The Chechen Mobilization in Violent Conflict

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Master of Science in International Relations

THESIS CREDIT

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DECLARATION

I, Malikov Bekhan Ibragimovich, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature………………………………..
Date…………………………………………

DEDICATION

First of all, this thesis is dedicated to the people of Chechnya that have been suffering the last three centuries.

I also dedicate this work to my father – Malikov Ibragim Djamaldinovich who passed away when I was nine years old. To my lovely grandmother – Gabazova Dagman who is also in heaven, my best memories with you.

To my best grandfather – Makayev SaikHany, I wish you good health.

I proudly want to dedicate this thesis to my lovely mother for being a true inspiration in life, you had a dream and you did everything to give me a good education, Thank You!

Above all, I am indebted to my dear wife for patience and kind love.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ABSTRACT

Throughout the centuries, Chechen – Russian relations seem to be of never-ending war and conflict. Although, Chechnya is a tiny territory within huge Russian Federation, still it does not prevent the Chechens to mobilize again and again against Russia. Aiming to understand the reasons of this, this thesis takes a qualitative case study approach in order to understand how the Chechen mobilization was achieved before and during the Second Chechen War in 1999. Kaufman`s theory of Modern Hatreds is the most applicable theory to explain Chechen mobilization. The case study looks at Chechen leaders/elites who invoked the Chechens for violent conflict. The paper also looks at Chechen cultural/social practices since these ''frozen elements'' are facilitators of Chechen mobilization. Thus, the thesis concludes that the mobilization was achieved due to historical memories (symbols and myths), and manipulation of ethnic fears/emotions by elites. In addition to the symbolic politics, the Chechen social practices were complementary elements that promoted the Chechen mobilization.

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VOCABULARY

Adat: Customary law

Abrek: Avenger

Gazavat: Holy war

Imam: Muslim leader

Nokhcho: Chechen

Nokhchalla: The Chechen character

Sharia: Muslim law

Sheikh: Islamic leader, respected elder

Teip: Chechen tribal organization or clan, extended clan in Chechen society

Vainakh: Chechen and Ingush people

Yah: Honor of man. Main virtue of every Chechen man. Competitiveness

Tukkhum: Grand alliance of familial clans or *teips*

«Мы не будем оплакивать, мы не забудем и мы не простим!» «We will not mourn, we will not forget and we will not forgive! »

23 February 1994 Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev

CHAPTER 1

1. Introduction

One of the most influential Chechen political scientists, Abdurahman Avtorkhanov claims that "the history of Chechnya-Ingushetia is decades of bloody struggle by a freedom-loving people against the colonialists" (Avtorhanov 1991:5). The reason I illustrate this quote in the beginning of my study is that I totally agree with him, and it represents the general Chechen view about Chechen – Russian relations. The Chechen – Russian relationship is tragic and difficult and seems to be one of never-ending conflict and war. This conflict that started long time ago has been to some degree like a symbol of Russia`s decay at both the national and international level.

Any war is a disaster for human beings. The consequences are huge and horrible, and result in thousands, or even millions of people`s deaths. Moreover, it becomes more disastrous when the conflict seems endless. For three centuries Russia and Chechnya have not manage to establish stable relations, and the human cost of resistance for the Chechens has been extremely high. Quite recently the tiny Chechen mountain land was an almost unknown piece of the Soviet Union, however, during the 1990s the territory became the bloodiest battlefield on Russian territory since the Second World War (Seely 2001). Russia has fought two post-Cold War wars within its own state in an attempt to stabilize and take back control over Chechnya. Looking at Chechen-Russian relations over the past 20 years we see a history full of blood and pain. While Moscow repeats the slogan of "territorial integrity," Chechnya repeats the slogan of "independence" (Gall & De Waal 1997).

The time of writing this thesis coincides with the 72nd anniversary of the mass deportation of the Chechen people that took place on 23rd February 1944. The symbol of this deportation seems to be the most firmly remembered within Chechen society since they have

quite recently experienced the most violent treatment perpetrated by the Soviet regime. The elders who have experienced such tragedies tend to pass on the stories to the younger generation, something which in turn fosters hatred. These hatreds are likely to produce ethnic uncertainty which spills over to mobilization and war. Although the Chechens had to suffer a lot by waging wars against Russian aggression, still, again and again they manage to mobilize their population for armed fight against Russian rule. Aiming to understand the factors that drive the Chechen mobilization I seek to investigate how it is possible to mobilize Chechens in violent conflict. Historical grievances are said to be one of the main tools of mobilization. Thus, this thesis takes as its point of departure that such stories matter when populations are mobilized for violent resistance.

In 1996, the Russian leadership decided to put an end to the first Chechen war and withdraw its defeated and demoralized army from Chechnya. Notwithstanding these two years of bloody war, three years later in 1999 Russian forces were ordered back into Chechnya and the second Chechen war started. The second conflict became as brutal as the first Chechen war (1994-1996). Again the Chechens mobilized for violent resistance.

This thesis will not provide a full explanation of the conflict ridden relations between Russia and Chechnya, but will instead focus on how mobilization among Chechens against Russian rule comes about. Why is it so easy to mobilize the Chechens against Russian rule? Negative historical memories and ethnic fears make mobilization possible? By manipulating people through stories of grievances someone or something enhance hatred against certain group which usually leads to violent conflict. Perhaps the social organization of Chechens too can be one of the factors that facilitate the mobilization opportunity? I convinced that specific Chechen cultural aspects act as facilitator of Chechen mobilization in addition to collective memory. Being an ethnic Chechen, with personal ties to the Chechen struggle and distress which continues throughout three centuries, I felt drawn to do research within this field and answer questions that are related to the Chechen mobilization.

The general and by now global mobilization of Islam against the West might be another important factor to consider when trying to explain Chechen mobilization in the past 20 years, but will not be given weight in this thesis.

1.1 Research Objectives

In 1993, the political scientist Samuel Huntington developed a theory called "the Clash of Civilizations" where he argued that the primary source of conflict in the post-cold war era will not be ideological or primarily economic, but will be based on people`s cultural and religious identities. This was a response to Fukuyama. The main "evil" - USSR with its communist ideology collapsed and as Fukuyama argues in his book "The End of History and the Last Man" (1992), the Western liberal democracy may be the final destination of humanity`s sociocultural evolution and the final form of human government (Fukuyama 2006). As Huntington argues, Orthodoxy is less antithetical to Western civilization than Islam, which implies that Islam is likely to lead toward violent conflict (Hughes 2013). After the collapse of the Soviet regime, the first bloody conflict in Chechnya 1994 corresponds more to nationalist-separatist ideology. However the second war in 1999 definitely conforms to Huntington`s thesis that emphasizes the importance of religious and cultural identities.

Before and during the second conflict, many Chechen warlords claimed that the main goal of their struggle was to kick out Russians from North Caucasus and establish an Islamic state. Therefore, looking at the second Chechen war it proves that Huntington was right when he argued that the primary source of conflict will be based on religious differences which in turn helped to mobilize Chechens in violent conflict. While Chechen elites talked about religious identities, they were still referring to symbols and myths of violent history. Nevertheless, the major explanation of the conflict is historically rooted Chechen experience of resistance to Russian conquest, oppression and control (Hughes 2013). Is negative collective memory alone able to mobilize people against Russian threat by still referring to religious differences?

This thesis investigates the interim period between the first Chechen war (1996) and the beginning of the subsequent second Chechen war in 1999 until 2005 when the leader of the Chechen independence movement and the president of the Chechen republic of Ichkeriya, Aslan Maskhadov, was assassinated by Russian forces. In sum, the thesis seeks to shed light on how ethnic Chechen mobilization was achieved before and during the second war through considering how Chechen elites employed symbols and myths by seeking to convince their

followers for violence. Cultural/social practices[1] that fosters the mobilization process will be considered as complementary elements.

The thesis will fill a knowledge gap in the literature on the Chechen wars in that it includes Chechen language sources and perspectives. Most of the books on the Chechen wars have Western authors and build on English and Russian language sources. For example, there are many such studies of the Chechen wars (Evangelista 2002, Dunlop 1998, Gammer 2006, Lieven 1998, Seely 2001, Smith 1998 and many others). Many of these are weak on theoretical concepts and there is a general disregard of social theory (Wilhelmsen 2014). Using Chechen language sources and perspectives in addition to Kaufman`s theory of Modern Hatreds should therefore improve the understanding of the Chechen mobilization processes that occurred during the 1999s.

While writing this thesis, I would like to say that my intentions are not to accuse the parties that are involved in this conflict; not Russians, Chechens or International community (OSCE), but merely to understand how the Chechen mobilization was achieved before and during the 1999s.

1.2 Research Questions

The study addresses the above objectives through focusing to answer the following research questions:

1- *Which ethnic symbols and myths are used by Chechen elites to foster hatred against Russia/Russians and to what extent can this explain the mobilization of people/groups against Russian aggression in Chechnya since 1999?*

2- *What are the other factors that can explain Chechen mobilization in addition to the ethnic hatred and hostility?*

3- *How do elites use ethnic symbols and myths to provoke war?*

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[1] In this thesis, cultural aspect and social practices have the same meaning which includes the Chechen clan/teip system, blood revenge, seven generations and Chechen code of Honor/Yah.

1.3 Thesis Outline

This thesis is structured into six chapters:

- The first chapter presented an introduction of the Chechen-Russian issue, research objectives and research questions.

- Chapter 2 sketches the background of the Chechen-Russian conflict. I start by describing Chechen culture and identity, the Chechen clan system and the concept of honor which plays an important role in mobilization for violent resistance through the practice of blood revenge. Chechen identity is strongly defined in opposition to Russian. The Chechens see themselves as true soldiers drawing on centuries of warrior tradition, and willingness to take up arms is strongly rooted in their cultural identity. In order to understand the root causes of hatred and hostility a brief history of the conflict between Russia and Chechnya is then presented.

- In Chapter 3, I will consider different theories of ethnic conflict and ancient hatreds since different theories shed light on different aspects of conflict. However, Stuart Kaufman`s theory of Modern Hatreds seemed particularly useful for explaining how Chechens are mobilized for war and has therefore provided the point of departure for the empirical study. The theory explains the symbolic politics of ethnic war and posits that manipulative leaders use symbols and myths to invoke war. I consider this approach useful/applicable to the war in Chechnya, but I also want to add some factors that can help explain mobilization processes on the Chechen side. While the Modern Hatreds approach takes the upper hand in the thesis, other factors that will be touched upon are specific Chechen cultural practices such as the clan system, honor and blood feud. Russia is a large, multi-ethnic country with a diversity of nationalities and religions. However going back to history, it seems like the Chechens are the only nation that have resisted Russian national policy throughout three hundred years. I therefore want to consider if there are any particular cultural/social practices that make the Chechens so capable of mobilizing for war/resistance. To cater for this broader agenda, the thesis will apply an extended version of Kaufman`s Modern Hatreds Theory.

- Chapter 4 presents the methods section where my choice of method is a qualitative case study. I will to some extent rely on discourse analysis in my analysis of Chechen texts. Discourse analysis will be implemented with the aim of shedding light on how

members of the Chechen elite invoked, talked to civilians while seeking to mobilize them against Russian rule.

- The empirical chapter, Chapter 5 moves into the case/evidence study. Here, I will present the background of the first, interwar and second Chechen wars. Furthermore I provide primary and secondary data that found during the research process. Much of the material had been translated by me from Russian and Chechen languages into English. Different interviews that had been taken from Chechen military leadership will be analyzed by seeking to understand the Chechen mobilization process.

- In the concluding chapter 6, I will summarize the elements of symbolic politics, and the core findings on the empirical case studied throughout this thesis.

CHAPTER 2 Background

"Everywhere there are mountains, everywhere forests, and the Chechens are fierce and tireless fighters" (Dunlop 1998:1).

2.1 The Chechens as an Ethnic Group

Chechens are a Caucasian ethnic group of the Nakh peoples[2] originating in the North Caucasus. They do not refer to themselves by this name ("Chechens") rather they call themselves Nokhchi (Dunlop 1998). When they talk about Vainakhs, they refer to Chechen and Ingush[3] people. The Chechen ethnic community have lived in or near their present territory for at least 6,000 years and most of its territory lay within the forest zone of the Caucasus (Dunlop 1998).

Looking at cultural aspects, the Chechens are very proud of their social code and code of honor. They have a strong sense of nation and *Nokhchalla* which means the Chechen character. Chechen code of honor implies moral and ethical behavior, chivalry, diplomatic skills, will to defend the honor of women and obligations to clan and tukkhum. The wolf is considered by Chechens as being a national animal and its meaning is that "all Chechens are free and equal like wolves" (Jaimoukha 2014). All ethnic Chechens are Muslims and adhere to the Sunni Islam (Osmaev 2014).

The concept of freedom is valued strongly by Chechens, since looking at history we can see that the nation (including many national heroes) have been dying and struggling for their independence for centuries. Even Marx and Engels (spiritual precursors of the Bolsheviks) wrote, "Europeans, learn to fight for freedom and independence on the heroic examples of the Caucasian highlanders" (Avtorhanov 1991:14).

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[2] Nakh peoples are a group of historical and modern ethnic groups speaking Nakh languages and sharing certain cultural traits who reside in the parts of North Caucasus, available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nakh_peoples

[3] The Ingush are a Caucasian native ethnic group of the North Caucasus, mostly inhabiting the Russian republic of Ingushetia, available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ingush_people

Chechens have traditionally been egalitarian and this ethnic group unites more than 200 clans (teips). Honor and blood feud play major roles within these clans and the clans` internal dynamics are based on these two features. The social position of a Chechen is defined by their clan and tukkhum[4] membership. The Council of Elders is made up of representatives of all the teips. These elders are responsible for addressing the issues related to the inter-teip disputes and differences in order to protect the interests of individual clans and tukkhums. This is a kind of brotherhood, where the elders can declare war, conclude peace, negotiate and make alliances (Mamakayev 2009). The members of these clans and tukkhums feel an obligation to help those in need and live through mutual assistance.

Below I provide the ***Vainakh social organization scheme.[5]***

Scheme 1.

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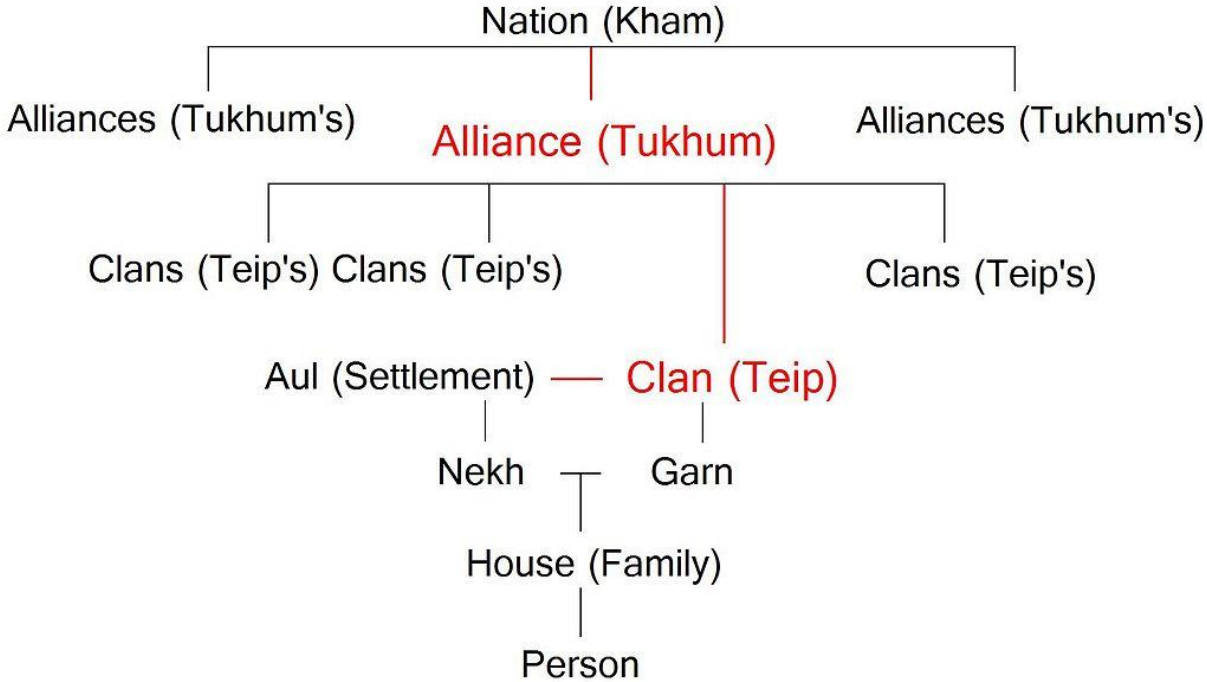
[4] Tukkhum are systems of social organization in traditional Chechen society. Grand alliance of familial clans or teips. The tukkhum unites clans together which are unrelated by blood, who seek to find joint solution of common problems-the protection from enemy attack and economic exchange, available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tukkhum

[5] This scheme is retrieved from Wikipedia 2016.

From the scheme above we are able to see how the Chechens are socially organized, the way they are involved in the teip (clan) membership and the way they make alliances with other clans thereby creating tukkhums that in turn make up the nation (Kham). Currently, the Chechens are divided into approximately ten tukkhums which comprise more than 200 clans (teips). Albeit, according to the Chechen scholar Akayev, the teip is neither a clan nor a tribal structure: it is an association made up of various clans and ethnic groups that inhabit the same territory and have established particular socio-cultural ties (Akayev 2010). As Hughes writes, Chechnya is a kind of military democracy: "In peacetime, they recognize no sovereign authority and may be fragmented into a hundred rival clans. However, in time of danger, when faced with aggression, the rival clans unite and elect a military leader" (Hughes 2013:4).

Observing this scheme and being a native Chechen, I suggest that the cultural aspect and the way the Chechens are socially organized provide important possibilities for mobilization. Being a member of the clan and tukkhum on the other hand causes a kind of commitment or shared responsibility towards that tukkhum which implies that all members have obligations towards different issues/conflicts that the tukkhum might face. Thus, in case of danger/war from external "enemy" (for example, Russian force), the Chechens tend to mobilize united by clans which would spill over to the alliances (tukkhums) and this may make up the whole nation (excluding some opposition) that would fight against external enemy. Thereby, we can see how the clan-based system is important to understand the mobilization possibilities.

2.2 The Role of Religious Ideology in Chechen Society

Although someone might think that the clan-based organization is constant, I would not describe it as an unchangeable feature. Albeit certain primordial traits have survived within Chechen society, as Lieven argues Chechnya`s modern identity and self-consciousness as a nation have mostly been influenced by Russian conquest and the resistance to it that in turn was the adoption of Sufi Islam which became both the inspiration and the organizer of Chechen resistance (Lieven 1998).

According to the Chechen customary law, *adat,* the elders must be shown respect, and those who are younger must behave appropriately. However when the Wahhabis[6] ideology spread in Chechnya, the Chechen *adats* were subject to criticism and many started to refuse these customary laws. The Wahhabis ideology gave the chance to jump the barrier of seniority and achieve prestige while still young (Tsatsos 2014). Thus, the acceptance of Wahhabis ideology had required not only the refusal of previous religious thoughts but also refusal of the usual Chechen lifestyle and extended family kinship which had played an important role within Chechen society. Even though the refusal from clan system is comparable with refusal of the national identity, it has still influenced many Chechens during the interim period in 1996. While the traditional Islam which included national traditions facilitated the consolidation of the Chechen society, the Wahhabis' ideology in turn destroyed the Chechen national consciousness (Osmaev 2014). Wahhabism was considered by some Chechen leaders as a tool to unite the Chechen population by undermining clan-based loyalties and sweeping off religious differences (Giuliano 2005). From this we can see that those cultural features that had seemed to be primordial can be changed since they are socially constructed.

2.3 Chechen Social Practices

There exists one norm within Chechen society that comes from ancestry called *seven generations.* It is semi-mandatory for every Chechen male to remember the names of their previous seven generations of paternal ancestors. In other words, the names of their father, grandfather, great-grandfather until seventh great-great grandfather. Not only the names, but also circumstances of their deaths and the places of their tombstones. Going back to history and discovering the causes of ancestors deaths it becomes quite obvious that in many cases the ancestors destiny was in the hands of Russian colonizers (under the tsarist policy, Soviet regime, Yeltzin etc.). As Basaev (Chechen warlord) notes in one of his interviews, *"Everyone in my family, through seven generations, fought the Russians. I consider it an honor to fight because I must continue what my fathers and ancestors began"* (YouTube 2011a). Thus, from this we can see how socially constructed practices contribute to increase hatred and hostility

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[6] Wahhabism (often called Salafism) is a religious movement of Sunni Islam. While scholars and advocates describe it as "ultraconservative, austere, fundamentalist, puritanical, Islamic reform movement", opponents claim that Wahhabism is an "extremist pseudo-Sunni movement." Available at, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wahhabism

towards a certain group. As a result of this, almost every Chechen is likely to consider Russians as enemies who have previously killed one of their ancestors.

Another important facet to mention here is blood revenge that exist within this ethnic group. Little is known about the role of blood feud in different armed conflicts. I believe that this cultural aspect is also a fundamental driving force in mobilizing people. The practice of blood feud has been an important mechanism in fostering mobilization in the local population against the Russian rule and pro-Moscow Chechen leaders. The need to exact blood revenge is valued so seriously by many Chechens that it has taken the upper hand over an individual's political views or lack of it.

The blood feud aspect is so strong that even apolitical Chechens who initially tried to avoid participation in the hostilities could be triggered to mobilize by the loss of a relative or humiliation. This is done in order to exact blood revenge and regain their clan and individual honor (Souleimanov, Emil Aslan & Aliyev, Huseyn 2015). I would like to mention the words of the last Chechen *abrek* (avenger) Khasukha Magamadov who fought the communist regime until 1976 when he was killed by KGB/Committee for state security. He said: *"I have never avenged for myself, never declared war to this country (Russia) or to other countries, I have protected the honor of my people, and the revenge has been used as a weapon of retaliation against those who committed crime against the whole Chechen nation"* (Vaynahi 2016). The a*breks* appeared in the 19th century as a form of protest against tsarist and communist policy. We see how important a role is played by the blood revenge and honor within Chechen society. As I will get back to in the theory chapter, it functions as an effective grievance-based device fostering mobilization processes on the Chechen side.

2.4 Chechen Identity

Centuries of violence forced Chechens to create a clan system which has been seen as a protection mechanism, and this clan system ensured all the identity they wanted and needed. While the tsarist and Soviet regime tried to change the Chechen history and assimilate them into a "civilized world," still the Chechens have managed to resist this aggression and to create their identity by employing collective memory that in turn created nationalism. As mentioned earlier, the history of Chechen-Russian relations is endless story of conflict which shapes negative collective memory. Although Russia managed to conquer the Chechen territory, they have been unable to fully subjugate the Chechens. This again shows the

Chechen desire for independence and freedom which has never disappeared. For centuries the Chechen people have distinguished their relationship with Russia as "us against them," thus this has influenced creation of the ethnic group`s cohesion and solidarity against Russian rule. Such negative historical events significantly influence the collective memory, and these symbols and myths has been a unifying aspect for many Chechens. Understanding the power of these symbols and myths helped the Chechen leadership to unite and mobilize groups before the second war in 1999. If a group`s identity includes a warrior ethos, as the Chechen mythos does, then the group is more likely to be prone to ethnic violence (Kaufman 2001).

The following section deals with the history of Chechen-Russian conflict. The conflict history is important to consider, since it gives insight into the post-cold war instability in the region and root causes of hatred and hostility that comes from the 1700s. Presenting the conflict history will show the historical grievances that the Chechens possess. It is these collective memories which had been used by Chechen elites as symbols and myths. As we will see later in the case study, these symbols had a great impact on Chechen mobilization.

2.5 Conflict History

The post-cold war Chechen conflicts can be understood as a consequence of the constant battle of Chechen people for independence against violent the tsarist policy and Soviet regime. The first time when the Russian empire started to show interest in the Caucasus region was in the 16th century after its conquest of Kazan and Astrakhan khanate 1556 (Avtorhanov 1991).

Starting from 1555 until the first half of the 19th century, Caucasus region was a major competitive area for two rival empires, the Persian and Ottoman empires who took over some parts of the Caucasus. The Ottomans prevailed in Western Georgia and Persians in Eastern Georgia, Dagestan, Azerbaijan and Armenia. In 16th century, Russian empire also started to expand its influence over the Caucasus, thus there were three empires that competed for dominance over the region. Tsar Ivan the Terrible was married to the Cherkessk princess Mariya Temryukova in 1561, and this marriage was supposed to be a symbol of the Caucasus` peaceful annexation to Russia. However, peaceful annexation was unsuccessful, and when tsar Boris Godunov in 1606 attempted to penetrate the Caucasus, he failed to do so and was forced to withdraw his forces from this mission.

The first outbreak of Chechen resistance against oppressive tsarist national policy can be seen starting from the 18th century when the Russian empire started its expansive pressure towards Chechnya. As a result of this expansion strategy, clashes between Russian troops and Chechens became more frequent. Already in 1708, Chechen leader Amiramza Turlov had gathered other mountaineers from the North Caucasus to attack Russian fortress called "Terki" which was eventually seized (Abdurakhmanov 2014). In 1718 and 1721, Peter the Great visited Chechnya during the Persian campaign where he launched two military operations against Chechens using Cossacks and his allies in Kabarda[7] which resulted in many Chechen civilian casualties. The process of colonization of Chechnya by Russian empire dates from that time (Yevsyukova 1995).

In the late 18th century, the Chechen movement began its resistance against Russian domination under their leader Sheik Mansur. Mansur proclaimed himself sheikh and then imam (chief of a Sufi Muslim order) and called for the Chechens to maintain pure Islamic values and vilify the use of tobacco and alcohol, which had been introduced into the region by the Russians (Dunlop 1998). He argued that customary law (adat) should be replaced by Islamic religious law (sharia). As he claimed, the holy war/*gazavat* must be launched against corrupt Muslims who behave based on adat and not sharia, thus allowing themselves to be assimilated by infidels. Mansour inspired many people, and under the banner of Islam he managed to unite Chechens, Dagestans, Kabardinians and Adygeans in order to defend their territories from Russian colonizers. Nevertheless, the movement was destroyed by the Russian army in 1789. Sheik Mansur was considered by Russians as the leader who "have raised the people of the Mountain against Russia and having caused great harm to the empire" (Dunlop 1998:12).

The Caucasian war (1817 – 1864)

This long lasting war was a result of the Russian invasion into the Caucasus region which at the end resulted in Russia`s annexation of the areas of the North Caucasus (Abdurakhmanov 2014). In the first half of the century, clashes between Chechens and colonial troops never ceased. The war became more intense after general Yermolov started his brutal methods of cleansing against Chechen population. Yermolov hated the Chechens, describing them as "bold and dangerous people." His cleansing operations were the most

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[7] Kabardia was a historical region in the North Caucasus corresponding partly to the modern Kabardino-Balkaria, available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kabardia

violent including "scorched earth," deportations and destroying villages that resisted (Yevsyukova 1995). During this resistance, the major attacks against Russian troops were made under the leadership of the Dagestani leader Imam Shamil, however this came at great loss for Chechens since they lost most of their entire population. Although Yermolov`s means were extremely brutal, he never managed to fully break the Chechen people. Instead, such violent actions had a great impact on Chechen identity by promoting a sense of rebellion and resistance towards Russia.

According to Dukuvakha Abdurakhmanov, the Chechen population had declined from 250,000 in 1840 to 150,000 in 1859 (Abdurakhmanov 2014). Imam Shamil declared holy war that lasted 20 years and during this period Chechnya`s territory was the region of permanent battles. In 1861, after the Chechens were defeated, the tsarist government decided to deport many Chechens to the Ottoman Empire in order to expand its influence in the Caucasus region.

Mass deportation February 1944

During the Civil war in Russia (1918-1920) many Chechens supported the Bolsheviks, since they promised greater autonomy and self-rule. However, knowing the history of Chechen-Russian relationship, already in 1936 the Soviet regime started to act against "anti-Soviet tensions," consequently approximately 10,000 people were arrested in Chechnya and Ingushetia. The Soviet regime that adhered to communist ideology started to implement the policy of anti-religion campaigns, therefore there were several Chechen rebellions seeking to protect their Islamic beliefs.

After accusing the Chechens and Ingush of aiding and cooperating with Nazi Germans, in 1944 Stalin`s government began mass deportation of the entire population to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. During the violent mass expulsion, half of the population died of hunger, cold and disease (Yevsyukova 1995). Those who were sick and residents of high mountainous villages were shot and burned; this was done in order to save transportation space for those who were deported (Abdurakhmanov 2014). The most well-known story of these monstrous murders is the burning alive of 700-1000 women and children including infants and elderly in the Haibach village. The Colonel Gveshiani – the NKVD[8] officer who

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[8] The People`s Commissariat for Internal Affairs was a law enforcement agency of the Soviet Union that directly executed the will of the All Union Communist Party. Closely associated with the Soviet secret police. The NKVD conducted mass extrajudicial executions and deportations of entire nationalities.

was responsible for this massacre - was promoted by Beria[9] for successfully implementing the operation (<u>Lieven 1998</u>).

As Avtorkhanov argues, despite those accusations of collaborating with Nazi Germans, the real cause of this deportation was "a long lasting bloody struggle by freedom loving people against colonizers" (<u>Avtorhanov 1991:5</u>). Avtorkhanov claims in his book that there are two factors to mention: first of all, during the Second World War there were no German soldiers in the Chechen-Ingush territory except for a short occupation of the borderline place Malgobek which was populated by Russians; second, the Chechens physically could not cooperate with Nazis because there was no compulsory mobilization in Chechen-Ingushetia. The Chechens were released from mobilization in Red Army since they refused to eat pork based on religious grounds (<u>Avtorhanov 1991</u>).

In 1957, after 13 years of exile, the Chechens were allowed to return to their homeland, although they were not welcomed at home by Russians/Cossacks who felt uncomfortable with them. The Chechens lost economic resources and civil rights, and they were discriminated again. In 1958 a Russian demonstration held in Grozny required the return of the Chechens back to Siberia. Unfortunately this was not the last suffering that Chechens had to experience. After having attempted to regain their independence at the beginning of the 1990s, the post-cold war era brought a new wave of violence into Chechnya with the outbreak of the first Chechen war (1994-1996).

Summarizing the conflict history, I would like to add that such historical sufferings and centuries of violence have influenced the shaping of the Chechen nationhood, alongside martial-oriented and clan-based society. The constant need to protect themselves has contributed much to the Chechen ethos and shaped its fiercely independent national character.

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[9] Lavrentiy Beria was a Soviet politician, chief of the Soviet security and secret police apparatus (NKVD) under Joseph Stalin.

CHAPTER 3 Theory Framework

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the theory that will be applied in the thesis. Since this project analyzes ethnic conflict, the chapter will start out by defining what ethnic groups are. Then it moves on to the discussion of different ethnic mobilization theories and Chechen cultural aspects, in addition to the symbolic politics of ethnic war. Theory is of great importance to the social researcher since it provides a conscious approach to guide the research that is being conducted. It gives a framework within which social phenomena can be understood and the research findings can be interpreted (Bryman 2012).

An ethnic group or ethnicity is a category of people who share five key traits: a group name, a believed common descent, common historical memories, language-religion and attachment to a specific territory (Kaufman 2001). In this thesis, the terms nation and ethnic groups have the same meaning. Nationalism is a desire by a large group of people who share the same culture, religion and language to establish a separate and independent nation of their own. What gives nationalism its power are the myths, symbols and historical memories and the ways the past has been reinterpreted by modern elites. Modern national identities are reproduced in each generation by using historical memories (Smith 1999). A myth is a "belief held in common by a large group of people that gives events and actions a particular meaning" (Kaufman 2001:16). A symbol is an "emotionally charged shorthand reference to a myth" (Kaufman 2001).

Ethnic emotions and group history that are based on historical memories are constructed socially and politically. According to Suny (2004), "national identities are saturated with emotions that have been created through teaching, repetition, and daily reproduction until they become common sense…These tropes – betrayal, treachery, threats from others, and survival – are embedded in familiar emotions – anxiety, fear, insecurity and pride" (Suny 2004:8-9). He further claims, "the national history is one of continuity, antiquity of origins, heroism and past greatness, martyrdom and sacrifice, victimization and overcoming of trauma" (Suny 2001:870).

As Tsatsos mentions, the hatreds that had been shaped through violent conflict history are temporarily controlled by dominant groups, for example the communist regime of USSR. However when authoritarian power collapses, the hate is more likely to revive (Tsatsos 2014). When previous institutional mechanisms cease to exist, this causes instability and uncertainty about what the future might bring or to use Lake and Rothchild's words – "collective fears of the future" (Lake & Rothchild 1996a:41). Posen claims that when central government collapses simultaneously losing its ability to provide security for ethnic groups, then as realists propose a *condition of anarchy* exists within a state. When groups having felt a threat, they may start to mobilize, thereby increasing ethnic security dilemmas (Posen 1993).

On the other hand, Kaufman argues that mutual ethnic hostility causes uncertainty, followed by ethnic mobilization, and then anarchy. Anarchy is made possible by people who have mutual hostility which in turn leads to anarchy. We do not know if someone is our enemy or friend before we talk to them, which is why social constructivism is important when considering anarchy and security dilemmas.

In times when ethnic hostility is high, ethnic groups are likely to demonstrate their negative emotions towards another group, and this creates good conditions for ethnic elites to mobilize people by fostering ethnic hostility using various symbols and myths. If state provides an effective policy, for example giving equal rights then the probability of ethnic riot is reduced, however if humiliation continues then it is likely to lead to ethnic violence.

3.2 Ethnic Mobilization Theories

There are various approaches to ethnic mobilization that explain ethnic conflict. Such perspectives as ancient hatreds, manipulative elites or economic rivalry seek to explain the causes of ethnic conflicts. However as Kaufman notes, discussing these theories separately actually oversimplifies the real cause of ethnic conflict. Thus, he argues in order to understand the root cause of the conflict, a theory should combine the insights from these theories (Kaufman 2001).

The *primordialists* interpret the role of emotions and the conflict potential as inherent to ethnicity (Blagojevic 2009). Kaufman notes that ancient hatreds are important because they are based on historical memories, however this approach is less efficient and academic since it is seldom supported by empirical evidence. The ancient hatreds theory is also criticized because it is not able to explain why ethnic wars emerged in some places but not in others.

For example, the second Chechen conflict was not caused by uncontrollable ancient hatreds but by manipulation of ethnic emotions.

The point with *Culturalist* approach is that they consider culture as an important factor that explains ethnic mobilization. *Culturalists* argue that the same cultural features, like religion and tradition that lead groups to make alliances, and mobilize against common threats. Primordialism`s view is close to that of Culturalists which claim that ethnicity is unchanging and the biggest cause of conflict among ethnic groups is historical memories/ancient hatreds. The reason I refer to these two theories is that before having read Modern Hatreds Theory I was convinced that these perspectives are capable of explaining the main cause of Chechen mobilization during the 1999s. Although the elements of these theories are important regarding the Chechen case, nevertheless these theories cannot explain mobilization as thoroughly as Modern Hatreds does. These approaches give a feeling of helplessness, a feeling that the conflict will be eternal and nothing can be done to resolve the issue. In the case of the Chechen conflict, these theories would describe the conflict as natural due to past grievances between Russia and Chechnya, recalling historical memories such as the Caucasus war, Stalin`s mass deportation of the free spirited mountaineers and post-Cold War conflicts. If we consider ethnic hatred as something that is ingrained in ethnic societies without looking at other factors, then this simplifies this big issue. Taking into consideration ancient hatreds as the only cause of ethnic mobilization/conflict is not sufficient. As Ganguly claims, "a proper understanding of the causes of ethnic political mobilization and conflict is crucial and we must move beyond simplistic discussions of ancient hatreds to search for more systematic explanations" (Ganguly & Taras 1998:49).

The physical and emotional consequences of ethnic wars are so huge that it is important that the global community try to understand the real causes of ethnic mobilization. Jalali and Lipset argue, "given the variety of ethnic conflicts and their dynamic and fluid qualities, no one factor can provide a comprehensive explanation" (Jalali & Lipset 1992:600). According to Lake and Rothchild, ethnicity by itself is not a cause of conflict, it only becomes dangerous when it feels uncertainty and fear about what the future might bring due to historical memories (Blimes 2006).

Instrumentalists argue that ancient hatreds oversimplify deeper issues that are the true causes of conflict. They point to the fact that in many instances ethnic groups have managed to live in peace, and hostility appears only after conflict has emerged (Blimes 2006). The theory of ancient hatreds is fixed, in other words, regarding Chechen conflict it claims that

Chechens will always hate Russians. This is not correct because people are not born with these hatreds; the hatreds are socially constructed and generated. If we consider our reality as socially constructed we also have greater possibilities for cooperation and peaceful cohabitation (Blagojevic 2009).

3.3 Modern Hatreds Theory as a Point of Departure

The opposite theory of ancient hatreds was developed by Stuart Kaufman who has succeeded in explaining the symbolic politics of ethnic war. Although there are many ethnic mobilization theories, Kaufman`s Modern Hatreds Theory seems most applicable to the post-Cold War Chechen conflict, particularly when bearing my research question in mind about mobilization of Chechens in violent conflict. Hughes (2013) claims that the conflict is considered by many to be ancient, but Kaufman rejects the ancient hatreds theory since he sees ethnic groups are changing social entities.

Most scholars have today moved away from ancient hatreds theory towards a constructivist approach where identities and differences are made in history. They are the products of human action and choice rather than dictates of nature (Suny 2004). What enables people to mobilize is the mythic reconstruction of past experiences/grievances and their symbolization. The way the leaders describe myths gives meaning and power to symbols, and due to their emotions people are likely to choose the most emotionally potent symbols. Thereby, elites have good possibilities to manipulate people`s emotions, and symbols provide the tool for such manipulation (Suny 2004).

I agree that these hatreds actually do have ancient roots since tracing back to the legends of Chechen-Russian violent relations, it is obvious to say that Chechens had enough time to generate hate throughout three centuries. However, as Kaufman notes, bitterness of such events cannot be ancient but must be renewed in each generation, thus hate becomes not only ancient but continuous (Kaufman 2001). Hatreds that groups possess are modern since each generation tends to tell modern revisions of older stories with quite different messages, so these hatreds are renewed by new mythologies. For example, the norm of seven generations in Chechen society where a person who seeks to find out the causes of his ancestor`s death will revive older stories with different messages. Kaufman questions why hatred that may have deep roots increases dramatically in the years before war, while ethnic tolerance decreases equally. Ethnic identity is another issue because ethnic nationalism is a

modern ideology and it is only in the twentieth century that groups started to distinguish themselves from others on the basis of common language, common faith and historical mythology, thus this rejects the notion that ethnic groups are ancient at all (Kaufman 2001).

Manipulative leaders

Kaufman claims that "belligerent leaders stoke mass hostility; hostile masses support belligerent leaders, and both together threaten other groups, creating a security dilemma which in turn encourages even more mass hostility and leadership belligerence" (Kaufman 1996:109). Hostile elites use ethnic symbols to evoke emotions such as resentment, fear and hatred in order to motivate their supporters to act. One advantage these leaders have is that they have the opportunity to manipulate not only the interests of their ethnic group but also the group`s identity by constructing these identities when situations are favorable (Kaufman 2001). Predatory elites are the key cause of ethnic war and genocide; their aim becomes to provoke violence as a way of maintaining power and deceiving their followers into thinking the *others* are to blame for the violence (Kaufman 2006b). For example, Lieven (1998) describes how Dudayev was known for his "crazed tyranny – this war was provoked by him to rally the people behind him and stay in power" (Lieven 1998:303). In addition, "National independence was used by Dudayev not for the idea itself, but to implement his own power" (Seely 2001:293). As Smith claims, nationalist ideologies and symbols are of great importance since they are able to mobilize and legitimize the various sub-elites who seek power through control of a given territory (Smith 1999). While ethnic leaders use symbols to manipulate their followers, these ethnic symbols only function when there is a real conflict of interest at work and intense ethnic feelings of hostility which can be raised using these symbols (Kaufman 2001).

According to Kaufman, all of the following elements must be met in order to make mobilization possible. A perceived conflict of interest encourages people mobilize, hostile feelings based on myths give stimulus to act aggressively and finally ethnic elites manipulate ethnic emotions, thus organizing and mobilizing for war (Kaufman 2001).

The myth-symbol complex is described as the core of the ethnic identity which contains memories, values, myths and symbols, thus defining who the member is and what it means to be a member. Ethnic myths often involve as Volkan (1996) describes "chosen traumas…the collective memory of a calamity that once befell a group`s ancestors, "defining the group as a victim which must seek security or revenge" (Kaufman 2006a:204). The basic function of any

political symbol is to create around conflicts of interests a myth of struggle against "hostile, alien, or subhuman forces" as a way to mobilize support (Edelman 2013:19). Accordingly, ethnic groups become very sensitive to the group`s existence and security which are seen to be dependent on the status of group symbols. Therefore these ethnic symbols are considered as one of the main reasons why people are willing to fight and die for them by following their leaders who manipulate these symbols (Kaufman 2001). In politics, "symbols are…selected and combined so as to achieve a desired state of people`s minds; to appeal to values, to refer to ideas, to stir emotions and to stimulate action" (Kaufman 2001:29). Elites who are interested in conflict evoke symbols of the nation's majesty and try to evoke antipathy to an enemy because symbols have powerful emotional effect on people`s minds. In Chechen mythology, for example the meaning of the Caucasus war is the martyrdom of Chechen people for their independence and honor against the tsarist Russian troops. Therefore, the Caucasus war is a symbol referring to the myth of Chechen martyrdom which in turn evokes different emotions among Chechens such as pride or grievances associated with the myth.

Ethnic emotions

As cited in Kaufman`s work, Horowitz claims that ethnic violence is driven by emotions such as fear of group extinction or as he shows, "the sources of ethnic conflict reside, above all, in the struggle for relative group worth" (Kaufman 2006b:52). The fear of group extinction is believed to be based on myths and history of domination by another group whereby this fear leads to feeling of hostility and then to group violence. Myths of shared historical memories, heroes, common kinship as well as symbols that evoke these myths have great emotional impact. Identity, autonomy, territory and dignity are believed to be the driving forces when ethnic myth inspires the ethnic groups by feeding them like an "explosive charge" (Smith 1999). If these attributes become a subject of threat then this will generate a conflict of interest which in turn serves as a facilitator for mobilization (Kaufman 2001). For political goals, the truth or falsity of the myth is irrelevant, the important thing that affects politics is less the events themselves but mythologies around them.

Young notes that the mythology and symbols are important aspects in order to make mobilization possible (Kaufman 2001). If people`s negative emotions such as anger and aggression towards a certain group are justified, this leads one to accuse another group, and the likelihood of mobilization increases. As Suny (2004) claims, emotions are key to human motivation and these emotions give us stimulus to action; they are fundamental to self-identification, distinguishing "them" and "us." These emotions facilitate the social bonds that

make groups or nations, that is why they are considered as powerful tools that help to explain why people do what they do politically (Suny 2004). Kaufman also emphasizes that people are more prone to mobilize for war only if ethnic *myth-symbol complex* justifies animosity towards other group. Thereby, the myth justifies hostility when a certain ethnicity seeks to defend their territory (considered as their homeland) and establish their political autonomy.

Ethnic fears

Ethnicity "embodies an element of emotional intensity that can be readily aroused when the group`s interests are thought to be at stake" (Smith 1986:3). The key factor that causes conflict escalation to war is when an ethnic group starts to fear about their insecurity due to historical grievances, and such fears may be exaggerated by emotions or "fear of the future, living through the past" (Suny 2004:29). The sources of these fears are historical memories or renewed stories told by generations in myth-symbol complex, in other words, the level of these fears depends on how historians or elites describe the group`s past victimization. According to Petersen, fear prepares the individual to satisfy safety concerns, hatred prepares to act on historical grievance while resentment prepares the individual to address status/self-esteem discrepancies (Petersen 2002). If these fears become dominant among ethnic members, then this is likely to motivate them to resort to violence in self-defense. As a result of this, risk-aversion becomes enough to motivate violent actions.

As Lake and Rothchild mention, "…Political memories, myths and emotions magnify ethnic fears which in turn mobilize groups…distrust and suspicion can explode into murderous violence" (Suny 2004:23). This is the best way for political leaders to use ethnic fears since elites can justify their actions by claiming that it is in their nation`s interest to launch violent war against *others* in order to avoid their group extinction. As Maskhadov said before the second Chechen war, *"if we fear our common enemy, we will be able to stay against them, we realize what happened to us three years ago, the same atrocities are waiting us, if we do not unite and fight"* (From the case study).

Ethnic fears play a major role in ethnic wars because it is usually only possible to mobilize people when they encounter some threat. Hence, rather than pursuing gains, they are much more concerned to avoid loss (Kaufman 2001). In order to defend themselves (their clans/families/homeland) the Chechens are likely to mobilize, and of course their cultural aspect and warrior ethos will have its impact on mobilization. However, Kaufman adds, if any of the following points is absent, like elites avoiding symbolic appeals or people resisting

such appeals, or if the situation does not cause a security dilemma then war can be avoided (Kaufman 2001).

Summarizing the symbolic politics, this is a useful theory which helps to understand how Chechen mobilization was achieved. Myths that justify ethnic hostility, fear of group extinction and the opportunity to mobilize are three preconditions which must be met in order to make mobilization possible.

Now I will look at other factors that facilitate Chechen mobilization. The symbolic aspects from Kaufman`s theory of Modern Hatreds as well as social norms and practices will guide this study of the second Chechen conflict since I believe the Chechen cultural aspect should be taken more seriously in addition to symbols and myths.

3.4 The Role of Chechen Culture in Mobilization

Since Kaufman describes ethnic groups as social entities, when analyzing social causes of mobilization society itself may play an important role in mobilizing people because it preserves cultural values that facilitate the mobilization process. Culture is a crucial element in all things man does, and it may become one of the main driving factors of political or social mobilization and "Deep culture is the bedrock of social action" (Johnston 2008:331). Our attitudes towards the world, how we formulate ideas about the world and how we respond to different issues depends on our beliefs, customs and traditions.

The Chechens are different from other nations because of their adherence to the clan system. The clan and tukkhum systems were established because of the perpetual feeling of danger when they always had to protect themselves against a common enemy. The obligation to collective defense and existing along blood and territorial lines made them easier to mobilize.

Being an ethnic Chechen, every person has an obligation to protect the interests of their clans and alliances. Thus, mobilization becomes kind of mandatory activity in case of danger. Looking at history, starting from 13th century Chechens have always had to protect their land against foreign colonizers – the Mongols and then the eternal struggle for independence against Russian aggression. These centuries of violence have shaped their character, militancy, independence and bravery that are even noticed in Russian literature at the time of Caucasian war in the 19th century (Yevsyukova 1995). Such a mindset can also

facilitate the mobilization process when views on honor and freedom kind of shape their world.

While many Chechens consider Russia to be a constant enemy, the one who took their rights that are given by Allah, the Chechen resistance can be explained as not just protection of their land and people, but also their traditional culture (honor). In times of war this can be employed effectively in order to justify their actions and then mobilize people for war. Seeking to protect the honor of one`s clan or family gives a special right and duty to react to Russians with violence. Atrocities such as the Caucasus War, the 1944 deportations, first and second Chechen wars, "mopping up" operations that included kidnappings, murders, tortures and rape will be inserted into the collective memory. Such humiliation is not accepted among Chechens because of strong attitudes towards their traditional culture, honor and blood feud. It is therefore obvious that many Chechens will pursue revenge for those atrocities that had been perpetrated by Russian forces. The possibility of mobilization will increase in order to avoid the risk of humiliation and defeat, thus violence can be portrayed as a duty against Russian aggression. When Chechens feel themselves threatened by other groups, they tend to mobilize in terms of their ethnic identity since this provides a source of protection and secured environment. From this we can see how traditional culture might influence the Chechen mobilization.

The Chechen blood feud practice enables people to take revenge, thereby for each person that had been killed there might be ten relatives who mobilize and fight against the offenders. If someone gets killed from family/clan, traditional culture can be used as a legitimizing factor for mobilization. Realizing huge rebel, civilian and loved ones casualties from the first Chechen war, many Chechens felt that the blood revenge is still waiting to be exacted. After the first war, there were many fighters who were motivated to fight not because of ideology (Wahhabism) but due to personal missions in the form of duty to avenge the honor of family.

The period from 1996 to 1999 can be called a mobilizing period, and this was implemented by manipulating ethnic emotions using symbols. I call these cultural elements (blood revenge; social organization) as "frozen" since against Russian aggression for example, they are likely to start functioning more intensely with the help of Chechen elites who invoke myths and symbols whereby "frozen elements" start to move in parallel with symbolic politics.

Family is everything for Chechens, and the achievements and shortcomings of a family member will impact other members of the family. Good or negative actions made by one person will represent how others see the family and the teip as a whole, while a desire not to "lose face" play an important role. Having relatives or close friends mobilize against existential threat most likely will spillover to other relatives. It becomes easier to be involved in mobilization when your close friends or relatives seem to accept that the goal of these activities is revenge of Chechen sufferings that results from three centuries of violent conflict. Moreover, if the group members accept violence as a rational strategy, this is likely to become acceptable for new entrants who engage in violence.

There is also another important cultural norm within Chechen society called *yah* which describes the Chechen family traditions as competition-oriented. From early ages family elders/parents try to convince their children that they should have *yah*, or in other words, be better than everyone else. *Yah* is considered to be the main virtue of every Chechen man: *"Gain the deepest possible insight into yourself and your ancestry. Retain your yah. Never lose decency or dignity…you are mortal. But never be fearful of your physical death. The only thing to be really feared is life without decency, dignity, spirit, faith and yah. He who loses them loses his freedom as well…"* (Isaev 2007). The centuries of violence have influenced the Chechen character in a way so that clans/families often try to prove their social status through displays of courage because the idea of the fearless hero is regarded as the highest symbol. For example, Chechens praise their heroes so much that such symbolic heroes, as Imam Shamil and Shaikh Mansour are also likely to produce cohesion and solidarity against Russia.

A Chechen man with *nokhchalla* is ready to rather die than lose honor. Having *yah* and warrior ethos forces any man with *nokhchalla* to pursue revenge against Russian offenders. When it comes to resistance, Chechnya is somewhat divided between people who live in the lowlands and those who reside deep in the mountains (mountaineers of the highlands). Perhaps it is due to geography that those who reside in the mountains have historically been more resistant, independent-minded and hostile towards Russian colonizers than those who live in the lowlands. Even when Chechnya did fall under colonizer rule, Russian rule had no complete power in the highlands, which confirms the power of the clans that remained self-governing (Cozort 2011).

The cultural aspect is also likely to have great impact on Chechen mobilization. The feeling of competitiveness/*yah*, the liability to protect the clan/family honor and attempts to create an image of fearless hero seem to be ingrained in Chechens which in turn seems to

increase the likelihood of mobilization. The reputation of the clan much depends on the past memories of success/victory or defeat which respectively tend to increase or decrease its standing (Souleimanov 2003). Most Chechens are described as having irrational courage; their sense of human dignity and fear of shame are so highly ingrained that they would rather die than "lose face" and honor. Freedom and honor are of great importance among mountaineers of Chechnya. As mentioned before, Chechens are traditionally considered to be a martial-oriented society, for whom fighting is linked to the sense of honor and prestige. Handling weapons is rooted in the code of honor where this is widely practiced because it is regarded as one of the components of manhood (Zurcher 2007).

Thus, although culture strongly influences Chechen society, cultural norms and practices alone cannot be considered the source of conflict. If symbolic politics were absent there would not be conflict. Chechens lived in peace with Russia (due to effective communist policy) before Dudayev and other military elites came into power in the beginning of 1990s.

CHAPTER 4

4.1 Method and Sources

This study employs qualitative research methods in data collection and analysis. Qualitative research methods were preferred since they enable the researcher to look at a broad range of interconnected processes and realities which have been socially constructed in the subject of interest (Alan 2008). The qualitative case study I used served as a guide to data collection and data analysis, and it provided a deeper understanding of how Chechen leadership talked and mobilized groups for war. Most of the primary and secondary data that I found was given either in Chechen or Russian languages. Therefore, it required some time and effort to translate all these data into English.

Qualitative strategy allows one to generate data in words and statements rather than in numbers and statistics as used by quantitative research. In other words, such strategy focuses on the meanings of social interactions and processes which results in creating the social reality. Use of YouTube videos where the Chechen elite give interviews and invoke for war by using different symbols and myths allowed me to apply primary data in my analysis. Dictated by my research questions and the theory framework I decided to examine mass-media (YouTube videos) and text-based content by employing discourse analysis. Unfortunately, some of those YouTube videos do not provide information about the author of the video that is why I put sometimes YouTube itself.

For this thesis I adopted the epistemological position of interpretivism because it allows the researcher to understand the social world of participants through their own interpretation (Alan 2008). According to Berg and Lune, the main belief of interpretivism is that realities are constructed through the participant`s experiences or views of their social world thus allowing the researcher to make conclusions about the subject being studied (Berg and Lune 2012).

My choice of research method has been made largely by the main research question and the theory that constructs this study. My focus in the thesis is to analyze and understand how the Chechen elite managed to mobilize people by invoking emotion-laden ethnic symbols, thus I feel in order to get this result we must study language first since language

itself is seen to be formative of reality. According to the structuralist and poststructuralist linguistic philosophers, our access to reality is always through language. Language allows for creation of representations of reality which in turn contribute to constructing reality. Of course reality itself does exist, physical objects also exist, but they only gain meaning through discourse (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002). Thus, this project will study the speeches and talks (written and spoken) that have been made by various military leaders including President Aslan Maskhadov. The speeches (symbols/myths) that were aiming to mobilize people against Russian rule will be analyzed by doing discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is considered as a general term for a number of approaches to analyze written, vocal or sign language use and this approach builds on the assumption that social reality is produced through language. As Potter (1996) observes, "The world...is constituted in one way or another as people talk it, write it and argue it" (Bryman 2012:34). This method enables us to learn how (written/spoken) speeches and talks express certain worldviews, and in turn, shape reality. The method is part of a qualitative research strategy, which helps to describe and interpret the nature of things like meanings, motivations, empathy, emotions and characteristics. Discourse theory *"aims at an understanding of the social as a discursive construction whereby, in principle, all social phenomena can be analyzed using discourse analytical tools"* (Bryman 2012:530). Kaufman`s theory states that ethnic communities are not fixed but subject to change due to symbols and language.

This type of analysis does not seek to reveal the motivations behind the text or choice of words and it provides some techniques for carrying out qualitative analysis of texts to disclose how this happens. In this study, the goal was not to try to get behind the text, or seek to find out what the Chechen elite really think and mean when they invoke for violent conflict.

In addition to primary data, I will also use secondary data such as books, newspapers, articles and webpages written by various Chechen, Russian and Western scholars. Using the material of Chechen scholars, I hope to see different point of views, not just how Western or Russian scholars think but also how Chechen scientists explain their views who have experienced violent actions.

5.1 The First Chechen War (1994-1996)

Before getting into the interwar period and the second Chechen war, I will start with the outbreak of the first war in 1994 since I believe that the second conflict was a continuation of the first war. I am going to do discourse analysis of the myths and symbols that had been used mostly by President Dudayev. Thus, the elements of Modern Hatreds and cultural/social practices will be used in order to explain how Chechens are being mobilized. Although Dudayev was killed in 1996 before the second Chechen war, I will focus on his mobilizing efforts during the first war since his speeches, symbols and myths have had a great impact on Chechen mobilization before the second conflict. Many Chechen leaders during the second war used to start their conversation stating *"...As our first president Dudayev said...this or that..."*

Background

President Dzhokhar Dudayev declared independence from Russia in November 1991 after he and his supporters successfully managed to seize power. This was the time when many republics declared independence from the USSR. In order to receive as much support as possible for his struggle against Gorbachev, Yeltzin encouraged local elites to "take all the sovereignty you can swallow" (Lapidus 1998:12). However, Yeltzin was unwilling to accept the Chechen sovereignty, and declared a state of emergency in Chechnya.

In 1994 at the 50th anniversary of the mass Chechen deportation, Dudayev pronounced a historical phrase: "We will not mourn, we will not forget and we will not forgive!" By saying this, Dudayev gave a clear signal that Chechens are ready to fight for all those injustices that were implemented by Russian rule against Chechen people. During the 1990s, General Dudayev succeeded in mobilizing people by manipulating their emotions. This success was made possible due to all of the preconditions that have been described by Kaufman. Dudayev portrayed Russia as without a human face, violent and brutal. By giving examples of what the Russian empire has done to other nations with its communist ideology,

Dudayev thus described myths that justified ethnic hostility. According to Dudayev and other commanders of the Chechen resistance, the Chechens have never formally submitted to Russia and never signed any document that proves surrender or accession, therefore they argued that they had a legal and moral right to independence (Lieven 1998).

Ten months after the anniversary, Moscow sent thousands of military troops to Grozny backed by tanks and aircraft aiming to establish a constitutional order in Chechnya. The period from 1994-1996 can be described as a bloody period where Russian troops and Chechen rebels were involved in brutal war. The consequences of this war were huge not only on general damage within Chechnya, but also resulted in mass casualties among civil population. According to the Russia`s Human Rights Commissioner Sergey Kovalev, only in Grozny 24,000 civilians were killed while in general, human casualties are estimated at up to 100,000 dead, and possibly over 200,000 injured, most of which were civilians. Russian troops executed so-called "mopping up" operations that has led to massive looting, illegal detainment, torture, murders and rape across several villages and towns.

The first war ceased when the Khasavyurt peace agreement was signed in 1996. In 1997 the Moscow Peace Treaty was signed by the Russian president Boris Yeltsin and the newly elected president of Chechnya Aslan Maskhadov. The treaty stated that all possible conflict situations in the future between Chechnya and Russia will be resolved only by peaceful measures. The sides agreed to reject "forever" the use of force against each other and build stable bilateral relations based on the "norms of international law" (Fuller 2007).

The outcome of the first war was a humiliating defeat for the Russian troops. While the Khasavyrt agreement gave Chechnya de facto independence, the decision regarding Chechnya`s status was postponed for five years (Wilhelmsen 2005). A security dilemma requires a de facto situation of anarchy which increases the possibility of mobilization.

Case Analysis

On the 23rd of February 1994 at the opening of the memorial to the memory of those who died on 23rd February 1944 (50 years ago) Dudayev made this speech to the Chechen people just 10 months before the outbreak of the first Chechen war:

"On this hard day (due to the deportation memory) through evil and violence, lies and deceit, the tragedy reached the Chechen nation who lost 600,000 sons and daughters within three years (1944-1946). The centuries-old Chechen struggle for life and the right to this land

stimulated the Russian colonizer to perpetrate such atrocity against humanity. Not only our people, but also other nations with spirituality, morality, culture and history who are different from barbaric imperial evil and violence were subjected to the most terrible genocide in the world…the best sons of Polish army, tens of thousands had been shot (Katyn massacre)…we can see today that after the deportation, our standing stones on the graves were used for pavements, curb, house foundations, and even for pigsty…we went through hell, lies and violence, evil and deceit, violence in the guise of communism…this horrible ideology has murdered millions of people around the world…nothing has changed today, the Russian Empire is not willing to change…the killing of people still continues…Baltic states, Moldova, Almaty, Tajikistan, Tbilisi, Armenia, Abkhazia, Ossetia, Ingushetia…the violence is perpetrated every day and every hour against innocent people…they want us to have sorrows every time…I don`t agree with this...there is no power, no weapon, no army in this world which can defeat spirit…this proved Afghanistan. Throughout 10 years, the strongest army in the world (the Soviet power) did not manage to defeat the Afghan people because they had spirit...Vietnam, Iraq…the only people who survive in this world are those who are strong in spirit...Caucasus need to grasp that the only way to avoid annihilation and humiliation is the unity of the Caucasus"[10] ([Ichkeria.de 2013](#)).

We see from this appeal how Dudayev manipulated ethnic emotions. Before the first war, Dudayev managed to mobilize hostile masses by referring to ethnic symbols and myths which were directed against Russian rule. From the words above we see how he portrays Russian aggression and its consequences not just for the Chechens but for millions around the world. The symbol of deportation depicts the myths of the suffering Chechens who lost more than half a million people during this violent exile. Knowing the centuries-old Chechen struggle for independence and their cultural warrior ethos, Dudayev draws on examples of Afghanistan who managed to resist the strongest power in the world just because they had spirit. This is a smart way of mobilizing; he instrumentalizes and makes use of the Chechen`s cultural identity and *yah*. While providing the examples of different states and republics that had been suffering from the Russian empire, he gives space for the myths that justify ethnic hostility against Russia. As Kaufman argues, people are likely to mobilize if ethnic myth-symbol complex justifies animosity towards other group ([Kaufman 2001](#)). By mentioning "The centuries-old struggle against colonizers," Dudayev appeals to the symbol of the

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[10] My translation from Russian.

nation`s sufferings. This is comparable to Avtorkhanov`s words, who stated that the main reason for deportation 1944 was "the centuries-old struggle of freedom loving people."

In Chechen mythology, the meaning of mass deportation 1944 is the martyrdom of Chechen people against Russian aggression. The symbol of deportation therefore generates negative grievances associated with the myth. The exile in Central Asia left deep wounds and made a new generation of Chechens, whose grandparents had died fifty years ago. This in turn generated a new wave of negative historical memories (Gall & De Waal 1997).

Considering the first Chechen conflict, Avtorkhanov claimed that "What is happening now in Chechnya is a revolt by the children in revenge for the deaths of their fathers and mothers in the hellish conditions of the deportations in distant, cold and hungry Kazakhstan and Kirgizia. It is a protest by the whole people against the continuing supremacy of the old power structures in Chechnya" (Gall & De Waal 1997:77). This suggests that emotional symbols generate effective mobilization tools, especially when a certain ethnic group have the blood revenge and *seven generations* norms within their culture. This is a good way for chauvinist elites to manipulate ethnic emotions while understanding that people will take revenge for their parents and relatives. According to Kaufman, chauvinist politics become possible when hostile myths and attitudes are present, and these attitudes become more hostile due to symbolic appeals to the myths that evoke emotions. Feelings of insecurity stimulate antipathies towards another group, which in turn causes a security dilemma. Extremist elites use all possible resources including mass media to manipulate ethnic symbols. This is performed by reminding citizens of past horrible events (for example, mass deportations, destruction of villages and violent genocide against people). Use of the media is how elites identify enemies to the group by evoking myths to justify ethnic hostility and violence against another group, moreover, this creates an opportunity to highlight the "threats" they pose. The motives for violence can be a result of perceived threat of group extinction, historical memories can be recast as current threats, thus concluding that violence is the only alternative left that would defend the group survival (Kaufman 2001).

When in June 1995 a journalist asked Dudayev

"How do you (Chechens) manage to hold out against the strong Russian military troops"?

Dudayev answered,

"The secret lies in the 300 years the Chechens have been fighting Russia`s evil and violence. It is hard to describe all the violence that is being waged today and which a normal person cannot understand: how is it possible for a company of soldiers to rape one woman? How is it possible to use all the heavy weapon against living unprotected people, at your own people?" (Baranova 1995).

As noted earlier, what happens to the woman that is a disgrace for a Chechen man since inability or unwillingness to protect the honor of women is described as not being a man at all. In such case, not only one person but the honor of the entire clan is at stake (Souleimanov 2003). Thus, we can see how this can affect the entire clan due to such horrible situations as raping a woman which would definitely be one of the factors that could explain the mobilization against Russian brutality.

Dudayev also tried to increase nationalist sentiment by manipulating Vainakhs`s cultural aspect. After he declared independence in 1991 he announced,

"There is a single and indivisible Vainakh people with a place of honor for each of its five member-nationalities: Chechen, Ingush, Ortskhoy, Melkhistin, and Akkin[11]. Today, history gives us a unique chance to establish that fact by creating a single Vainakh statehood" (Cozort 2011:56).

Incorporating all these clans into one Chechen entity would give Dudayev more support and thus better mobilization possibilities. By emphasizing the indivisibility of Chechens who share common historical memories, he demonstrates how it is important to unite different communities into one. It is a type of interlinkage of the social norms within Chechen society and the leader who appeals to these social norms in his talk that makes the mobilization possible.

In 1995, Dzhokhar Dudayev gave a speech to an Estonian film group EXITFILM where he clearly describes myths and symbols that have motivated the Chechens to take up arms against Russian rule.

- ***Is it worth the enormous number of victims and destruction to live in an independent state?***

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[11] In the past, these groups (Ortskhoy, Melkhitsin and Akkin) were considered as separate clans, but later on they gained much stronger standing among the Chechens.

"Freedom and independence mean either life or death for us. It would be possible for one nation to live among other nations in a state, where some of your rights were protected, with other states or nations keeping their promise to you. Russia never sticks to any commitments to any peoples or states. It is like living in a cage together with a bear and being on friendly terms with it, stretch out your hand to that beast and be happy. That is Russia…We have gone through hell on earth. Demolition…all that force… prepared for four years by the general headquarters, special services. Have a look at the document! What a complete destruction of a nation, deportation of a whole nation prepared by Russia. For 4 years they built towns for the deported. Special towns with barracks reserved for the Chechens" (EXITFILM 1995).

During the 1989-90s the Chechens started to recognize themselves as a nation. Dudayev complains that Chechens live in a country where their rights are not protected. It creates the sense of humiliation that increases collective anger and reminds people about deportations for example, which are the most emotive symbol in Chechen collective memory. Dudayev used the symbol of deportation as the touchstone of his political ideology and he also raised the fear that Russia was planning to deport the Chechens again (Gall & De Waal 1997). In 1994, Yandarbiev, a Chechen warlord, claimed that such violent deportation was one reason why Russia could never be trusted. He added, "Over the last two or three hundred years we have always acted on the assumption that Russia is acting out of a wish to occupy Chechnya and expel the Chechen people from its territory" (Gall & De Waal 1997:75). Thus, we see how historical memories and symbols of deportation have influenced the Chechens throughout the centuries. In order to avoid loss and humiliation, ethnic fears about possible future deportations forced many Chechens to mobilize against Russian threat.

The Estonian interview continues as follows:

- ***Where were those places for possible deportation?***

"Saratov, Orenburg, Volgograd. About a couple of years ago, the dispersed Chechens were offered to go to the prepared places away from the present locations. Live and work there. I knew about the plans. Chernomyrdin (in 1995 - Russian prime minister) signed the project of evacuation, in fact, this was the deportation plan, and paragraph "8" states – "without right to return"…then will come the rockets, bombs, attacks, and the Chechens will be resettled, will be "taken away from the bomb attacks"…we know this kind of propaganda. They did and continue their violent policy against whole nation. Throughout the history, whenever having hard times, Russia has fled into signing treaties, but has never kept its word and has no

intentions to. When it feels strong enough, it starts again by cutting off the weakest. That is Russia – the evil empire which shows its rapacity, greediness, mercilessness, poor mentality and immorality to Chechens" (<u>EXITFILM 1995</u>).

- ***The Chechens have struggled for freedom for 300 years. What is the secret of recalcitrance of the Chechens?***

"The Chechen people are not born for slavery. They are not doomed to slavery by nature or God, and even dirty, hideous policy can`t change it. What self-respectable people would stand such violation? Mental, moral and natural capacity does not allow the Chechens as an ethnic group to be slaves" (<u>EXITFILM 1995</u>).

Here again, Dudayev give a clear signal that Russians cannot be trusted since they never stick to any commitments. He also says that Russian forces were planning to deport the Chechen nation again before the first war. As Kaufman claims, a key factor that causes conflict to escalate to war is when an ethnic group starts to fear for their security due to historical memories, so it is in the group`s interest to wage war against *others* (Russians) in order to avoid their group extinction (<u>Kaufman 2001</u>). The initial symbolic process started in early 1990s when Dudayev´s appeals were directed to increase hostility and hatreds against Russian rule. Knowing the history of Chechen-Russian violent relations and Chechen culture, he knew that these hostilities would be justified by the myths, and mostly it is these myths and symbols that have been used by Chechen elites before and during the second war, but this time with renewed messages.

In March 1996 before the first war was over, another Chechen warlord named Shamil Basaev explained clearly his intentions in an interview to a Russian journalist:

"After the liberation of Chechnya, some of the other North Caucasian republics will follow its example. We…shall naturally be showing full solidarity with them and try to put pressure on the Kremlin. I am sure that in the end, a North Caucasian confederation will be established as a united bloc confronting the Russian Empire" (<u>Sagramoso 2007:697</u>).

An interesting fact is that this interview was taken in 1996 and in August 1999 Basaev and his followers invaded Dagestan which has led to the outbreak of the second war. In other words, knowing the history of Russian-Caucasus relations, perhaps Basaev was hoping that the liberation of Chechnya would motivate other republic`s leaders to take their grievances against Russian rule, thus destabilizing the situation in the North Caucasus. Moreover, we can

see that the war was not going to end in 1996 since the interest was in the perpetuation of the conflict aiming to liberate the whole Caucasus from Russia.

5.2 An Interwar Period of Mobilization

After two years of bloody war came the Khasavyurt peace agreement, and while many believed this would bring peace, it did not succeed because the internal situation in Chechnya was disastrous. After Russian troops left Chechnya, the situation could be described as simply an absence of war with Russians while the struggle for power and resources continued among Chechen elites (entrepreneurs of violence).

The economy and infrastructure were destroyed and the consequences of this conflict were tremendous which resulted in the outbreak of organized crime and widespread lawlessness including kidnappings, torture and murders. Russia promised aid from their federal budget which never came. This situation became a "perfect" opportunity for entrepreneurs of violence to appear who aimed to transform the war from sorrow to a rational economic activity.

Maskhadov was legally elected president, but such warlords as Shamil Basaev, Khattab, Salman Raduev and other warlords divided Chechnya into two camps, those who were mobilizing for the second military campaign and those who wanted peace. Maskhadov simply did not manage to consolidate power and keep the region in control. Wahhabism became so powerful that it undermined Maskhadov`s capabilities. Many Chechens consider Maskhadov weak since he did not stop the Wahhabis movement in Chechnya that ultimately lead to a bloody war with Russia. Basaev and other field commanders were gathering power by recruiting new young Chechens, and many of those rebels had made an alliance with Basaev since he was considered the most powerful warlord in Chechnya. Although before the first war Basaev`s main goal and motivation for fighting was Chechen independence, by the end of the first war he claimed, *"I was the first to introduce Sharia courts on Chechen territory…and we see ourselves as warriors of Islam and therefore do not fear death"* (Wilhelmsen 2005:37). The goal of these military groups, as they argued, was to kick the Russians out of the entire North Caucasus in order to liberate and unite Dagestan with Chechnya and establish an Islamic republic.

Khattab, Baraev, Basaev, Raduev and many other entrepreneurs of violence were more interested in extending an economy of war than in establishing statehood (Zurcher 2007). As

Bakonyi and Stuvøy (2005) note in their article, looking at economic approach to conflict, war creates a perfect condition for elites to earn money, and represents an alternative form of social order (Bakonyi & Stuvøy 2005). This is true, because during 1996-1998, in seeking to maintain their powerful positions, Chechen elites mobilized groups while giving them opportunity to execute criminal activities (kidnappings, torture, robberies) thereby making such violence a rational survival strategy.

The violence process was also accelerated due to fragile state authority and institutions that were replaced by criminal ones. The warlords succeeded in establishing new business activities that included armed crime and organized kidnappings. They aimed to receive huge amounts of money, and this resulted in competition among them for power and profits. Maskhadov failed to put the warlords under control, as well he did not manage to control huge revenues that were coming from the shadow economy and oil sale. As a result of this, Chechnya was considered a failed state where the warlords did not obey their president, thus giving a clear signal that they had no interest in stability and statehood.

Khattab – Saudi Arabian born and some other Arabian fighters were fighting along with Chechens and this period is called "the ideological transformation of the conflict" from Nationalism to Jihad (Hughes 2013;Wilhelmsen 2005). Foreign fighters are considered another source of violence; they do not directly create mass hostility but offer material assistance to one side. These "assistants" succeeded in providing money and advice by seeking to aid hostile elites to mobilize politically and promote ethnic hostility. Several Chechen warlords and politicians turned to Wahhabism as a consequence of the first Chechen conflict. During this period, the religious aspect was used as one of the major sources to mobilize people and groups against Russian rule. As King notes, the outcome of the first Chechen war is a radicalized younger Chechen generation, divergence of military and political elites, and acceptance of violence as a rational economic activity that could provide a livelihood (King 2008). Islamic rebels such as al-Khattab and Basaev have established training camps in Chechnya thus creating good conditions for recruitment and mobilization.

The impact of religion on Chechen groups was quite high prior to the second war since religion has always been considered seriously within Chechen society. As noted earlier, Sheikh Mansur and Imam Shamil fought for independence and religion against tsarist troops, and these symbols of the Caucasus War have had a great impact on Chechen mobilization before the second conflict. While the Chechen clan system implies that the members of the *teip*/clan have to be cohesive, Islam offers a strong element of social cohesion, social

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solidarity and mutual material support which in turn makes it more attractive for new rebels. Thereby, providing such common identity in religious, social and political spheres increases the likelihood of mobilization against common enemy if it is needed.

A centuries old struggle for independence was now followed by religious war against "infidels." This can be proved by describing the changes that had been made in the Chechen constitution by the militants headed by Aslan Maskhadov during an extended meeting of the State Defense Committee in the summer of 2002. A provision was included into Article (1) which states that "Chechnya is an Islamic state, and all laws in force in its territory are derived from the Koran and the Sunna" (Falkowski 2007:42).

An interwar period with its instability and uncertainty gave good conditions for elites to manipulate ethnic emotions and mobilize people for their own political goals. This was done by using ethnic differences and relying on negative historical memories which in turn caused an inter-ethnic security dilemma.

During the memorial ceremony on the 54th anniversary that was held in Grozny after the first Chechen war (February 23rd 1998), Maskhadov surrounded by other field commanders like Basaev said the following, *"Our people wanted to live in freedom…and because we refused…to be subject to Russian customs…we were deported to the coldest place on earth – Siberia"* (YouTube 2005). Again we see how Chechen elites used ethnic symbols. Makhadov and other Chechen leaders were successful when they referred to myths that in turn justified ethnic hostility. Telling the stories about deportations, humiliation and genocide was a useful tool for mobilization. By creating a myth of struggle and presenting others as hostile and alien, the leaders were able to mobilize more groups against Russia. Before the second Chechen war (as before the first war) group fears and myths that justified hostility were strong, which has led to powerfully hostile attitudes. As Chechen scientist Osmaev claims, in the period between the two Chechen wars, the Ichkerian[12] mass media was involved not only in active promotion of negative emotional stereotypes towards Russian rule, but also actively created new myths. The Ichkeriyan mass media (TV and newspapers) presented Russia and Russians as enemies which in turn facilitated the ideological preparation for war (Osmaev 2014).

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[12] Unrecognized secessionist government of the Chechen Republic

Many consider the time between 1996 and 1999 as a peace time, but I call it "three years of Chechen mobilization." The conflict was over only on paper, but not in reality and the second Chechen war was just a continuation of the first conflict.

As Saudi Arabian born Chechen fighter Khattab said to the "Trud" newspaper correspondent (1998), cited in Khasbulatov`s book,

"The war is not over!"… "those who think the war is over, I would say they are mistaken. Not just once happened in the history of mountaineers- Muslims when Kafirs concluded a truce and violated it afterwards. There are lot of examples of such violations from the past Russo-Chechen war 1994-1996, armistice and defeat of the Dargo village (in the mountains of Ichkeriya), armistice and bombing of the Maxkety village – there are hundreds of such facts, and this shows the principles and rules on how Russian kafirs perform their politics. I fought against Russian troops that were aiming to kill Muslims in Chechnya and I even did not touch the Chechen opposition since there might be errant and those who needed money for their families"[13] (Khasbulatov 2003:150).

From the interview above we can see how Khattab manipulated emotions using his knowledge the history of animosity. An interesting fact is that the interview was taken in 1998, just a year before the second conflict escalation. Even though "peace" is concluded, giving the examples of the armistice violations, Khattab nevertheless gives a signal that Russian rule cannot be trusted, in other words it provides a stimulus for many Chechens to mobilize and attack the Russian force before Russians attack them. This is a good way to manipulate ethnic fears of group extinction.

In the second part of his speech, realizing the Chechen attitude to religion, he explains his obligation to protect his Muslim brothers from infidels simultaneously not touching the Chechen opposition. This in turn would create associations of a man that came to Chechnya to save the Chechens from a common enemy, not even distinguishing between the Chechen opposition and those who are against Moscow`s rule. I believe this is a good way of encouraging mobilization by manipulating ethnic identity.

Three years after the Khasavyurt agreement was signed, Basaev, Khattab and their followers (approximately 2000 militants) launched an invasion into Dagestan. Thinking logically, it seems like it is impossible to start a new war against Russia since after the first

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[13] My translation from Russian.

conflict the Chechens were exhausted and tired. The first conflict resulted in massive physical, political and economic casualties, nevertheless this fatigue did not prevent the Chechens from taking up guns against Russia. This is the time when the second Chechen war started. In addition to this, the Chechen fighters had been accused of bomb explosions in Moscow and other Russian cities in September 1999, although according to some critics no proof has been shown concerning their involvement (Wilhelmsen 2014). The discourse against Chechens and Chechen rebels did not exist as tense as it did during the second war.[14] This was a perfect strategic moment for Russia to act decisively since these bomb explosions were an ideal pretext to mobilize Russian`s around an enemy image of the Chechens.

During the Dagestan invasion, Basaev noted

"What is going on in Dagestan is a mighty "Jihad," a holy war to expel the infidels from an Islamic land, which has been in the Islamic fold for thirteen centuries…We are fighting for the proclamation of an Islamic republic and the establishment of a greater Chechen empire in Chechnya, Dagestan and later also Ingushetia" (Sagramoso 2007:697).

From this statement we can see how Chechen elites seek to influence people's minds by referring to the Caucasus history and religion. Basaev thus appeals to the symbol of Caucasus war which reminds the Chechen struggle and genocide. He demonstrates the importance of protecting Islam which "has been in the Islamic fold for thirteen centuries," moreover knowing the people`s attitude towards Islam creates good conditions for mobilization by showing the necessity of uniting the neighboring republics into one Islamic state. During this time, many Chechens had been influenced by a new ideology of Wahhabism that came from abroad. The new ideology had a great impact on many rebels which in turn facilitated the mobilization process. One of the Chechen leaders – Yandarbiev promoted the establishment of an Islamic state in Chechnya after the first war, and he argued that the fight against infidels is a Muslim`s duty (Wilhelmsen 2005).

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[14] This moment of making war acceptable and legitimate is very good described by Julie Wilhelmsen from Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI, Oslo) in her book (2014) "How war becomes acceptable." Re-phrasing of Chechnya.

5.3 The Second Chechen War 1999

"When people disappear from their families and no one will say where they are located, and then their relatives find their bodies, this gives birth to a minimum of ten new rebels" –
Akhmad Kadyrov (Cozort 2011:63).

Background

The second Russian invasion into Chechnya was much larger in scope than in 1994, approximately 90,000 military troops crossed the territory aiming to destroy terrorist bases but apparently the real motive behind this invasion was to bring Chechnya back into Russian sovereignty.

Humiliation, torture, rape and cleansing operations that were implemented by Russian military forces were ordinary practices in Chechnya during the second conflict. Such horrible atrocities caused massive public discontent and protests. These events has generated new myths about Russian rule, and these atrocities will be remembered among Chechens. Even Akhmad Kadyrov – the head of Administration of Chechnya claimed that if such atrocities continue it will lead to public outrage. Thus he realized that these people are human and he will have to remain on the side of the people (Wilhelmsen & Fatland 2010).

It is difficult to estimate the accurate number of those who died during the second war, nevertheless Zurcher (2007) notes in his book, from 1999 to 2002 approximately 3,000 Chechen rebels and 13,000 civilians have died due to Russian aggression. *Amnesty International* in 2007 estimates that since 1999 the amount of civilians who were killed is 25,000 while 5,000 have gone missing (Tsatsos 2014). Sagramoso (2007) claims that the huge amount of human casualties has encouraged many young Chechens to mobilize and join radical groups in order to take revenge for their suffering or the loss of their relatives, and this perpetuates a spiral of violence. As once Alexander Lebed[15] said, "The main opposition comes from people who lost relatives in the war…they become wolves…no army in the world has a chance against such people" (Gall & De Waal 1997:348). Throughout this Chechen

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[15] Alexander Lebed was a Russian military officer and politician who led negotiations with Maskahdov, signed agreements in the town of Khasavyurt in Dagestan which ended the first Chechen war in August 1996, available at:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Lebed

elites continued to use symbols and myths as a tool of mobilization, however this time these symbols were in the guise of Jihad.

According to Wilhelmsen`s article (2005), in the 18th and 19th centuries Islam played a major role in mobilizing the Chechens against Russian conquest, however due to the Soviet rule and deportation in 1944 the impact of Islam has decreased dramatically (Wilhelmsen 2005). Ethnic nationalism was a dominant ideology in the early 1990s within Chechen society. During his first years of presidency Dudayev rejected any talk of an Islamic state, but afterwards in order to legitimize his actions he started to refer to Islam. This choice was made due to internal opposition and in the face of the Russian invasion in November 1994. Dudayev realized that adopting Islamic slogans was a useful mobilizing tool (Wilhelmsen 2005). Adopting Islamic slogans is still connected to symbolic politics since it associates with the holy war of Imam Shamil and the martyrdom of the Chechen nation. It seems like the history of the conflict repeats itself, Sheikh Mansour`s and Imam Shamil`s struggle for independence has inspired many Chechens and military warlords, and these memories and myths are a driving force for mobilization. Referring to Imam Shamil`s struggle, Dudayev encouraged the Chechens to fight the Russian invasion under the slogan of *gazavat* – holy war. We can see how Dudayev managed to manipulate ethnic emotions by referring to symbols and myths. Thus, many Chechen fighters believed during the second war that it was a holy war in the tradition of previous Caucasian wars against Russia. For example Shamil Basayev could have connected himself to Imam Shamil by seeing himself and Imam Shamil as the heroes of Chechen independence against colonizers. Imam Shamil`s war was the symbol that fostered the myth of stubborn resistance against the Russians which has inspired many Chechens to fight since it remained at the heart of the Chechen struggle as a heroic national myth (Lieven 1998).

Another factor that could explain the continuation of the Chechen movement is that the largest and most dominant ethnic group within Chechnya was the Chechen one. Furthermore, there were approximately 20,000 men in Chechnya who were able and willing to fight before the second Chechen war (Zurcher 2007).

Case Analysis

During the second Chechen war Basayev and his followers became known for their terrorist methods of war, including a well-known 2002 hostage taking at Moscow theatre "*Nord-Ost*" and the 2004 Beslan school attack. Movsar Barayev was a militia leader during

the second war, who led the seizure of a Moscow theater. The demands included the withdrawal of Russian military troops from Chechnya and cessation of the second Chechen war. Movsar Barayev made a videotaped statement where he claims,

"We have come to Russia`s capital city to stop the war or die here for Allah…We might as well die here as in Chechnya, we`ll perish here, taking hundreds of unbelievers/infidels with us…I swear to Allah, we desire death more than you want life, Allah is great" (YouTube 2011b).

Another interesting statement was made by Barayev and his group who declared their willingness to die for their beliefs. This contained the following:

"Every nation has the right to their fate. Russia has taken away this right from the Chechens and today we want to reclaim these rights, which Allah has given us, in the same way he has given it to the other nations. Allah has given us the right of freedom and the right to choose our destiny. And the Russian occupiers have flooded our land with our children`s blood. And we have longed for a just solution. People are unaware of the innocent who are dying in Chechnya: the sheikhs, the women, the children and the weak ones. And therefore, we have chosen this approach since this approach is for the freedom of the Chechen people…If we die, others will come and follow us – our brothers and sisters who are willing to sacrifice their lives, in Allah`s way, to liberate their nation. Our nationalists have died but people have said that they, the nationalists, are terrorists and criminals. But the truth is Russia is the true criminal…We have nothing to lose…We have come to die. Our motto is freedom and paradise" (CNN.com/world 2002).

The elements of Modern Hatreds are present here, as Kaufman would say, myths that justify ethnic hostility. We see how the myths about humiliation, genocide, and not having equal rights motivate people for armed conflict. It seems like Barayev appeals others to join their forces since they are on the right path, and their goal is to liberate Chechnya from Russia. It shows how these fighters justify their actions by using myths: "their struggle for freedom and liberation of the Chechen people" who are dying and suffering from Russian aggression. When Movsar Barayev pronounced that "we desire death more than you want life," it clearly shows how fundamental Islam/Wahhabism can have a radicalizing effect on violence.

A Western journalist *BBC Four* interviewed Khamzat Gelayev, who is recognized by all Chechen clans as an excellent fighter as well as a spiritual leader. It is interesting to hear his thoughts about his motivations for mobilization:

"Our ideology is simple. And I, for one, understand why the world today is turning away from these values. The world does not want the truth. But the time will come. If not today, then tomorrow. We can already see the signs, this great day is coming…We are fighting for truth and justice. If anybody can show me evidence that contradicts this, then please do so. But do not show me the people who cut Englishmen`s heads off. [16] *And do not say: this is what the Chechens are like. No. This is a different battle. Those people who did it were trained by Russian Special Services for their own ends. They wanted to film something like that to show to the world. Why? Because Russia wanted this war…They needed evidence to use against us. They put great effort into dividing our nation. Into turning our neighbors from Dagestan, Ingushetia, Ossetia and Europe, America…and the whole world turn their backs on us. All that against the small country of Chechnya. Why? The only reason is* **they wanted to destroy us as a nation**. *This is the only reason I can see"* (<u>BBC Four 2000</u>).

Gelayev explains how Russian forces managed to securitize their violent actions against the Chechens in order to destroy them as a nation. This breach of justice motivated the rebels to fight for justice. Gelayev says that Russia wants to destroy Chechens as a nation. This again proves Kaufman's theory which states that ethnic fears of group extinction drive people to mobilize against other ethnic groups. So, in order to avoid loss and humiliation people start to defend themselves.

Another interview was taken from Chechen rebel Khattab during the second war.

"The Muslim faith is very correct…We never attack first. I mean we do not attack ordinary people. No matter if they are Jews or Communists. Our religion forbids it. We only strike when somebody attacks us and our faith. Then we fight to the end. Whether we win or not…whether we are defenseless or armed…even if they kill us all. It does not matter what happens. Because we know one thing – Allah told us in the Holy Koran to fight against the unfaithful. The Koran says that each Muslim must fight against the armies of the unfaithful.

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[16] The 1998 abduction of foreign engineers took place when four English workers were seized by unidentified Chechen gunmen in Grozny. After two months in captivity, all four workers were brutally murdered, available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1998_abduction_of_foreign_engineers_in_Chechnya

No matter who they are – Russians or others. Where we have been attacked first, that is what really counts" (BBC Four 2000).

This interview clearly illustrates the picture of the second war when the Chechen resistance turned into Radical Jihad. Khattab claims here, that it is their right and duty to fight infidels since they have been occupied by Russians first. From the interview above, Khattab touches upon two aspects. The first one is religious obligation. The Chechens have always been very sensitive to religion and by saying *"Allah told us in the Holy Koran to fight against the unfaithful"* he describes the duty to fight Russians. The second one goes back to symbolic politics, since we can see the elements of the Caucasus war. The history of Sheikh Mansur`s and Imam Shamil`s struggle had been renewed throughout the generations, and these myths and symbols still have a great impact on Chechen society which in turn again demonstrates Kaufman`s theory.

Aslan Maskhadov had a meeting in one of the mosques in Grozny on October 8th 1999 where he said,

"Our enemy (Russian rule) is very strong, powerful with no mercy. Because of this enemy, our fathers, grandfathers and the whole Chechen nation had been suffering throughout 400 hundred years. The infidels want us to subdue to them, under their rule…we have always resisted it, and we do not obey like other nations…that is why they always wage wars against us, deport us and use other tactics of humiliation and genocide, however with the help of Allah, we will manage to overcome these sufferings, because we do not want to live with their rules and customs/traditions, these do not fit with our customs and Islamic values. We do not want to be Russians, we are Muslims and Chechens. There are a lot of rumors saying that we could have avoided war if we behaved in this way or other way. These are sick and stupid people, because knowing the power of Russia and our capabilities, we (Maskhadov and his followers) always tried to find peaceful solutions. However, Russia is not willing to listen. The Dagestan invasion is not supported by us and by the Chechen nation. Although, we seek to deny it…Still, Russia tries to blame us Chechens for these actions. I even spoke to all our region`s military leaders telling them that in case of Dagestan invasion, Russians are aiming to invade Chechnya…and if we unite then we can stop this war. We said to the whole world that we do not want to fight Russians anymore. Nevertheless, despite our attempts to avoid war, our enemy want to see us under their control…they seek reasons to destroy us. That is why, if we fear our common enemy…we will be able to stay against them…we realize what happened to us just three years ago…the same will happen again, the

same atrocities are waiting us, if we do not unite and fight them. With the help of Allah, we will fight them…we don`t lose anything since we will be in Paradise. We will not "lose face" as being the Chechens and Muslims, but those who are against us (pro Russian Chechens) they will not be regarded as being the Chechens or Muslims"[17] (<u>YouTube 1999</u>).

Kaufman distinguishes between mass-led and elite led violence, and I believe that both Chechen conflicts were caused by Chechen elites. Kaufman argues that the elite-led violence is performed by elites who play on ethnic emotions to provoke hostility and violence. The main argument in Kaufman`s theory is that ethnic war is a result of myths and fears and the opportunity to act on them politically (<u>Kaufman 2001</u>).

Maskhadov indicates here the symbol of long-lasting war and genocide; he invokes for war by manipulating ethnic fears. As Kaufman argues, the level of these fears depends on how elites describe the group`s past victimization. If these fears become dominant among ethnic members, then this is likely to motivate a resort to violence in self-defense (<u>Kaufman 2001</u>). Maskhadov justifies ethnic hostility by indicating the mass deportation and centuries-old struggle. He portrays Russia as unwilling to listen to their claims and suggests that if the Chechens do not unite and mobilize it will lead to their destruction. We can also see the cultural aspect here, knowing the Chechen`s code of honor where a real Chechen man would rather die than "lose face." Thus Maskhadov indicates that those who will not fight the Russians will not be considered as being Chechens at all, or being men at all. This is a smart way of manipulating ethnic fears and social/cultural practices.

Another interview of Maskhadov was done in 2002 during the second Chechen war. The Arabian *Al Jazeera* Media Network took the following interview:

- ***Mr. President, three month ago you have had an extended meeting of the State Defense Committee, what changes are being made after the meeting? Did this change the military situation to the advantage of Chechen mobilization?***

"Yes, the military situation has changed to the advantage of Chechen resistance since we made an important decision. We decided to unite, all like one, all the militants…Allah says to us Muslims…unite…and he will give us victory. During these three months, we made a great damage to our enemy including 10 helicopters that we managed to destroy. Approximately

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[17] My translation from Chechen.

500 high trained rebels came from Georgia and joined our forces…this proves again that Allah will give us victory. Russia will lose this war, if not already lost" (Al Jazeera 2002).

Here, Maskhadov refers to their success damaging Russian helicopters, and the rebels who have joined their forces. Showing their success and saying that "Allah will give us victory" means that they are on the right track and they will soon have their victory. As Kaufman notes, the process of mobilization becomes a "tipping process" since mobilization is more likely to succeed when more people join in and they can pressure others into joining (Kaufman 2001).

- ***Russians calls this war the war against terrorism. How can you explain the last assignment to a position of Basaev, Yandarbiev and Udugov who are recognized by their radical thoughts?***

"This war is not against terrorism, this is again the genocide of the Chechen people. It is barbarism…these atrocities made all Chechens radicalized, starting from an ordinary person until the President…perhaps today the most radicalized person in Chechnya against Russia is the President (Maskadov indicates himself)… this war has shown us the true face of Russia…the face of our common enemy…Basaev, Yandarbiev and Udugov are our brothers, we have one common enemy (Russia) and we all equally hate Russia. After the State Defense Committee…all the mujahedeen (militants) declared that they unite around the President…I made a statement that there is no terrorism on Chechen territory and will not be…those who fight today against Russia are the Allah`s warriors/mujahedeen and I am responsible for them" (Al Jazeera 2002).

Here, Maskhadov indicates the myth that justifies ethnic hostility. The myth of genocide as he says, radicalized everyone ("from an ordinary person until the President") thus he wants to show that everyone should be fighting Russia for all those atrocities that had been perpetrated by Russian aggression. Saying those who fight are Allah`s warriors implies that they will be in Paradise even if they die (in war or ordinary death). The main goal of every true Muslim is to get immortality, or to be in Paradise. As Kaufman argues, ethnic and nationalist appeals tend to claim that ethnic fighters are "fighters from God" who are interested in clan survival/honor, clan territory/independence and protection of religion and country, and they are convinced that even if the fighters will die, they will achieve immortality (Paradise, in case of Chechen conflict) (Kaufman 2001).

Czech television journalists made a documentary video during the second war from 1999-2000 where many people describe their sufferings and willingness to fight due to Russian barbaric policy against Chechen nation.

One of the local citizens in Grozny describes Russia`s violent actions against innocent people,

"They fight against women. It is cowardice. They are like sparrows who shit on people down here (talking about the bombarding helicopters/planes). These are also birds shitting poison on us from the air…They kill women and children…You see our houses on fire…A terrorist-Putin is destroying the Chechen nation. Russia wants a Chechen republic without Chechen people! Our only guilt is that we were born as Chechens.

Shamil Basaev,

"Each human being has to have freedom of choice. He has to have a chance to live in freedom. If the people in the West can freely chooses how to live, why can`t we do the same? This conflict is entirely based on this question."

Khattab,

*"Arms are not everything, a big army is not everything (Russian army). The goal is the main thing. People have to know what they are fighting for. **We fight for freedom, religion and Allah.** We have to liberate the Caucasus from invaders."*

Aslanbek Abdulhadzhiev, Chechen field commander says,

"Chechen (opposition) and Russian communists, Soviet ones, now join and attack the Chechen republic. We are bearing the full weight of the Soviet Union and communism, we have borne the burden of the whole world. And I believe that we shall cope with the communist infection. We have just one thing, God is with us. This is our strongest weapon. We are strong in spirit. We will never forgive them for these atrocities. We will avenge ourselves upon the Russians, upon those who are governing. As long as we live we will take revenge."

We see from these statements that the main motivation for rebellion is freedom. The symbol of Caucasus war is still valued seriously. By talking about the Soviet Union and communism, they refer to the symbol of deportation. In addition to this, blood revenge comes into play that suggests, there are some possibilities of future mobilization against Russia in the guise of revenge.

A Czech journalist asked a Chechen rebel, **what motivates you to fight?**

His answer was

*"**We defend our country, our independence.** We did not invite them, nor did we invade them. We did not kidnap them. We are ordinary people. If they would not come here we would not kill them. Yesterday, Russians killed many people in one of our villages again. And they call us bandits. They are bandits"* (<u>Czech Television Network 1999-2000</u>).

Salman Raduyev another Chechen field commander says,

"The greatest dream is to die on the path that Allah has made for us. It is a pleasure to fight against the Russians because we are on the right path of Allah. We are creating a new type of army, not like the Russian army. New army where the entire population would become an army within three hours in case of aggression from the outside" (<u>YouTube 2011a</u>).

Here, the rebels appeal to new myths that describe atrocities in different Chechen villages, and fighting against Russians described as being on the right path of Allah. This again confirms that even if rebels die, they will get immortality.

During the second Chechen war Maskhadov gave an interview,

"For 300 years, the Chechens have been at war with Russia. Our fathers, grandfathers – fought against Russia all their lives. The whole world thinks that the Chechens are bandits, terrorists, mafia. It is specially prepared for the public opinion that today it would be possible to declare, that, they kill here bandits…the war will end when there is not one Russian soldier left. When they sit down and have talks. And if they think they can conquer us by force then the war is only beginning" (<u>Nizam Production 2006</u>).

As Osmaev argues, historical memories such as Caucasus war and violent deportations had a great impact on Chechen consciousness and development of political processes during the 1990s- and beginning of the 2000s (<u>Osmaev 2014</u>).

"Our enemy or the country that we are at war with is a godless country. We are actually fighting with the Koran in our hands against the unbelievers. And our adversary has no human face. Everyday cleansings…is another tragedy for peaceful residents. Because our enemy is not conducting a war against the fighters, actually, but against peaceful civilians. Against women, children and the elderly…for example, in the village of Aldy…the Russian troops were snatching infants from the hands of their mothers and they were shooting them in

the back of their heads…in two hours they killed 75 people…For the fighters it is a duty before Allah, they are fulfilling their duties, they are taking revenge and they will keep taking revenge…Chechens know the price of freedom well. They know what a war is, what genocide is. We are full of decision to defend our freedom, to free our territory from invaders, aggressors and build our independent Chechen republic" (Nizam Production 2006).

From these interviews above, we can see how strongly the symbolic politics have influenced mobilization of Chechens in violent conflict. These cases demonstrate Modern Hatreds Theory which is useful in explaining how mobilization was achieved before the second war. In addition to symbols and myths, cultural aspects (social organization/blood revenge) of Chechen society play an important role within this ethnic group. Maskhadov goes back to history of Chechen-Russian conflict by referring to the *seven generations* norm. He also refers to the myth of Russian atrocities against innocent people. Thus, he says that it is a duty for every Chechen man to take revenge in order to protect his family`s/clan`s/nation`s honor. As Khisaimov says in his book, "War requires hatred. The one who cannot hate the enemy and develop rage – will lose the battle" (Khisamov 1999:37).

CHAPTER 6 Conclusion

The conflict that I have presented in this thesis has been going on throughout three centuries. During this time the Chechens have been a subject of genocide, deportation, and humiliation. Although the human cost for Chechens is high, nevertheless this does not prevent them from mobilizing against Russian rule.

In the eyes of many Chechens, Russians are seen as enemies because of the eternal struggle against Russia that has become the symbol of a permanent enemy. Although Russia is a big player in world politics and a permanent member of the Security Council of the United Nations, Russia is seen as a waning power because of this perpetual conflict. It demonstrates that Moscow is not even able to secure the stability and integrity of its national borders (Tsatsos 2014). Different solutions have been offered by Western military experts, human rights activists and academia to resolve this internal conflict. The suggestions such as significant autonomy for Chechnya or the formation of a separate and independent state have been disregarded (Tsatsos 2014).

The goal of this thesis has been to investigate how Chechens have been mobilized for armed conflict against Russia before and during the second Chechen war. Before this research I was convinced that the mobilization had been influenced by ancient hatreds, however after having read the symbolic politics of ethnic war I realized that this theory is the most useful to explain mobilization process. The symbolic politics approach is relevant for analyzing any political or ethnic mobilization that involves elite-mass interaction. Having analyzed Modern Hatreds Theory, I now understand how ethnic elites manipulate ethnic emotions and fears in order to mobilize them for war. However, in the case of the Chechen war – culture and social practices play a crucial role in mobilization.

The Chechen identity is very different from other ethnic groups. Their social organization, code of honor and blood revenge creates kind of duty to mobilize against common threat. Even Kaufman mentions in his book, "If the group`s identity includes a warrior ethos, as the Chechen mythos does, then this group is likely to be more prone to ethnic violence" (Kaufman 2001:30). Thus, knowing the centuries-old Chechen struggle and their culture, this in turn gave elites good opportunities for violent mobilization.

The case analysis suggested that the second war was a continuation of the first conflict where Maskhadov, Basaev and other members of Chechen resistance have succeeded in mobilization due to historical memories – myths and symbols. In many cases, simply historical grievances do not lead to conflict escalation. As Kaufman argues, there are some necessary conditions for ethnic war to occur such as myths justifying ethnic hostility, ethnic fears, hostile leaders and opportunity to mobilize and fight. All these elements were present in 1999 that facilitated the Chechen mobilization. The invasion of Dagestan created fear on the Russian side, while at the same time it created fear of a new Russian invasion amongst the Chechens. Thus, this was a convenient time to manipulate ethnic fears.

The second Chechen war is officially over. Nevertheless there is still potential for mobilization of Chechens against Russia in the future. First of all, many families still are searching for their relatives and they do not know whether they are alive or not. With so many people still missing, the family members or someone from the same teip/clan are likely to take revenge in the future. Secondly, I am often a witness to negative talk about Russians. People mostly tend to talk about the horrible atrocities that were perpetrated by Russian forces in different Chechen villages, for example, during the Samashki or Aldy massacres where innocent civilians were shot. I believe, however, that violent mobilization will only be possible if there are also hostile elites willing to manipulate the Chechen emotions and fears. There are many myths that could justify new ethnic hostility in the future, however I really hope there will be no need for Chechens to mobilize again.

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