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BALKANIZATION OF CAUCASUS: CASE STUDY OF GEORGIA

Although the term and phenomena of balkanization is internationally well-known, excepted within international relations and diplomatic circles, some peculiarities are interesting even for further analysis and discussion. This article underlines some of them and proves that many of them can be traced down in different areas all over the world. Specifics like secession, accompanied by inter- and intrastate conflicts based on ethnic and religious grounds, huge pressure on the civil population expressed in war crimes, genocide and ethnic cleansing, enormous economical devastation of the country and very low level of democracy denoted the collapse of Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia. As the consequence the term balkanization got the final »outlook«. Analysis of different events after collapse of Soviet Union in Southern Caucasus may be compared, to a certain degree, to those on the territory of former Yugoslavia. Based on this and many other facts article offers new perspective in better comprehension and may enable us to predict further development of the international relations regarding the Southern Caucasus region.

Keywords: Balkanization, Southern Caucasus, Balkans, Yugoslavia, Georgia, and geopolitics

BALKANIZACIJA NA KAVKAZU: PRIMER GRUZIJE

Čeprav je izraz balkanizacija v mednarodnih odnosih in diplomatskih krogih dobro znan, so nekatere značilnosti tega pojava kljub temu vredne poglobljene analize in debate. Članek dokazuje, da je fenomen balkanizacije prisoten na različnih koncih sveta. Secesija, notranji in meddržavni konflikti na etnični in verski osnovi, močan pritisk na civilno prebivalstvo, ki se odraža v vojnih zločinih, genocidu in etničnem čiščenju, ekonomski propad dežele in skrajno nizka raven demokracije - vse to je spremljalo razpad Socialistične Federativne Republike Jugoslavije. Tako se je izraz balkanizacija dokončno ustalil. Analiza dogodkov v Sovjetski zvezi in na južnem Kavkazu kaže določene podobnosti z dogajanjem na ozemlju nekdanje Jugoslavije. Članek ponuja drugačen pogled na balkanizacijo, ki bo strokovnjakom omogočil zanesljivejše napovedovanje mednarodnih odnosov na območju južnega Kavkaza.

Ključne besede: balkanizacija, južni Kavkaz, Balkan, Jugoslavija, Gruzija, geopolitika

BALKANIZATION OF THE BALKANS

Many scholars offer different definitions on balkanization and many of them are similar. Basically is balkanization stressed as geopolitical term used to describe the process of fragmentation or division of the region into smaller regions that are often hostile or non-cooperative to each other. The term has arisen from the conflicts in the 20th century Balkans. The first Balkanization was embodied in the Balkan wars and the term was reaffirmed in the Yugoslav wars. However especially nowadays the term is also used to describe other forms of disintegration, including, for instance, the subdivision of the Internet being divided into separate enclaves.³ Based on this the term Balkanization overstretched the original meaning and is possible to find it in different sciences and even more situations in every day life.

But why was the Balkans able to produce and implement this kind of term? What determined the evolution of the Balkan region in this way? And which were the specifics of the region through out the history and geopolitical pressures of the regional powers that indirectly caused extreme confusion in international relations that even all international organizations and superpowers are not able to solve?

As already stated, the roots of Balkanization have to be defined in the 19th century, when the German geographer Zeune gave the territory in the southeastern Europe, what was at that time known as the European Turkey, the name after the old mountain that stretches itself from northern parts of Bulgaria to the border between Bulgaria and Serbia. Originally this name comes from Turkish word for the very the same mountain.⁴ However, the name itself did not influence the nowadays known definition. Different scholars and experts on Balkan history and on going international and ethnic relations proved close links between colonialism and geopolitical interests of regional powers regarding the Balkans. And exactly involvement of different countries into Balkan situation generated



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3 (<http://www.bartleby.com>)

4 Šušvar, Stipe, »Balkanizacija kao instrument globalizacija«, <http://www.geocities.com/>, (2005).

the term. Conflicts of interests between East (Russian Empire), West (Austro-Hungarian Empire, Prussian Kingdom and even United Kingdom accompanied by France) were demonstrated by favoring different local entities and nations. At the beginning of the decline of Ottoman Empire in 18th century interests who will control the formal Ottoman territory had arisen. Geopolitical concept of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was based on the German colonization of Balkans, known as *Drang nach Osten* or Expansionism to the East. With this attitude toward Balkans their interests ran into the newly independent state – Kingdom of Serbia that gained independency from Ottoman Empire by two well organized revolts. Their fight for the independency was carried out entirely by them self. This military success and war experience put huge amount of self-reliance into Serbs that were determined to spread their territory on the Balkans what put Kingdom of Serbia into the local power position. But the success of Serbs was important also for the other Slavic nations on the Balkans. It was considered as a strong national signal to fight for their national rights. Those movements led to different peaceful and some less peaceful actions. Thus, in case of Bosnia there was an open revolt to the Austro-Hungarian intentions to rule on this territory. This situation led to the attempt of final solution of the Balkan question that should be achieved on the Congress in Berlin in 1878. The great powers under the pressure of German Empire gave the Habsburg family the mandate over the Bosnia to restore order and peace. But they were not successful. In 1903 the Macedonians organized new uprising and the fragmentation of the so-called patient on Bosphorus went its way further. Finally in 1912 and 1913 the Balkan wars should define the borders and led to a peaceful development of the Balkan Peninsula what was already at that time considered as the most underdeveloped part of Europe. Instead in 1914 the Great War broke out after the assassination of the successor to the throne Franz Ferdinand of Habsburg.

With these facts in mind the term Balkanization became an offensive word that had roots in German language as *Schimpfwort*. Todorova claims that: »already at the beginning of 20th century Balkanization did not only indicate the disintegration of bigger and survivable states but also the return to the tribal, failing behind, primitive and barbaric political creations.«⁵ Balkan was considered as second Europe where people do not want to accept new, more civilized values that were accepted by cultivated world. But were the attempts of so-called western states to implement those values with the exploitation and use of brutal force the right way? It may be assumed that reaction on this policy was even fiercer fight for basic national rights as use of the language and free development of the cultural identity. And this question was not appropriate addressed. After the end of the



5 Todorova, Maria, »Imagining Balkans«, Oxford University Press, New York, (2001).

Great War and creation of new state in the South-eastern Balkans – Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes that was later renamed into Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the discrepancy between three recognized nations grew larger. We can only imagine how felt other, non-recognized nations within this state (like Macedonians). This situation gave nationalistic movements among Croats and Slovenes free way. At the same time Serbs tried to implement the plan for the Great Serbia. Royal family of Karađorđević was determined in gaining benefits in favor of Serbs.⁶ It was obvious that the term Balkanization was going through many evolutionary phases. Before Second World War very strong ethnic load was added to the term Balkanization. When appropriate moment finally came – occupation of the territory Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the outburst of decades suppressed feelings came on the surface of interethnic relations.⁷ Accumulated hatred resulted in civil war, numerous war crimes and atrocities against all ethnic groups, concentrated on innocent civil population. However, the worst situation was between Serbs and Croats, who underwent the experience of genocide in years 1941 and 1945.⁸ After these events the comprehension between Serbs and Croats was lost.

After the Second World War and the creation of Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, new, communistic government under Josip Broz Tito paid special attention to the ethnic relations. Huge amount of time, financial resources and political efforts was given to the implementation of national brotherhood, recognizing of all ethnicities in the state and giving them autonomies regarding their language and culture. Tito was well aware of the national tensions between Serbs and Croats therefore he launched process of creating the new nation, not based on cultural and language diversities – Yugoslavs. But this experiment had limited success. All what was achieved was accumulated migration between republics of Yugoslavia and consequently decreasing the national homogeneity within republics of Yugoslavia. This was the reason for direct correlation between lower degree of national homogeneity and intensity of the conflict on one and human suffering of civilians on the other.

It may be considered that the term Balkanization entered historical books and was more or less bad memories during the times of President Tito, however despite all the efforts the collapse of the communism and decreasing abilities of the federal government after his death, national questions had grown once more. However, the reason were not the cultural limits of lack of autonomy, reason were new political elites that saw a great opportunity to gain the power in the republics on free elections. But the arguments presented to the voters were based



6 Malcolm, Noel, »Kosovo: A Short History«, New York University Press, New York, (1999).

7 Tadić, Božidar, »Etničke zajednice i međetnički sukobi«, CID, Podgorica, (1999).

8 Djilas, Milovan, »Wartime«, Secker&Warburg Press, London, (1977).

on nationalism and populism. All economical problems that Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia faced in 1990 were annotated to the ethnic minorities on other nations within the state. Slobodan Milošević was considered as a master of the crowds. Historical wounds were open and the main intentions of these nationalists were to settle the account. After the secession of two northern and most economically developed republics, Slovenia and Croatia, Yugoslav People's Army tried to prevent the break down of the state with all means what led into bloodiest war in Europe after the Second World War. This war was described as war between different nationalities (based upon cultural, linguistic and historical differences), ethnic communities and finally war between religions (Catholic, Orthodox and Islam).⁹ This latter fact had to be discussed even more, since Church with its institutions became cultural centers and enabled the survival of national and ethnic identity over the years of foreign suppression. With this fact the religion and Church was object of division between entities that fight the civil war in Croatia and especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina. International community that involved into conflict resolution achieved, also with the help of military force, peaceful cohabitation between new independent states and in some cases (like in Bosnia) between different entities and religious in one. Europe is preparing for the tenth anniversary of the signature of Dayton Accord but Balkan did not say the last word since the negotiations for future status of Kosovo region are on the way. This quick overview of the most important events on the Balkan Peninsula gave the term Balkanization final touch. The core of the term did not changed from 19th century on – fragmentation of greater states into smaller ones. Nowadays, the way to achieve the independency is embodied into the term and to this characteristic has to be paid bigger attention.

BALKANIZATION OF CAUCASUS

Taking its name from the fragmentary and divisive nature of the Balkans, the term balkanization has come to refer to any region with internal turmoil or divisions. For example, the 1991 breakup of the Soviet Union into fifteen countries can be referred to as the »balkanization of the Soviet Union«. Dissolution of the Soviet Union (SU) caused escalation of inter-ethnic conflicts in Caucasus region. Our analysis shall focus on case study of Georgia, which is one of the most ethnically picturesque states in the region and where conflicts were most violent.



9 Schöpflin, George, »The Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia« in McGarry, John and O'Leary Brendan (ed.) *The Politics of Ethnic Conflict Regulation*, Routledge Press, New York, pp. 178–205, (1993).

ETHNIC QUESTION IN SOVIET UNION

Former Soviet Union (SU) was because of the ideological and political reasons unable to solve national question. The fundamental problem was upon communist idea that the national awakening was just a transitional phase or passing phase of the early capitalism and that ultimately all cultural and ethnical differences within each state would merge into one international socialist culture. Since this was not a quick or easy process Communists established some safeguards to speed the process of volunteer assimilation by establishing regional autonomy, with the boundaries of these regions determined as much as possible by ethnic boundaries, they forbid ethnical discrimination and try to abolish the supremacy of Russian language.¹⁰ As says: »... there was general assumption there so no national (ethnical) question in SU.«¹¹

But reality was quite different even though SU was federation; it was a centralised one with Russian as only official language. Because of Stalin's reign of terror the ethnic question become even more complicated and new ethnic frictions occurred (expulsion of Chechens and Crimean Tatars after Second World War, establishing new borders regardless ethnical boundaries in Naghorni Karabah). Regardless to all Soviet leadership went one step forward and created a new Soviet nation that made ethnic mess in SU complete. The outcome of the socialist experiment was the rise in complexity of the ethnical question. And when Gorbachov started the policy of Glasnost and Perestroika, unsolved ethnical question coupled with economic collapse of the economy lead to ethnic clashes, especially in Caucasus region and caused the dissolution of the Soviet Union¹².

GEORGIAN ETHNIC MOSAIC

With the end of the SU approaching almost all its republics declared sovereignty. Georgian soviet republic followed the rule especially after the Red Army violently tried to stop the rise of the Georgian nationalism and demands for independence. The course of action was quick and in mid 1990 Georgia declares sovereignty and elects Gamsakhurdia as a first non-Communist president, while formal independence was declared in April 1991. But independent Georgia inherited Soviet federalism, which reflected itself in existence of two ethnically



10 Peled Y., »Lenin on the Jewish Question: The Theoretical Setting«, Political Studies Vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 61-78, (1987).

11 Caratan B. »Krizna perestrojke I novi savez suverenih republic«, Politička misao Vol. 28, No. 2: 98-117, (1991).

12 Caratan B. »Krizna perestrojke I novi savez suverenih republic«, Politička misao Vol. 28, No. 2: 98-117, (1991).

based regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia, where simultaneously with the rise of the Georgian national awareness, national awareness of those regions rose too. It's true that ethnical tensions become apparent already in the SU, but this time tensions got new dimension when state of emergency was proclaimed and armed conflicts broke out when Georgian side used force to prevent secession.

First to escalate was the conflict in South Ossetia, where Soviet federal forces were inter-positioned between Georgian and Ossetian side in 1989. With the end of the SU federal forces were withdrawn and South Ossetia declares its independence from Georgia. Since Gamsakhurdia wanted to established unitary state he revoked Ossetian autonomy and the war erupted. It continued until 1992, when durable ceasefire was reached through the mediation of Russian President Jelcin and Western pressure.

Next to come was Abkhazia which had before its declaration of sovereignty granted autonomy vis-à-vis Tbilisi and Abkhazian population was able to maintain significant political representation in the legislature. Since this case was more complex and risky, especially for the Georgian government, there was no imminent outbreak of war. To the Georgian government in Tbilisi it was obvious that it is too weak to fight Abkhaz.¹³

In November 1992 internal political turmoil started in Tbilisi, when opposition demanded resignation of the President Gamsakhurdia, which was accused of being unsuitable for the office and having authoritarian tendencies. In November 1991–January 1992 intensive firefight broke out in Tbilisi, which resulted in ousting Gamsakhurdija. He retreated to his native region to mount a rebellion, while the interim president, as a leader of the State Council became Shevardnadze. Because supporters of the Gamsakhurdia used Abkhazia as sanctuary from which to resist Georgian force. The Georgian side sought the way to enter Abkhazia to confront rebels. There is some confusion regarding whether Abkhaz side gave limited permission to Georgian forces for hot pursuit of Gamsakhurdias supporters or no. The general assessment is that some kind of agreement did actually take place. Never the less when Georgian forces entered Abkhazia they found the road open to capital Sukhumi. Georgian forces attacked the city and ousted Abkhaz forces out of the Sukhumi. The Abkhaz forces re-consolidated in the northern part of the region and begun counter-offensive. In mid-1993 they re-entered Sukhumi and ejected Georgian forces from Abkhazia. Abkhaz success and Russian pressure lead to a ceasefire and to inter-positioning of the Russian forces between warring parties. The last day of campaign in Abkhazia also witnessed a revival of the Zviadist rebellion behind Georgian lines, which threatening the complete



13 Georgian side was exhausted after the conflict in South Ossetia and was aware of possibility of outside support to the Abkhaz cause.

collapse of the Georgian state. Shevardnadze asked for Russian help and agreed that Georgia enters Commonwealth of Independent States. For return Russian forces intervened and suppressed rebellion. In June 1994 the CIS acting upon the agreement between parties, legitimised on going Russian deployment as a regional peacekeeping operation based on the consent of the parties.¹⁴

Both wars and violent ethnic conflicts almost completely devastated the country and resulted in around 13.000 dead (South Ossetian 1.000 and Abkhazian war 12.000 dead) and some 200.000 internally displaced people.¹⁵

EXTERNAL PLAYERS

Important role in the development of the Georgian state had also external players, especially Russia and US. Russia was trying since the collapse of the SU to obtain active presence in the areas of the former SU especially on its volatile southern border. Main areas of Russian interest were restoration of some kind of control over former Soviet external borders, to establish common CIS air-defence systems and to obtain agreements on basing Russian forces in the non-Russian republics of former SU and to prevent any presence of the foreign forces in the area of former SU, even multinational peacekeeping forces were not acceptable¹⁶ (MacFarlane 1997). Some scholars are talking of the Russian hegemonistic ambitions, but reality is much more complex as it seems at the first glance. It's true that Russia played very important and also very ambiguous role in both mayor conflicts in Georgia. In the case of South Ossetia it's true that many individuals from Russia fought on Ossetian side and that official Moscow did not try to stop North Ossetian authorities in helping South Ossetia separatist movement. The same can be said in the case of Abkhazia, where Georgian side accused Russians of supporting Abkhazian forces. But in both cases we could hardly say, that was a result of the official Russian policy and not the result of complex regional setting in which those conflicts were going on¹⁷ and partly also by Russian official policy.



14 MacFarlane S. N., »On the front lines in the near abroad: the CIS and the OSCE in Georgia's civil wars«. *This World Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 509–525, (1997).

15 Tishkov V. »Ethnic Conflicts in the former USSR: The Use and Misuse of Typologies and Data«, *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 36, No. 5, pp. 517–591, (1999).

16 MacFarlane S. N., »On the front lines in the near abroad: the CIS and the OSCE in Georgia's civil wars«. *This World Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 509–525, (1997).

17 Major reason for North Ossetian support to South Ossetia was ethnic links between the two areas. In Abkhazia the support was coming from North Caucasian nations in Russia and also to some extent from Russian forces based in Abkhazia.

On the other hand mostly Russian authors are emphasizing that: »the Russian presence (including military) in the South Caucasus is not an element of its »imperial resurgence.« Ensuring stability in the former Soviet republics of the Transcaucasus is a fundamental condition of Russia's peaceful domestic development and the preservation of its integrity.«¹⁸ In this respect the main source of concern for Russia is the question of Pankisi Gorge as a safe haven for Chechen rebels staging attacks against Russian forces in Chechnya.¹⁹ Regardless all the fact remains that in nineties there were not so many states, besides Russia, willing to contribute their forces for peace missions in the area of the former SU. It is also true that conflicts in these areas were not on main western political agenda.

Russian military presence in Georgia was always important element in Russian-Georgian relation. In Georgian case Russia was not very successful in efforts to legitimize its bases on Georgian soil. Russia did try to formalise its military presence since 1991, but it succeeded only in 1993 with Georgian entrance into the CIS.²⁰ Since this entry was according to Georgians imposed upon them by Russian side, Georgia always tried to expel Russian forces from its territory. First steps in this direction were achieved at the Istanbul summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (November 1999), where Russia and Georgia finally agreed on the withdrawal of Russian bases. These Istanbul agreements were formalized as the official supplement to the Treaty on the Conventional Forces in Europe.²¹ Russia pulled out from all but two bases (Batumi and Ahaljaljaki), but according to the agreement on complete Russian withdrawal from Georgia reached on 30 of May 2005, all Russian forces will leave Georgia until 2008.²² But Russia was not alone; with the start of the construction of the pipeline Baku-Ceyhan US strategic interest in the region has grown considerably. The true explosion of US influence started with the beginning of war against terror, when president Shevardnadze convinced US side to provide professional training to Georgian forces for fight against terror. The whole process intensified after the Rose Revolution in Georgia took place and new political establishment started with the policy of democratization and allying towards US. Growing US influence is most evident in the military aid and in the presence of US instructors. One of major US aims in Georgia is to secure the flow of Caspian



18 Makedonov S. »Russia Needs a Stable Caucasus«, Available at www.rian.ru on 22. 11. 2005.

19 Cohen A. »Moscow, Washington and Tbilisi wrestle with instability in the Pankisi«, available at www.eurasianet.org, 15.11.2005.

20 MacFarlane S. N., »On the front lines in the near abroad: the CIS and the OSCE in Georgia's civil wars«. *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 509-525, (1997).

21 Makedonov S., »Russia Needs a Stable Caucasus«, available at www.rian.ru on 22. 11. 2005.

22 Aksenov P., »Without bases«, available at www.vip.lenta.ru/news/2005/5/31/base, 31. 5. 2005.

oil in to the world markets. In this context it is also vital US interest to prevent any escalation of frozen conflicts or eruption of new one (especially between Russia and Georgia), which would endanger the Baku-Ceyhan project.²³

Internal political situation in Georgia was in the past ten years far from stabile. After the ousting of the first president Gamsakhurdia, the president became Shevardnadze. He consolidated Georgia, which was in 1992 at the doorstep to civil war. But with time passing by the regime was becoming more and more unpopular and chronically corrupt. The political corruption and mass fraud in 2003 elections caused the Rose revolution and the collapse of the regime. Even though the regime was not totalitarian as some other regimes are in the CIS,²⁴ it did take some actions against opposition movements especially against opposition media and opposition candidates in 2003. Extend of the political corruption and of growing authoritarian ambitions of the regime reflect in its unwillingness to accept the victory of opposition in 2003. Shevardnadze at the end resigned and left the country when opposition protesters storm the parliament and it was evident to him that he lost all internal and also external support.²⁵ New president Saakashvili elected in 2004 oriented its policy towards West and democratization, but did not tackle successfully the question of corruption and according to some views; he is becoming more and more totalitarian. Opposition in the country is marginalized and has no real access to media. More and more are becoming cracks with other actors of the Rose Revolution, which didn't support all aspects of president's policy.²⁶

Shevardnadze was not the only hard line leader in Georgia in both secessionist regions (Abkhazia and South Ossetia) have more or less authoritarian leaders. In both regions there is no actual opposition and the ruling elite did not change in the past decade. Nice example is presidential elections in Abkhazia in 2005, when a crisis broke when both presidential candidates claimed victory.²⁷ The crisis was settled with an agreement between involved parties and the outcome of elections was at the end the result of power play between candidates.²⁸



23 Welt C. «Georgia: Causes of the Rose Revolution and Lessons for Democracy Assistance», USAID and Russia and Eurasia Program-Center for strategic and International Studies, Washington (2005).

24 If we compare Shevardnadze rule with regimes in Turkmenistan or in Uzbekistan we can say it was quite tolerable to opposition forces.

25 Sidorov J. »Georgia: Political Situation is Deteriorating«, available at www.rian.ru on 22. 11. 2005.

26 Welt C. »Georgia Under the New Regime«, Russia and Eurasia Program-Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, (2005).

27 Palievsky A. »Abkhazia in the Grips of a Power Crisis«, available at www.rian.ru on 22. 11. 2005.

28 It was a real power game and Mr.Bagpsh become president mainly because of his military force composed of Abkhazian-Georgian war veterans.

CONCLUSION

More and in many occasions the term Balkanization is used by journalists, scholars, scientists and diplomats. However, in recent history the contents of the term came very close to the history of the last days of Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia and finally its collapse. Secession and creation of new European states (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro) can be considered as fragmentation, which was the core or primarily meaning of the Balkanization, but today it means a lot more. It embody the rise of nationalism in the very bad meaning, the uprising of dictatorships and treading down of democracy and human rights, civil war, war crimes like ethnic cleansing, acts of genocide and all other atrocities that finally lead into sovereignty and independence of formal part of a greater state. But at what costs? Hundreds of thousands dead civilians, much more wounded, turned into disabled persons as a casualties of landmines, millions of refugees and internally displaced persons and total devastation of the now independent country not capable to reform and achieve the free market economy. In fact, as many scholars underlined, it is little chance of success (especially in the near future) to build a rapidly prospering market economy based on a stable liberal democracy in most former communist countries.²⁹ These states are in most cases depended upon financial and political help of international organizations and donor states. Can we really accept these countries as independent states? Thus more resources should be placed into studying the phenomena of Balkanization with special emphasis not on what the term had become but how to prevent further examples of this kind. This is necessity since the true paradox of balkanization comes from the right of secession³⁰ and recognition of national state what was one of the great achievements of the I. World War and promoted in »Wilsonian« spirit as right to self-determination.

We can conclude that concept of Balkanisation is quite appropriate in the Georgian case. Georgia was part of a bigger multi-ethnic state, which was burdened by unsolved national question. The collapse of the multi-ethnic state was predictable and with this also the rise of the national awareness of different nations in it. With the deepening of the crisis in multi-ethnic state claims for independence surged which in many cases, including Georgia led to the ethnical tensions and conflicts not only in former federal SU but also in newly independent Georgian state. Because of the ethnic conflicts and wars newly independent state was almost completely devastated, many hundreds people



29 Zuzowski, Robert, »Political Change in Eastern Europe since 1989: Prospects for Liberal Democracy and a Market Economy«, Praeger, London, (1998).

30 Lehning, Percy ed. »Theories of Secession«, Routledge Press, New York, (1998).

were killed and many thousand more displaced. Georgian state become because of the ethnical instability also chronically politically instable and under constant threat of the civil war. These circumstances were fruitful for the emergence of authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes and corrupt political elite. Additional disturbances and plight of Georgia was created by the external actors, which used it as a field for implementation of their own national (security or economic) interests. What about the further? There are both positive and negative signs present in today Georgia and Caucasus region in general. The most positive is determination of both external players Russia and US to prevent any escalation of the frozen conflicts in Georgia.³¹ However there are also more ominous signs, one of them is last year intensive firelight between Georgian and South Ossetian forces and second even more ominous sign is increasing Georgian military build-up and intensive preparation for war with both separatist regions.³² At the moment there are regarding circumstances only two possible solutions on the horizon a diplomatic (negotiations) or military (Georgian forceful reintegration of the separatist regions) one.



31 Simakovsky M.D., »US Diplomacy Strives to keep South Ossetia conflict in Check«, accessible at www.eurasianet.org, 15. 11. 2005.

32 Nikolaev V., »Bronetankovij skandal (Armoured scandal)«, Военно-промышленный курьер No. 42 (109) 09–15 November 2005. Available at www.vpk-news.ru, 9. 11. 2005.