень сети этнологического мониторинга, 1996-2002.

12. Дробижева Л.М. Социальные проблемы межнациональных отношений в постсоветской России. М. Центр общечеловеческих ценностей, 2003.

13. Кажаров В. X. Традиционные общественные институты кабардинцев и балкарцев. Нальчик, Эльфа. 1994.

14. Кисриев Э. Дагестан. В кн.: Межэтнические отношения и конфликты в постсоветских государствах. Ежегодный доклад, 2002. Под ред. В. Тишкова и Е. Филипповой. М.: Авиаиздат, 2003. С. 194-205.

15. Расселение, этнокультурная мозаика, геополитика и безопасность горных стран. Тезисы международных конференций. Ставрополь, СГУ, 2001.

16. Степанов В.В. Региональная экономика в контексте этнополитических проблем. В кн.: Этнические проблемы регионов России. Северный Кавказ. Калининградская область. Крайний Север. М. Старый сад. 2002. С. 81-100.

17. Тишков В.А. Реквием по этносу. Исследования по социально-культурной антропологии. Москва, Наука, 2003.

18. Ямсков А.Н. Традиционное землепользование кочевников исторического Карабаха и современный армяно-азербайджанский этнотерриториальный конфликт // Фактор этноконфессиональной самобытности в постсоветском обществе. Ред.: М. Олкотт, А. Малашенко. М.: Московский Центр Карнеги, 1998, с. 168-197.

September 2004