Separated Memory

The Influence of Spatial Discourses on the Nation-Building Process of the Republic
of Abkhazia
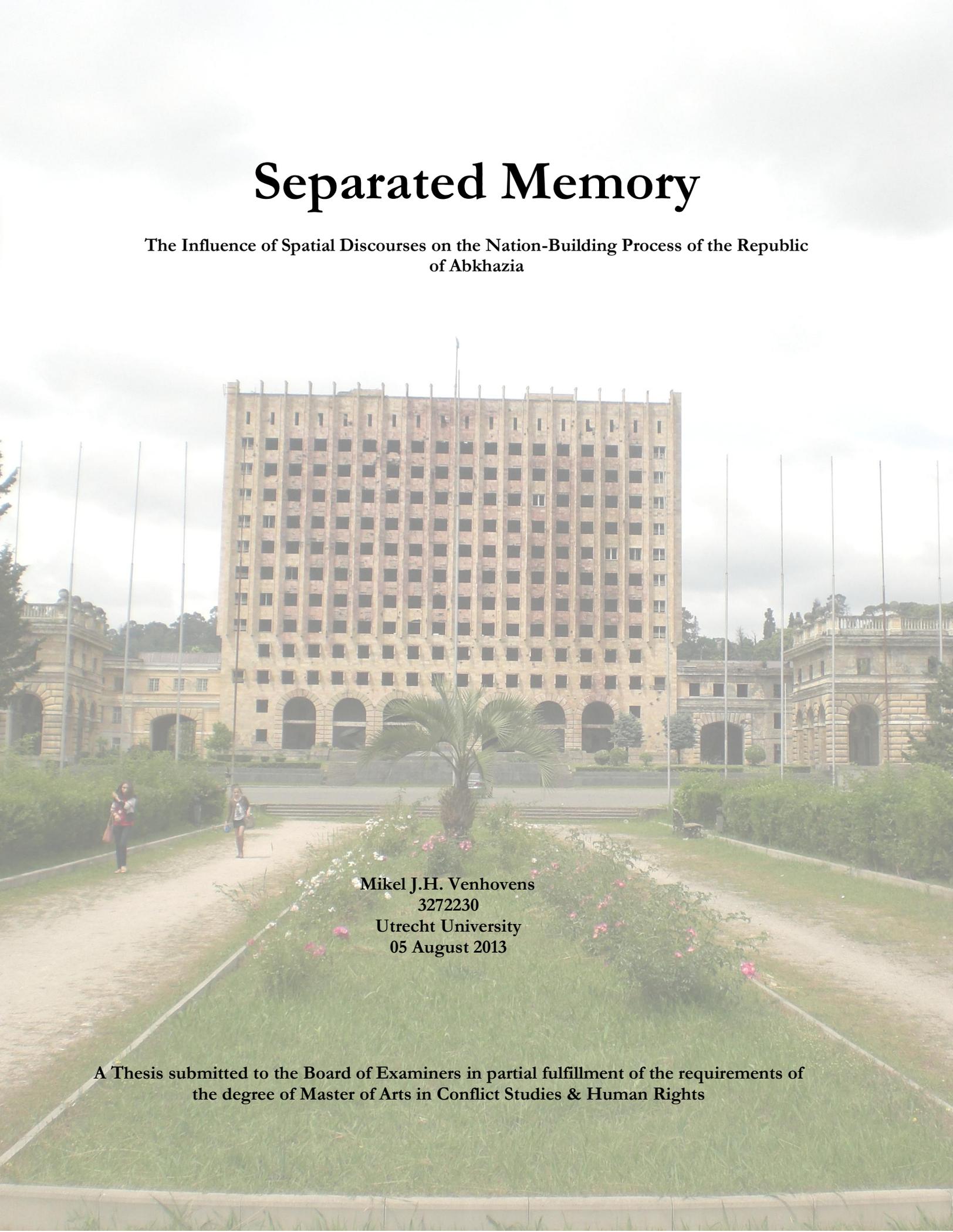
Mikel J.H. Venhovens
3272230
Utrecht University
05 August 2013

A Thesis submitted to the Board of Examiners in partial fulfillment of the requirements of
the degree of Master of Arts in Conflict Studies & Human Rights

-Cover image is the former ASSR government building situated in Sukhum, Abkhazia. Picture taken by author on 15-05-2013

Separated Memory

As the snow slowly thawed, God's emissaries finally visited the Abkhazians. And just like every Friday, the table was richly laden with food and drinks. Then God arrived and spoke, 'If only everyone could be like the Abkhazians.' 'All the countries have already been given away, except the one beautiful piece of land I kept for myself. I will bestow that on you.' God gave his land and language to the grateful Abkhazians who had proved to be so hospitable and courteous. When he left, God issued one more warning. 'Everyone will desire your country like a beautiful young woman. It will be difficult to protect. If your descendants cannot protect it, they will melt away like snow in the spring. But if they do, the country will remain theirs. Then it will be a beautiful country.'[1]

"When the God divided the Earth among the people, Georgians were late because of their traditional feast, and by the moment of their arrival the entire world had already been divided. When the God asked them to what they had drunk Georgians just answered:"To you, oh Lord, to us, to peace". The God liked their answer. So told them that although all lands were taken, he reserved a small plot for himself and now he decided to give it to Georgians. According to the God the land was incomparable in its beauty and all people would admire and cherish it forever ".[2]

---

[1] Bruggen van, A & Hornstra R (2010:2-5)
[2] Myth of the creation of Georgia, as told by Georgian locals in Tbilisi.

Abstract

_____

This thesis seeks to deconstruct the discourse of national building in the contemporary *de facto* Republic of Abkhazia through spatial discursive analysis. It contributes to a stronger academic engagement with the spatial dimension of conflict and discursive analysis. In order to do so, this thesis has analyzed three forms of spatial discourses, respectively: destruction, separation and remembrance. By looking at these forms of spatial discourse concerning the Georgian-Abkhaz war of 1992-93 this thesis has established that spatial discourses are of significant importance during the nation building process. This thesis argues that a few of the contributions to the nation building process in Abkhazia through spatial discourses are: physical evidence of the nation, creation of cohesion among its population, establishment of cultural hegemony, an instrument in order to cleanse the cultural landscape from unwanted cultural signs.

Key words: Abkhazia, Georgia, South Caucasus, Discursive analysis, Spatial Discourses, Spatiality, Ethnic Conflict, Cultural Cleansing, Nation Building, Separatist State, Collective Memory, Identity, Boundaries, Structuration.

Contents

Acknowledgments

_____

Abbreviations

ARISC   American Research Institute of the South Caucasus

ASSR   Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic

CIS   Commonwealth of Independent States

CRRC   Caucasus Research Resource Centers

ECMI   European Centre for Minority Issues

EUMM   European Union Monitoring Mission

FSB   Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation   (Федеральная служба безопасности Российской Федерации)

GFSIS   Georgian Foundation for Strategic & International Studies

GSSR   Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic

HRW   Human Rights Watch

ICG   International Crisis Group

ICRC   International Committee of the Red Cross

IDMC   Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

IDP's   Internally Displaced Persons

OECD   Organization for Economical Co-operation and Development

UNESCO   United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNDP   United Nations Development Programme

UNOMIG   United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia

Maps

_____

Administrative map of Georgia including separatist regions of Abkhazia & South Ossetia

Administrative map of Georgia

Source: Abkhazia: The Long Road to Reconciliation Crisis Group Europe Report N°224, 10 April 2013, P.27.

Map of Abkhazia

Source: International Crisis Group (2008) *Georgia and Russia: Clashing Over Abkhazia*, Europe Report N°193. 5 June.

I.   _Introduction_

2013 marks the five year 'anniversary' of the end of the South Ossetia War of 2008 in South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Georgia and the subsequent recognition of Abkhazia as an independent state by Russia. The Abkhaz population was euphoric when Russia recognized the Abkhazian entity in 2008, as they hoped that they would follow the same line as Kosovo which today has been recognized by more than 90 countries (ICG 2013:1). But after five years, it has to be said that the state of affairs concerning the recognition of the Republic of Abkhazia is at least disappointing. At the time of writing, only a list of 6 countries consisting of Russia, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Nauru, Tuvalu and Vanuatu have recognized Abkhazia, of which it has been said that the latter has actually withdrawn its recognition (Lomsadze 2013). To a large proportion of the general public, Abkhazia is an unknown entity. The small _de-facto_ state situated on the northern shore of the Black Sea is best known due to the Georgian-Abkhazian War of 1992-93, the large Russian presence that was installed after the 2008 Georgian-Ossetia War or maybe because of the World Domino Championships that were held in 2011 in the Abkhazian capital of Sukhum. To a large proportion of the international community, Abkhazia is still part of Georgia, but it might not be as simple as it seems.

Case Selection: Introducing Abkhazia

Abkhazia is situated on the north-eastern side of the black sea coast, bordering the Russian Federation in the east and northwest, while it shares a _de facto_ border with Georgia in the west. The territory of Abkhazia covers approximately 8,700 square kilometers with Sukhum as its capital city (Trier, Lohm & Szakonyi 2010:7). The Republic of Abkhazia consists of eight administrative districts, namely: Gagra, Gadauta, Sukhum city district, Sukhum rural district, Gulripsh, Ochamchira, Tkuarchal and Gal. Since the expulsion of Georgian troops out of the Kodori Gorge, the Republic of Abkhazia has regained whole control over its territory which now again coincides with the territory of the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Abkhazia. According to the ECMI estimates of 2008, there are 186,500-236,500 people currently living in Abkhazia (see Table 1). This is a significant decrease compared to the pre-war Soviet census of 1989.

Table 1: Population in Abkhazia according to the Soviet Census of 1989 and Recent Estimates by ECMI

	Soviet Census 1989	ECMI Estimates 2008
Abkhazians	93,267	65,000 – 80,000
Georgians	239,872	45,000 – 65,000
Armenians	76,541	60,000 – 70,000
Russians	74,914	10,000 – 15,000
Greeks	14,664	1,500
Others	25,803	5,000
Total	525,061	186,500 – 236,500

Source: Trier,Lohm, Szakonyi 2010:32

As can be seen, especially the Georgian population decreased drastically between 1989-2008, this as the result of an immense ethnic cleansing campaign during the Georgian-Abkhaz war of 1992-93.

The dissolution of the communist Soviet empire was a relatively peaceful affair as, notwithstanding the amount of social grievances and disputed boundaries across the former Soviet region, few of the rivalries actually produced open war (Fearon & Laitin 1996:90, in King 2001:529). Still, in a few regions violence and conflict erupted which led to the loss of life of many and resulted in hundreds of thousands of refugees and IDP's (King 2001:529). This was also the case in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia, the GSSR.

On August 14, 1992, a fratricidal war broke out on the resort beaches of Abkhazia, a small territory located on the Black Sea coast of the newly independent Republic of Georgia. A sixteen-month conflict ensued between, on the one hand, Abkhaz forces aided by local civilians as well as fighters from other countries, primarily neighboring areas of the Russian Federation, and, on the other hand, the central government of Georgia, in the form of National Guard, paramilitaries and volunteers. The Abkhaz fought for expanded autonomy and ultimately full independence from Georgia; the Georgian government sought to maintain control over its territory (HRW 1995). Intensive battles raged on land, air and sea. About 8,000 people, Georgian and Abkhaz, died, 18,000 were wounded and an estimate of 200,000-250,000 people became IDP's (ICG 2006:1 & HRW 2011:10).

A ceasefire was declared in May 1994, when both parties signed the Agreement on a cease-fire and Separation of Forces, which is also known as the Moscow Agreement. Furthermore, this agreement led to the deployment of a peacekeeping force of the CIS, which was entirely composed of Russian troops, who were responsible for the monitoring of the ceasefire. In addition, a UN Observer Mission was also deployed under the name of UNOMIG, to monitor the conduct of the CIS peacekeeping force (HRW 2011:11). The loss of this 'little paradise'[3] is still being seen as one of the most traumatic experiences in the collective memory of post-communistic Georgia.

After the 1992-93 war, Abkhazia remained war torn and isolated for 15 years. The effects of the

---

[3] Interview Alexander Rondeli, Tbilisi, March 1st 2013.

destruction of the internal infrastructure and collapse of the Soviet economic system have been exacerbated by an international blockade imposed by the CIS in January 1996 (Trier, Lohm & Szakony 2010:7).During Vladimir Putin´s presidency, Russia softened its stance towards Abkhazia and began with an increase of political, economical and military support. This only increased during the Rose Revolution of 2002 and during Saakahsvili´s presidency when Georgia invested millions of USD in their military, which resulted in a military budget that almost reached 1 billion USD, compared to USD 19 million in 2002 (Trier, Lohm & Szakony 2010:9). These investments in the Georgian military did not help to assuage the feeling of the Abkhazian population that they are under a constant threat (Trier, Lohm & Szakony 2010:9'. This feeling of insecurity only resulted in the fact that Abkhazia sought more security by its neighbor Russia.

After the conflict that briefly erupted between Russia, South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Georgia in August of 2008, the dynamics of the Georgian-Abkhazian relations have shifted as the reintegration of Abkhazia into proper Georgia was made virtual impossible. This was mainly due to the increasing involvement of Russia in the region, and the security it brought to Abkhazia. In June 2009, Russia vetoed the extension of the UNOMIG mission in Abkhazia that had been present since 1993 (BBC 2009). UNOMIG was present in the border region between the Georgia and the region of Abkhazia in order to monitor the ceasefire between Abkhaz separatists and Georgian forces. This only left an observing EUMM mission which was established on 15 September 2009, whose mandate only allows them to control areas under Georgian control. The recognition of Abkhazia by Russia did therefore not only bring their long sought recognized independence, but also a significantly intensified Russian influence which made the re-integration into proper Georgia virtually impossible.

Research Question

Dov Lynch (2002:832) said concerning separatist states in the former Soviet Union that: "if ever they are discussed, the separatist areas are often dismissed as criminal strips of no-man's-land or as the 'puppets' of external states." Although this comment by Lynch does not reflect the current state of literature on separatist states, it must be said that he does have a point when he is arguing that separatist states are seen as entities that have to rely heavily on external political and economical support. Examples of this are: the Nagorno Karabakh Republic which relies on Armenia, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus which relies on Turkey, The Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic which relies on Russia and the same goes for the Republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. But by only addressing the external support on a broad geopolitical scale, it creates a one-sided approach to these separatist states. It creates an image of 'puppets' that show no sign of autonomy and control over their own population. This thesis therefore aims to give more attention to the Republic of Abkhazia as an autonomous entity that is not just a puppet but rather a functioning *de-facto state* with its own self-determination, institutions as well as its own limitations. It cannot be stressed enough

that this thesis does not want to give any judgment on the current international status of Abkhazia. This thesis does not take any stance in favor of Abkhazian independence or in favor of re-integration into proper Georgia.

The fact that the nation and state building processes in Abkhazia are contested by the international community and more importantly by Georgia, make the case study of Abkhazia even more important. This because the nation building efforts of Abkhazia affect not only the Abkhaz people residing in the Abkhaz territory, but also ethnic Georgians living in Abkhazia who have been at the center of all the turmoil. It is therefore interesting to look at how the nation building process is progressing and what the influence is on the several communities living in Abkhazia.

Within the process of nation building, this thesis will primarily focus on the use of spatial discourses. It is said by scholars in the field of discursive analysis that forms of spatiality, such as monuments and ruins, are merely artifacts. These particular forms of spatiality are seen as artistic rather than literary productions that can actually contribute to a certain narrative (Allison 2013 & Mills 2013). This thesis wants to argue that spatial discourses actually play a significant role in the formation of national identity which is a vital aspect of nation building. It therefore wants to add new insights to the discussion on the discursive analysis of nation building processes. Furthermore, it contributes to a stronger engagement with the spatial dimension of conflict and discursive analysis.

The aim of this thesis is to scrutinize some of the spatial discourses concerning conflict that are present in the Republic of Abkhazia during the process of national building. How these are represented, and what their influence is on the population and the nation building efforts of the Abkhaz state. This results in the research question of this thesis: <u>How do spatial discourses concerning the Abkhaz-Georgian war of 1992-93 contribute to the nation building efforts in the contemporary Republic of Abkhazia?</u>

This thesis seeks to answer this question by following a certain structure of three forms of spatial discourses namely destruction, separation and remembrance. This thesis is divided in six chapters including an introduction, conclusion and one conceptual and theoretical chapter. The three main chapters, named respectively: destruction, separation and remembrance, have been chosen in order to present a sort of feeling of a chronological foundation to this thesis. Although there actually is a slight chronological order in events during this thesis, events and processes are also being discussed and presented in a thematically order instead of chronological. Every chapter starts with a theoretical discussion of the main concept of that chapter, namely destruction, separation or remembrance. The theoretical discussion will highlight the theoretical foundation of the concept in question and the connection to nation building and spatial discourses. The second part of the chapter will be the linkage of the theoretical framework with a case study of spatiality in Abkhazia. Chapter 2 will deal with the conceptual & theoretical framework of this thesis. In this chapter the ontological foundation will be explained by focusing on the structuration theory as opted by Giddens. Furthermore, some key-concept such as 'the state', collective identity and spatial discourses will discussed.

Chapter 3 named Destruction will deal with the destruction of architecture during and after the Georgian-Abkhaz war of 1992-93. The case study that has been chosen for this chapter is the Ilori Church that is situated in the south-east Ochamchyra region of Abkhazia. Chapter 4 focuses on the physical separation between Abkhazia and proper-Georgia with a main focus on the Inguri River border crossing point. Besides discussing the physical evidence of the separation, the implications it has on the Abkhaz and Georgian population will also be discussed. Chapter 5 will deal with the remembrance of the Georgian-Abkhaz war through monuments. While the monument will be a main focus, it will also look at the ritual of mourning which is deeply connected with the case study of the Glory Park situated in Sukhum, Abkhazia. And this thesis will be concluded with the conclusion in which a summary of the most important findings will be given in order to give answer to the research question.

Methodology

This thesis draws strongly on `postmodern' discussions of spatiality, territoriality and discourse, and discusses the importance of narratives in understanding how spatiality and boundaries influence and are integrated in the social construction of (socio) spatial identities that contribute to state and nation-building. This thesis wants to develop a critical view and understanding of the discourse of nation building through spatial discourses in Abkhazia. The deconstruction of this discourse by exposing the framework, on which this discourse has been build, is therefore one of the primary aims.

Spatial discourse analysis is a field within discourse analysis that has not received much academic attention yet. There has been literature on cultural geography and discourses concerning space, but these have not yet been developed into a real extensive academic field that is being linked with conflict. As the field of spatial discourse has mainly been focusing on urban and (human) geography, this thesis aims to link spatial discourse analysis with conflict studies by applying it to a (post) conflict situation. This as conflict causes the destruction of many buildings ergo space, and most monuments are erected to remember a certain violent phase of a nations/regions history.

Fieldwork is of the upmost importance, as the population will be a vital part of this thesis as they are influence by spatial discourses. This thesis tries to create a dialogue between ideas and evidence (Ragin 1994:55). Ideas that have been opted by academics and evidence found during the fieldwork. Field research is therefore a vital aspect of this thesis. An example of why fieldwork is of vital importance is the case of the Government Building of the Abkhazian ASSR in Sukhum. During the preparations of this thesis, this building was intended to be the prime objective of the fieldresearch. The Abkhazian ASSR government building was build between 1932-39 and was designed by V. A. Shchuko and V. G. Gel'freikh (Prochorov, 1979). The building played a vital role in the Georgian-Abkhaz war of 1992-93, as it was the scene of the Battle of Sukhum on September 27 1993, when separatist forces violated the cease fire and attacked the city

(Cornell 2001:173). The Georgian troops pulled back to the Government building which was the last part of the city that was under Georgian control. It was the last Georgian stronghold in Abkhazia and the capture of that building was of vital importance as Irakli Khintba, the deputy foreign minister of the Republic of Abkhazia, also stresses by saying: "When we captured this building (former ASSR government building) it was the absolute evidence that the war was over. This because it was their castle, their fortress, where the Georgian authorities tried to hide in."[4] This building therefore seemed to be the embodiment of the Abkhaz victory over Georgia, as today it still stands as it was in that September of 1993. The building has not been renovated, bullet holes are still visible and the square in front of it is the location of many festivities such as the Abkhaz Independence Day during which a military parade is being held and a huge Abkhazian flag is being rolled down over the skeleton of the former ASSR government building. While conducting the fieldwork however, it turned out that this image of being some kind of victory monument was not at all present in the minds of the people in Sukhum. The building has not been renovated due to lack of financial resources, the parades are being held on that location simply due to the fact that it is the biggest square in Sukhum and the people mainly associated the building with the Soviet Union. This example therefore illustrates the importance of fieldwork, as the situation 'on the ground' might be very different than the situation sketched by literature research.

The research that has been done for this thesis is exclusively qualitative. As the main aim of it is to explain the existence of spatial discourses as a social phenomenon and the way they are manifested in everyday life. The qualitative research that has been conducted for this thesis has been done in threefold. Firstly, semi-structured in-depth interviews have been conducted with representatives of the government of Abkhazia, specialists on the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict and Abkhazia locals from the age of 20-40 currently residing in Sukhum and Gal, Abkhazia. As interviews are part of a case-centric approach, the accessing of participants is of vital importance (Curtis & Curtis 2011:35). The participants in Tbilisi have been selected on their involvement and knowledge of the current state of affairs in Abkhazia. The people that have been interviewed in Tbilisi are therefore mainly specialists in the field of international relations, minority issues and conflict studies with connections to the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. The participants that have been interviewed in Abkhazia have been selected because of their position within the Abkhaz society, or because of their connection with certain government institutions. While the main aim was to establish a sample size that was representative for the Abkhaz population, this seemed impossible due to lack of resources available. The participants have therefore been chosen on availability and on relevance in regard to the subject of this thesis. The interviews have been semi-structured, as a series of pre-established themes have been discussed during interviews with questions that have been prepared beforehand, but during the interviews there has been room for new questions and themes that may emerge in the process. The above mentioned approach

---

[4] Interview Irakli Khintba, Sukhum, May 15th 2013.

does however have some limitations, as a main aspect of this research is the interpretation of individuals. The interpretations and opinions of the subjects are therefore not used as factual information, but as interpretations of participants of spatial discourses. The participants therefore are variables themselves as they 'represent' a certain stance towards an opinion or discussion.

Secondly, part of the research consisted of ethnographic research in the form of observation. The main aims of the observations were firstly, observing the actual physical presence of the case studies and secondly, to observe how people interact with the case studies. Sites that will be discussed in this thesis have been chosen because of their dimensions which provide opportunities for observation. The list of dimensions that has been set up by Flick (2006:22 in Curtis & Curtis 2011:87) will be central to the observations discussed in this thesis:

-Space: the physical place.
-Objects: physical things in the environment
-Actors: the people involved
-Acts: actions or behavior
-Events: activities, often engaged in by several actors.
-Goals: things actors are trying to accomplish and/or towards which acts are directed.
-Emotions: as expressed by actors.

The ethnographic research was mainly conducted in the capital of Abkhazia: Sukhum and the border region of Abkhazia-Georgia at the Administrative Border Line. The observations are focused on how participants react to particular forms of spatiality. In Sukhum, the memorial and burial ground of Glory Park has been the main focus point of the field research. At the border the focus was on: the no-man's-land between proper Georgia and Abkhazia, the bridge over the Inguri River and the actual Abkhazian border point including its building, fences and border guards. Unfortunately, visitation of the Ilori Church was not possible due to problems with logistics and the security conditions that were present in the Gal region in South-East Abkhazia at the time of this research. This limitation has been tried to be reduced by conducting a very thoroughly literature research and gathering extra information through interviews.

Thirdly, thorough literature research has been conducted in which both primary as secondary literature has been consulted. This thesis has gathered most of its data from news articles, official reports of organizations such as Human Rights Watch, International Crisis Group and Unesco. Furthermore, reports from the Georgian and Abkhazian authorities have also been used. The conceptual and theoretical foundation of this thesis has been established through academic articles and books from a very multidisciplinary angle. Academics from the fields of: anthropology, political sciences, geography, human

geography, conflict studies, discursive analysis, human rights studies and development studies have been consulted.

Due to the sensitive political situation of Abkhazia and Georgia, this thesis has attempted to stay as neutral and objective as possible. Interviews have therefore been conducted with Georgian as well as Abkhazian individuals. The same equilibrium has been tried to establish in regard to the literature research by consulting Georgian as well as Abkhazian sources on different subjects.

Terminology

"To name is to identify an object, remove it from the unknown, and then assign to it a set of characteristics, motives, values and behaviors (Adler 1978:12 in Bhatia 2005:8)." During the fieldwork that was done for this thesis, the usage of the right terminology was of great importance. This due to the fact that it is important to know that "a name may provide truth to an extent, and perhaps even *a* truth, but it cannot reveal the complete 'truth' of an object by encompassing all aspects and facets of that identified (Bhatia 2005:9)." It is therefore important to know the context in which a term, or name is being used.

As has been said before, this thesis does not take any stance in favor of Abkhazian independence or in favor of re-integration into proper Georgia. Still, it is almost impossible to write a completely objective and neutral thesis when discussing the situation in Abkhazia. Using certain names already has significant implications, as the choice to use the Russian, Abkhaz or Georgian name for example a city already implies a certain political stance. Choices have to be made, and the author is aware of that the fact that with every choice at least one party will feel neglected and/or offended. I therefore have chosen to use the terminology that is commonly used in the area in which the town, river or building is situated. When focusing on space situated in the territory owned by the Republic of Abkhazia, it is common to refer to it with the Russian name. This due to the fact that Russian is the most common language spoken in Abkhazia. Although many locals refer to Sukhum with the Abkhaz name Aqwa, the capital of Abkhazia was mostly named by its Russian name. In addition, although the the Cyrillic alphabet was most commonly used in Abkhazia, this thesis will use the Latin names as this is more convenient and efficient as this is also the alphabet used in the rest of this thesis. In Annex A, I have compiled a list of towns and rivers with the English, Georgian, Abkhaz and Russian names, and in their own respective alphabet.

Besides the difficulties regarding the names of cities and rivers, the terminology regarding the people who had to flee the violence during the 1992-93 and 2008 war is also a very sensitive issue. Georgia, together with most of the international community, considers these people internally displaced people (IDP's), as according to them the misplaced people have fled from the Georgian region of Abkhaz to different regions within the same country. Abkhaz authorities in contrast, refer to the people that fled Abkhazia as refugees, as according to them the refugees have left one country and are currently living abroad. When mentioning the

border between Abkhazia and Georgia, I opted to use the word 'border' as this is the most neutral one possible. Terminology such as 'state border' or 'administrative boundary line' (ABL) or *'de-facto* border' have a greater subjective meaning and will therefore not be used actively.

Lastly the difference between Abkhazian and Abkhaz individuals has to be stressed. Abkhazians are citizens of Abkhazia, while Abkhaz refers to people of the Abkhaz ethnicity. This is important, as ethnic Georgians with an Abkhazian passport, as well as ethnic Armenians, Greek, Russians etc, have to be distinguished from the ethnic Abkhaz.

II. **_Conceptual & Theoretical framework_**

This chapter will discuss the conceptual and theoretical aspects of this thesis. The main aim of this chapter will be to stress the conceptual and theoretical importance of spatiality in combination with discourse, which will be discussed at the end of this chapter. Before bestowing upon this concept, there is a need to first elaborate on a few other important concepts in order to fully understand the construction and working of spatial discourses. First the ontological foundation of this thesis has to be explained by looking at the structuration theory of Anthony Giddens. The structuration theory can be regarded as the broadest element of this thesis' conceptual and theoretical framework as it is the most basic 'building block'. Secondly, there will be a very strong focus on the state as an imagined entity, which needs to be built and imagined but in addition also needs to be practiced in order to survive. Here will be the first strong link with spatiality, as the work of Gupta & Ferguson will be central to this story. This will be linked with the concepts of collective identity & memory, as these concepts are seen as vital components in nation building efforts. Lastly, before arriving at the core of this thesis, namely spatial discourses, there will be an emphasis on critical discourse analysis. Critical discourse analysis is of importance for this thesis, as it analyzes how language constitutes political and social discourses. This thesis tries to do the same, but replaces language with spatiality. So, in order to establish a methodological and ontological foundation, it is important to get familiar with the tools that critical discourse analysis offers.

While critical discourse analysis mainly focuses on language and this thesis is focused on spatiality as discourse, this chapter will be completed with the core concept of this thesis, namely spatiality and discourse.

Structuration

The structuration theory, as put forward by Anthony Giddens (1986), attempts to recast structure and agency as a mutually dependent duality. Structure and agency therefore constitute and complement each other. (Demmers 2012:119). Individuals can act freely within the constraints of the contemporary social structures, but do also influence these structures as these are formed through social conduct (Giddens 1984: xxi in Demmers 2012:120). Giddens also formulates structures as: "rules and resources recursively implicated in social reproductions institutionalized features of social systems have structural properties in the sense that relationships are stabilized across time and space (Giddens 1984: xxi)". These rules are not always implemented by an agent or such, but moreover these rules "are deeply embedded in time and space that we have come to see them as natural and self-evident (Demmers 2012:121)." Giddens therefore wants to

acknowledge a material structure, but only if it makes room for subjective play, manipulation, and creative struggle in overcoming constraints (Sica 1986:344).

As Giddens (1984, in Demmers 2012) argues: there are 'allocative' and 'authoritative' resources. The 'allocative' resources refer to the control over material facilities, while the 'authoritative' resources refer to the control over the activities of human beings (2012:121). As a result of these two structures, Giddens defines the third structure of domination (2012:121). Actors who have more control over the two aforementioned structures can therefore exert more control over others in order to achieve their desired outcome. As Demmers states "the asymmetrical distribution of power results in certain agents simply having more 'power to define' (2012:121)."

Within this structure, there is thus room for certain actors to exert power over the structure and discourses. Because as Giddens argues with his duality of structure, structure and agency are constituting and complementing each other (Demmers 2012:119). This means that individuals can act purposively but are also constraint to the social structures that we are born into. But like said before, these social structures can also be influenced and used by individuals

The state

Before bestowing on such an complicated concept as 'the state' it has to be noted that in the case of the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict, the concept of state might seem confusing and even wrong, as the authorities in Abkhazia have not yet been widely recognized by the international community. Still the authorities currently residing in Abkhazia act like a working presidential republic government within the separatist region, while the Russian federation is responsible for representing their interests abroad. So from a political perspective the Abkhaz authorities might not be seen as legitimate and an Abkhaz state is simply not existing. Still, for the population currently residing in the region in which the Abkhaz authorities hold power, there might be the conceived notion of an Abkhaz state. This because the Abkhaz authorities have institutionalized their power through a legislative and executive branch. Furthermore, they develop and practice certain (spatial) discourses to ensure they are imagined as a state by the population. Examples are the before mentioned political institutions, but also the safeguarding of the Abkhaz borders which is a prime example of a spatial discourse which institutionalizes the existence of an Abkhaz territory.

The state will be viewed as a constructed entity that exercises its power with a 'top down' process in which it uses social practices, such as spatial discourses, to legitimize its authority and influence society. The state is therefore a constructed structure in which agents operate. In addition there need to be a clear distinction between a nation and a state. This can be made clear by addressing the difference between those two by arguing that a nation must refer to a community of people with an aspiration to be politically self-

determining, and a state that must refer to the set of political institutions that they may aspire to possess for themselves (Miller 1995:19).

A common definition of the state is that of being the institution that has a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence (Mutimer, 2007:55). This definition has been opted by Max Weber in his book: 'Economy and society' in which he defines the state as a political organisation which has a successful monopoly on the legitimate use of violence (Weber, 1922:29). According to Einsiedel (2005) when the state is unable to exercise the monopoly on violence, it fails to fulfil its primary functions and could therefore be considered as a 'failing' state.

Next to this Weberian notion of a state, the state has an obligation to its citizens, and its citizens an obligation to the state. This obligation is being expressed in the so called 'Social Contract', as described by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1762) in his *Du contrat social ou Principes du droit politique,* between the citizens and the state they live in. According to the OECD, "the social contract emerges from the interaction between a) expectations that a given society has of a given state; b) state capacity to provide services, including security, and to secure revenue from its population and territory to provide these services (in part a function of economic resources; and c) élite will to direct state resources and capacity to fulfil social expectations (OECD, 2008:17)." The social contract is furthermore mediated by the existence of political processes through which the bargain between state and society is struck, reinforced and institutionalised. The last important part of the social contract is the legitimacy that plays an additional role in shaping expectations and facilitating political process (OECD, 2008:17). 'When a state is no longer able to meet the requirements of a functioning socioeconomic organization, it loses not only the support of its citizens but also the control over them (Malek 2006:445)'. Therefore, without a certain degree of legitimacy among the population a state is not able to work properly.

According to Väyrynen (1997), "the sovereign territorial state and its assumed coexistence with the nation is of a vital importance in understanding ethnicity, because it is space within which ethnic identification--and especially violent identification -- often actualises. The sovereign state has traditionally tried to offer the instrumental solution for the challenge set forth by different forms of identity politics (e.g. class, gender and ethnic claims)". In other words, the state has aimed at providing a shared domain of meaning for groups located within its sovereign control and territory. The state, as a social and political practice and as a system of inclusion and exclusion *par excellence*, has tried to solve the problem of conflicting identity claims by producing precise distinctions and differences between citizens and aliens, by domesticating particular identities and by creating a coherent sovereign identity (Väyrynen, 1997).

The social contract with its citizens binds a state to equally protect the rights of all groups, which, in its turn decreases the propensity for intrastate violence: "If the state is effective in controlling the overall level of violence as well as its targets, then political centralization will be associated with lower violence both internally and externally (Ross 1986: 441)". The state is therefore able to play an active role in the formation

of a community and/or a nationhood. This due to the fact that state/nation building is, as argued by Gupta and Ferguson (2002: 982) " inherently "top down" and state actions are efforts to manipulate and plan "from above"." (Civil) Society is the entity that is being influenced the most, as this is the particular subject during the state and nation building efforts. Nation building is therefore more concerned with the 'softer' aspects of state consolidation, such as "the construction of a shared identity and a sense of unity in a state's population, through education, propaganda, ideology, and state symbols (Kolstø & Blakkisrud 2008:484)." These nation building processes are being actively pursued by elites such as state leaders, intellectuals and educators who want to give the particular state the 'qualities of a nation state' (Kolstø & Blakkisrud 2008:484). Nation building is meant to create and instill a sense of cohesion among the people in the form that they belong to the same group/nation. It is important that a cohesive sense of belonging is created to the state that they live in and to no other (Kolstø & Blakkisrud 2008:484). This is being done through policies that very often include cultural and linguistic elements that encourage national homogenisation. The state therefore "invests a great deal of effort in developing procedures and practices to ensure that they are imagined in some ways rather than others (Scott 1998 in Gupta & Ferguson 2002)." Nationhood is therefore a quality that strengthens quasi-states, such as Abkhazia, chances for consolidation and survival. This is necessary as in the contemporary world there are, as David Held (1996:48) understands, certain 'disjunctures'. These disjunctures "are 'gaps' between, on the one hand the power of the nation state as in principle capable of determining its own future and, on the other, the actual practices and structures of state at the global level". In order to be seen as a legitimate state, one therefore needs to be consolidated and legitimized not only on a local level but also on a global level by the international community.

Identity & Collective Memory

As authors such as Anthony Smith (1996) and Benedict Anderson (1991) have already stressed in their works, the importance of myth, belief and self-image in the formation of group identity has been acknowledged to be a crucial factor in the emergence of many nationalisms. As Benedict Anderson (1991:6) famously said regarding a shared identity in connection to the nation: "I propose the following definition of the nation: it is an imagined political community-and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion". From this perspective, national and/or ethnic identities are constantly being reconstituted according to a presentist agenda (Osborne 2001). Instead of these groups being primordial entities, they are being generated by "symbolic processes that emerge and dissolve in particular contexts of action" (Handler, 1994:30). As Baumann (1999:21) said: "Analytically speaking, ethnicity is not an identity given by nature, but an identification created through social action" It is therefore very important to understand how nation states

and/or ethnic groups imaging and re-imaging themselves.

First of all, the concept of 'owning territory' is of great importance to the imagining of a group. In the ethnic or nationalist narratives, there are always many references to the 'generic territory of the nation' (Storey 2001:79). The community feels 'connected' to the soil of the homeland, it belongs to them. The reason why the particular territory belongs to a certain group is because importance is being attached to that specific territory. The relationship between the community and the particular geographical area is being created because of the unique and indispensable setting of events and experiences that happened in that particular area. Furthermore, the ethnic landscape is "felt to have influenced a contributed to the course of events of the community " (Smith 1996:588). A version of the communities its past therefore needs to be brought into being. All nations require a past to justify their current existence and to provide a rationale for territorial claims. Fact, folklore and fiction combine to produce and reproduce a sense of nationhood myths and legends are an important part of nation-building. 'National' histories tend to present a relatively seamless narrative through which the members of the nation can trace their collective past. This is not the same as saying that an 'accurate' version of history is important (Storey 2001:77). As Hobsbawm (1998:6 in Storey 2001:77) said: "if there is no suitable past, it can always be invented".

Having a common history is of great importance in order to create a national identity during the nation building process as this enhances the collective memory and therefore the collective identity. As Smith (1991:21 in Zajda 2009:3) explains, the six main attributes of an ethnic community, as a foundation of national identity, are:

1. A collective proper name

2. A myth of common ancestry

3. Shared historical memories

4. One or more differentiating elements of common culture

5. An association with a specific 'homeland'

6. A sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population

These attributes all provide a common ground on which an ethnic group or a nation stands. When looking closer at these attributes, it stands out that creating a cohesive identity is the most important aspect of the foundation of a national identity.   Collective memory is considered as a bundle of individual memories that coalesce by means of exchanges between people and develop into a communal narrative about a certain its [the groups] historical record (Bevan 2006:15).

Issues concerning the concept of collective identity have proved especially challenging in those states that have been created or recreated following the collapse of the USSR (Burch & Smith 2007:918). These states are for the most part configured as classic unitary nation states, and yet in nearly all cases processes of state and nation building "have been effectuated on the basis of societies that are deeply polyethnic or

multinational in character (Brubaker 1996; Smith 1999)". Furthermore, nearly all of the states in question have 'painful' pasts with which they need to come to terms (Budryte 2005:1 in Burch & Smith 2007:918). In some post-communist states during the early nineties, this 'coming to terms with the past' has had quite some horrific outcomes. In post communistic states such as Yugoslavia, Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, ethnic conflict caused thousands of deaths and many more victims that were in some way affected by conflict. These conflicts proved to be very influential during nation building processes concerning the cohesion within a certain ethnic group as 'certain dramatic events, in particular, can serve to galvanize and crystallize a potential group, or to ratchet up pre-existing levels of groupness (Brubaker 2002:71 in Jones 2011:215).' This because ethnicity is among the main social markers in which cultural boundaries among various groups of people are delineated (Tirtosudarmo 2006:9-10) .During these conflicts, the primordial discourse of ethnicity as being something natural became very significant. As Ignatieff (1999:189) states "ethnicity is sometimes described as if it were a skin, a fate that cannot be changed" As Fearon & Laitin state "people often believe, mistakenly, that certain social categories are natural, inevitable and unchanging facts about the social world" (2000:848). This was very much present in the ethnicity/nationalist discourse as Ignatieff argues "A nationalist takes the neutral facts about a people -their language, habitat, culture, tradition, and history- and turns these facts into a narrative" (1999:186).

Nation building is thus a top-down process in which authorities and/or elites influence processes in order to enhance national cohesion. The nation is a structure that has been institutionalized through long social processes that have their origins around 400-300 years ago.[5] Nationalism is a doctrine which enhances these processes significantly. This as nationalism is a doctrine in which people "who see themselves as distinct in their culture, history, institutions, or principles should rule themselves in a political system that expresses and protects those distinctive characteristics (Snyder 2000:23)". States in which there is a strong emphasis on nationhood, the "homeland is the place where pseudomemory is encouraged to flourish and where a given group becomes infused with primordial ideas about the eternal state of their nation and the inalienable link with the land that is a gift of trust from their forefathers (Smith et al 1998:48)". "Nation-

---

[5] Gellner argues that nationalism has its origin in the industrial age (1997:28). He argues that during the industrial revolution, there was a homogeneity of culture, instead of the strong hierarchical system that were present during earlier stages in history. Gellner argues that there was a high culture that was the precondition of political, economic and social citizenship. The modernization is according to Gellner the main factor for the creation of nations. This because the purpose of culture is no longer to define the place within the hierarchical society, but it is the creator of political boundaries. Benedict Anderson argues that the economic change and increase of rapid communications in the form of print-capitalism made it ''possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways'' (1991:36).Print-capitalism created print-languages which laid the bases for national consciousness. The print-language created unified fields of exchange and communication (1991:44). Anderson furthermore argues that in the process of this creation, people became gradually aware of the other millions of people in their particular language-field and therefore created a base for the nationally imagined community (1991:44). This print-language also reinforced the evolution of language to a modern unified language that helped build the subjective idea of the nation (1991:44).

building architects make extensive use of history to promote those historical narratives that embody the politically correct teleology of the state (Zajda 2009:4)."

As Sayyid and Zack argued (1998 in Demmers 2012:135) "group boundaries are constructed discursively", which therefore implies that power and manipulation play a vital part in this process as this process is not natural but being carried out. As Foucault states: "One can assume that power creates knowledge…, that there exists no power relations which does not constitute a certain field of knowledge and there exist no knowledge which does not constitute and is not conditioned by certain power relations (1977:63)." Certain members within society have therefore more power and have therefore more access to, and control over discourses that are used to influence society. These members, as they have more control over discourses are therefore by that definition more powerful (van Dijk 2001:356).

In addition it is important to know that discourses are not only instigated by elites, but are also being sustained by the people who practice those discourses. They may not be directly aware of the discourse, but that does not change the fact that they are also responsible for the existence of a particular discourse. As Durkheim (1933:79 in Demmers 2012:55) stated: "the totality of beliefs and sentiments common to average citizens of the same society forms a determinate system which has its own life; one may call it the collective or common conscience". Society therefore exercises its control over the individuals within that community, through their participation in a shared consciousness (Durkheim in Demmers 2012:55).

Critical Discursive Analysis

As Sayyid and Zac (1998:21 in Demmers 2012:118) argue: The discursive approach focuses on the way in which communities construct their limits; their relationship to that which they are not or what threatens them; and the narratives which produce the founding past of a community, its identity and its projections of the future. Critical discourse analysis therefore focuses on stories, narratives and more importantly how and why they are being constructed.

The struggle to control the interpretation of violence and the establishment of a 'regime of truth' should therefore be researched and acknowledged. Michel Foucault stated that "each society has its own régime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the type of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true" (Foucault 1980:131). Therefore, it has to be understood that it is not about finding *the* truth, as none of the interpretations are true or perhaps all of them are true, but to acknowledge there is a power/knowledge at work that establishes that regime of truth. As Bourdieu argues: symbolic power is power to construct a hegemonic version of reality (1996:40-42). Furthermore, it is therefore important to look at how and why these different interpretations of violence arise. This because the interpretation of a particular violent event can also be used to legitimize certain violent acts. If the truth of one particular party is seen as the legitimate truth, this could be seen as *the* truth and therefore there lies immense power within the

interpretation and narratives concerning the truth. Brass rightly states that: "we need to view the contest for gaining control over the interpretation of violence as at least as important and probably more important than the outcome of specific violent struggles themselves (1996:45). What therefore matters is "how the past has been relayed into the present, how an event obtains significance (or 'historicity') at the point of its occurrence and how the narrative of meaning which develops around it comes to inform present-day concerns" (Webber 2009:449).

These structures and régimes of truth imply certain norms and codes of conduct. One régime of truth might for example approve certain actions, while another might condemn it as it is against its norms. As stated by Jabri (1996:83 in Demmers 2012:121): "Structures of signification imply shared symbolic orders and modes of discourse which enable as well as constrain everyday interaction and situate or position actors in time and space… Structures of legitimation define a second element of the rules of social life, namely norms and the sanctions which accompany their application in social interaction. Normative expectations refer to those codes of conduct, some enshrined in law, and other more informal, which legitimate some actions while censoring others. Dominant norms are central in the definition and constitution of society and can be subject to conflict at different times in the historical process." The normative expectations explained by Jabri, therefore constitute and legitimize certain actions but can in addition also construct and legitimize certain versions of (collective) memory and history. As Schröder and Schmidt (2001, in Demmers 2006:132) argue: "Wars are fought from memory, and they are often fought over memory, over the power to establish one's group view of the past as the legitimate one. From this perspective violence is not only a resource for solving conflicts over material issues, but also a resource in world making, to assert one groups claim to truth and history against rival claims, with all the social and economic consequences this entails." Power is therefore being exercised through these symbolic orders, which are in the case of this thesis; spatial discourses. Power in this thesis is therefore defined as having the capacity and the resources to define and establish a régime of truth.

Spatiality and Discourse

While critical discourse analysis mainly focuses on language, it should be noted that there are many more forms of discourse that could impose political and social domination. It is therefore important to look at these other forms of discourse and expose those underlying power relations. As stated before, spatial discourses will be central to this thesis.

Spatial discourses concern spaces and places that have added meaning to one or more communities. They contribute to a certain régime of truth, as they convey certain meaning to a narrative. Because spatial discourses address certain communities, they therefore construct social boundaries by giving meaning to certain events or places. "Spatial discourses are elaborate ideologies of place that often relate to the

construction of social boundaries. Using ideologies of place, people describe the kinds of places that exist, explain their nature, evaluate them (employing cognitively and emotionally salient imagery to create a symbolic landscape), identify with them, and imagine places as they ought to be (Cooper 1994:93)."

Territory is a very distinct part of the shared identity of a group. This is also the case with Abkhazia, as Irakli Khintba states that: 'I think that for the Abkhazians, because they are more traditional as a people, it is different. And I think Dutch or German people are different, as we are a more traditional society still. So for us the most important is our soil, Abkhaz soil, Abkhaz land, the homeland is very important.'[6] The concept of territorial imagery plays an important role in the relationship between a community and the territory, as it illustrates the commonplace aspects of national identity, often associated with everyday spaces (2001:85). As Garik Sanguliya , the head of the department of the protection of the historical and cultural relics of the Republic of Abkhazia, said in regards to the Abkhaz soil and landscape: ´Abkhazia is the country of mountains and paradise at the sea. […] On the one hand we have the great Caucasus Mountains with beautiful places such as Lake Ritsa, and when you travel south you will reach the sea. We have everything, this is Abkhaz soil and we are so proud of it, this is home.'[7] These romanticized pictures of the homeland are also being used on tourism websites and postcards. The landscape becomes part of the identity of a group, as it associates itself with a certain landscape and views this relationship as unbreakable as 'this is where they belong'. The collective memory and formation of group identity therefore has also a very distinct spatial character as the '[home] land', is 'the place wherein memory is rooted', and has always been a key building block of national identity, as part of what we have termed the tendency to territorialize ethnic boundary markers (Williams & Smith 1985:502).

The relationship between the community and the particular geographical area is being created because of the unique and indispensable setting of events and experiences that happened in that particular area. This relationship is being stressed by the altering of the landscape, by adding spatial discourses that represent the connection of the community and the geographical area. Monuments, streets, neighborhoods, buildings, churches, and parks are al material *things*, but they also evoke specific kinds of meanings and serve as spatial coordinates of identity (Lynch 1972 in Osborne 2001:4). The forms of spatiality are traces that are left in place by cultural life (Anderson 2010:5). These traces can be durable in a material sense (as they have durability due to their solidity and substance as things), but they may also last due to their on-material substance (this as they make impressions and therefore leave traces in our (collective) memory (Anderson 2010:5)). These marks therefore tie the meaning of a certain place and/or form of spatiality to the identity of groups that make or are being influenced by them. Ricoeur (1995) explains that "the identity of a group, culture, people, or nation is not that of immutable substance, nor that of a fixed structure, but rather, of a

---

[6] Interview Irakli Khintba, Sukhum, May 15th 2013
[7] Interview Garik Sanguliya, Sukhum, May 15th 2013

recounted story". It can be argued that architecture, monuments in particular, is the keeper of this recounted story and thus a keeper of identity.

It has to be understood that spaces and places are not capable of embodying memories. As Adrian Forty (2001 in Bevan 2006:15) argues that it is impossible that "memories formed in the mind can be transferred to solid material objects". The built environment is merely a prompt, a corporeal reminder of the events involved in its construction, use and destruction. This does not mean that they are built without any meaning attached to them, or that they are built without a specific purpose. The meanings and memories that are being attributed to those examples are created by human agency (Bevan 2006:16). These memories attached or attributed to certain spaces and places can of course be removed and/or altered as they are contested and changed over time (Bevan 2006:16). As spatial discourses are being created and attached to a certain built environment, there therefore resides a certain purpose within the attachment to a built environment. History therefore works in conjunction with a 'national' geography to propagate the existence of the nation. It links the existence of the nation through historical narratives to a certain geographical area and feeds therefore the belonging of the particular group.

III. _Destruction_

"The essential act of war is destruction, not necessarily of human lives, but of the products of human labour. War is a way of shattering to pieces, or pouring into the stratosphere, or sinking in the depths of the sea, materials which might otherwise be used to make the masses too comfortable, and hence, in the long run, too intelligent."

-George Orwell, 1984 (2008:238).

This chapter focuses on the phenomenon of destruction during and after a violent conflict, and how this can contribute to nation building. The destruction of buildings and other forms of spatiality will be treated as acts that contain strategic logic and are therefore not merely forms of collateral damage. In addition it is argued that the destruction of buildings or other forms of architecture have extensive effects on a community.

Introducing Destruction

War is all about destruction, whether it is about physical, emotional, relational or architectural destruction. As Susan Sontag (2003:9) beautifully wrote in her last book before she passed away: "To be sure, a cityscape is not made of flesh. Still, sheared-off buildings are almost as eloquent as body parts (Kabul, Sarajevo, East Mostar, Groznyy, 16 acres of lower Manhattan after September 11, 2001, the refugee camp in Jenin). Look, the photographs say, this is what it's like. This is what war does. War tears, war rends. War rips open, eviscerates. War scorches. War dismembers. War ruins." Destruction is a physical manifestation of violence and war; it is both an act as a result of conflict. The destruction of buildings is to a city what dismemberment or amputation is to a human body. It scars a community which has to live amidst these ruined buildings.

"The destruction of architecture can be looked upon as merely achieving a military objective, getting closer to victory, or can be viewed as being second and a background to the casualties caused by a terrorist strike. When buildings are not in the path of the military but _are_ the target, their architecture takes on a totemic quality (Bevan, 2006 in Zaprianov 2012)". Many people discard the destruction of buildings during a war as barbaric acts, as being nothing short of savagery, or as a necessary evil, an unavoidable consequence of violence. While this of course has a certain truth to it, the destruction of buildings most of the time has a more elaborate and sinister purpose. Destruction can namely be a tactic, part of a strategy during and after

violent episodes. It can be used to demoralize the enemy, but also it can be used to erase the history and culture of a certain group. In warfare it can be notably difficult to determine what has been destroyed as part of the destructive process of war itself, what has been devastated by delinquent means or what has been ruined due to its cultural value to a particular community. Still, nowadays the destruction of buildings and other forms of spatiality that bare certain cultural significance are not merely seen as collateral damage but as intentional warfare and political tactics. Destruction as a tactic during conflict is not a something significantly new to contemporary wars. One of the most infamous and vivid example of tactical destruction of space, are the allied bombings of German cities and the German bombings of London during the Second World War of 1940-1945. The British at times sought out specifically German towns and sites that had important cultural and historic cores that were particularly sensitive to high explosives and incendiaries (Bevan 2006:74). This was considered useful in the war effort against Germany by the Allies, as many buildings were symbols of national or civilizational power, which made them exquisite targets to demoralize the enemy (Davis 2002:418).

Besides using destruction as a tactic during war in order to sustain the war effort, the destruction of space can even be used to influence, alter or even erase history and culture. The architectural structures have been created by people and are part of their cultural heritage. By destroying these structures, you destroy part of their culture, their identity and their sense of belonging. The destruction of culture is therefore a very effective instrument during ethnic conflict, as identity plays a significant role in those conflicts. As Milan Kundera(1988 in Bevan 2006:17) said: "[T]he struggle of man against power, is the struggle of memory against forgetting". It therefore has to be remembered that the levelling of buildings or other forms of architecture has immense consequences for the future well-being of communities (Bevan 2006:17).

A number of writers have noted that a new concept is required in order to grasp the nature of widespread and deliberate destruction of the built environment: *urbicide* (Coward 2009:35). "Urbicide […] is the destruction of buildings not for what they individually represent (military target, cultural heritage, conceptual metaphor) but as that which the condition of possibility of heterogeneous existence (Coward, 2009:39)." The use of terms such as 'urbicide' and/or 'cultural cleansing' to identify a particular form of destruction is of course not without its own political implications. These terms are therefore being used in order to indicate that the pattern of deliberate destructions of the built environment was a form of political violence, integral to specific political programs.[8] As Bevan also stated, "the point is that the destruction [of a building] is often the result of political imperatives rather than simply military necessity (Bevan 2006:2003)."

These accounts of destruction of cultural architecture go back centuries as the conquistadors for example destroyed many urban centers consisting of temples, palaces and houses in the New World (Bevan 2006:20) "All physical traces of Aztec culture were burned or looted and the people killed or forcibly

---

[8] Martin Coward on the use of the term 'urbicide' in Urbicide*:* The politics of urban destruction (2009).

converted to Christianity […] There was to be no backsliding and no reminders of the past (Bevan 2006:20)." While this phenomenon clearly can be traced back many centuries, the academic interest in the destruction of buildings enjoyed its peak during the war in former Yugoslavia of 1991-1995. The purposeful targeting of urban centres and buildings during this war caused many casualties in the form of human lives but also in the form of cultural heritage. The bombing of the Ottoman bridge at Mostar is maybe the most striking image of intentional cultural destruction.

Mostar, a city that was part of the former Yugoslavia in 1991 and now situated in Bosnia-Herzegovina was famous for its Ottoman bridge build in 1566 that connected the two parts of the city that was divided by the Neretva River. It "was considered to be a masterpiece of Islamic architecture and a unique symbol of an undivided city (Stover & Weinstein 2004:151)". This feeling of undividedness came to an abrupt end with the war in 1991. "At first, Croats and Muslims joined together against the Bosnian Serbs; then the Croats turned on the Muslims, driving them across the river. At the time, of course, it all seemed if not sane, then at least necessary, to divide into two warring camps, to defend yourself and to drive your neighbours across the river (Ignatieff 2002)." On Nov. 9, 1993, an artillery unit, from the Croatian side of the city, that had been firing for two days managed to bring down the Old Bridge (Ignatieff 2002). "It took the Croat gunners on Hum Hill some 60 shells, but eventually they brought down the sixteenth-century Ottoman bridge at Mostar. Its cat's back arch collapsed into the waters of the Neretva River on 9 November 1993(Bevan 2006:25)". It had seen a lot of violence and survived several wars in its lifetime including the first and Second World War, but during this 'act of madness' it finally succumbed to violence.

The bridge was the only thing that kept both sides of the city together, so as Ignatieff stated: "destroying the oldest and most beautiful of them (the other bridges were badly damaged, too) was not just a piece of barbarism. It was also a perverse act of self-mutilation (Ignatieff 2002)." As Riedlmayer (1995 in Coward 2009:6) states: "[T]he Destruction of the bridge was a symbolic illustration of the peaceful co-existence between different ethnic communities in Mostar." The historical record, or collective memory, of the co-existence that had characterised Bosnian society for over 400 years had been destroyed. Furthermore, it was also the destruction of a cultural artifact that had its foundation in the Ottoman Empire, which is closely linked with the Muslim Bosniak population. The destruction of the bridge had very little significance for a victory in the war, but had all the more impact on the collective memory of co-existence

It is therefore important to deepen the understanding of structural destruction during of ethnic conflict. Martin Coward (2009:37) agrees with this, as he states that: "Whilst there is much to condemn within ethnic nationalism, concentrating on supposed barbarity or backwardness distracts us from a considered analysis of the role the destruction of the built environment plays in such political programs". The destruction of architecture is not merely collateral damage. All of this is complementary to the attitude that contemporary warfare and terror now largely boil down to contests over the spaces, symbols, meanings, support systems or power structures of cities and urban regions (Graham 2004:168).

Cultural Cleansing in an Ethnic War: Abkhazia 1992-1993

During an ethnic conflict, the desire to eradicate everything from the other party outweighs the rational and ethical advantages of safeguarding buildings and cultural artifacts (Bevan 2006:15, Horowitz 2002:436). As said before, the destruction of cultural architecture during ethnic conflict has a deeper meaning than just destroying buildings for the sake of it. It has to do with eradicating the other completely, population wise but also the traces a community left on its soil. This was also the case in the Georgian-Abkhaz war of 1992-93.

During the war in the early nineties, the Abkhaz, Georgian but also the forces from the Northern Caucasus all destroyed architecture that had significant meaning to another party. Religious buildings were destroyed, monuments damaged and towns burned down to the ground. These events were all part of an extensive ethnic cleansing campaign in order to remove all Georgian/Abkhazian components from the area. On of the goals of this campaign was to make their own claim of the area called Abkhazia legitimate

When driving through the southern eastern part of Abkhazia, particularly the Gal region, the ruins of hundreds of houses scattered all over the landscape are the physical reminders of the war and the ethnic cleansing campaign that came with it. Today nature is reclaiming hundreds, if not thousands of ruined buildings across Abkhazia, from the concrete skeletons of small townhouses to the solemn grandeur of Tsarist-era sanatoriums and hotels (Edwards 2013). Most of these houses belonged to ethnic Georgians that fled the violence during and short after the war. The Gal region did not see much fighting, as most of the fighting was concentrated around Sukhum and the western parts of Abkhazia. But as the Gal region consisted mainly of ethnic Georgians, the Abkhazian forces continued the violence and ethnic cleansing in order to get rid of as much ethnic Georgians as possible (Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe 1993)

Rusiko Marshania, an ethnic Abkhaz woman married to a Georgian now residing in Tbilisi, said that: 'I was in Abkhazia when the Georgians fled. No one came to warn us for what was coming. I only remember one person, one Abkhaz military guy, who warned the remaining Georgian citizens that they [the Abkhazian army] were just looking for Georgian soldiers in the area. But, he said, after the Abkhazian army, there will be a group of paramilitaries to rob and to kill. [...] No one expected it would that cruel.'[9] The destruction of houses that occurred after the population fled can therefore also be seen as a continuation of the cleansing of Georgian elements. The destruction of Georgian houses reduced the chances of the return of the Georgians to who the houses belonged. One other side-effect of the 1992-3 war was that both sides attacked the cultural

---

[9] Interview Rusiko Marshania, Tbilisi, May 31st 2013

artifacts of the other. The Abkhazians for example destroyed Georgian architecture such as a statue of the medieval Georgian poet Shota Rustaveli and have erased all Georgian cultural references from Sukhum (De Waal 2002).

Not only the Abkhazians destroyed cultural artifacts of the enemy, as the Georgians also targeted buildings that had cultural significance to the other party. According to de Waal (2002) '"One of '[t]he biggest act of cultural vandalism was undoubtedly the destruction of Abkhazia's archive. It seems to have been a deliberate attempt by the Georgian paramilitary soldiers to wipe out the region's historical record." The Abkhaz news site stated in an article concerning the events involving the archive that: "At the end of October, the Abkhazian Research Institute of History, Language and Literature named after Dmitry Gulia[10], which housed an important library and archive, was deliberately torched by the invaders, who were bent on destroying the documentary evidence that proved Abkhazians' residence in their historical homeland; also targeted was the capital's public library (2009a)." As Sanguliya states: 'Many buildings have been destroyed during the war, and yes the library containing the archives was one of them. Today, the only reminder of those archives is the rubble still laying there on a field of grass. […] And yes, they were destroyed by the Georgian troops. They (the Georgians) said they never bombed the archives, but we have found artillery shells that were used by the Georgians inside the remains of the archives, which obviously is the evidence they did bomb it.'[11]

It seems that the question if something has been done on purpose is always very difficult to determine. And even if the individuals did do it on purpose, then this does not immediately mean that a certain event is part of some strategic logic set out by the authorities of an army and/or country. This is especially very confusing and difficult to determine in the fog of war, where it is almost impossible to recover all the facts contributing to certain actions. This is not to say that when it is hard to prove, it has not been done on purpose, it is only to argue that one should not step to conclusion to quick. Although it might not have been proven that the library and other buildings have been bombed to eradicate Abkhazian culture, it does not seem to matter, as most of the Abkhaz are very certain of the intentions of the Georgians. The visualisation of Georgians as barbarians whose main aim is to eradicate the Abkhazian culture and annex them into Georgia corresponds perfectly with the image that the Abkhaz want of their enemy. Sanguliya has no doubt on the Georgian intentions as he says: ' [Yelling] Yes! It was done on purpose! Of course it was! The archives were burned down on purpose so that the Abkhaz would have no evidence of their history, so that we would not be able to build our own independent state. People were trying to save the archives by putting out the fire. But those people got shot by Georgian soldier who were shooting at the legs of people

---

[10] Dmitry Gulia (1874-1960) was an Abkhazian Soviet writer and poet and considered as one of the founders of Abkhaz literature.
[11] Interview Garik Sanguliya, Sukhum, May 15th 2013.

who came out of the building. So yes, is that not obvious evidence that it was done on purpose?'[12] The cultural and historical influences of these buildings therefore bare a great significance for the population of Abkhazia.

Even after the end of the war, both sides accuse each other of destroying on another's cultural legacy, of committing urbicide.

Destruction as continuation of conflict in Abkhazia 2013: Ilori Church

Destruction has not only been an issue during the 1992-93 war, but also in the two decades that followed. As Georgian historian Giorgi Anchabadze said in an interview with radio station Ekho Kavkaza (Andrei Babitsky 2012): "unfortunately, this conflict, which took place almost twenty years ago, but thank God, the hot phase is over, and I hope it will not resume. Still, the conflict itself is not over; the political struggle continues — the information war will continue."

In Abkhazia, there are still many remains, buildings that have close connection to the ethnic Georgian community. The buildings very often are of a religious nature, such as churches and chapels. Many of these religious cultural artifacts are of great importance to the Georgian community residing in Abkhazia, as well as proper Georgia. Many of these buildings have been destroyed or damaged during the war of 1992-93, or have been in a deteriorating state since then. After 2008, the government of Abkhazia has started to renovate a few of these endangered buildings. These buildings have been neglected for a long time, mainly due to lack of financial resources caused by the isolation of Abkhazia after the war of 1992-93. After 2008, the financial investments from Russia made the renovations of a few buildings possible. These renovations however, sparked a lot of political discussion in Georgia and resulted almost immediately in the accusations of the destruction of Georgian culture.

The Ilori (Elyr in Abkhaz) Church of St. Georg is situated in the village of Ilori, next to the town of Ochamchyra in the South-Eastern part of Abkhazia. The Church was built during the first quarter of the 11th century, AD and was according to historians considered to have been one of the more significant religious locations of medieval western Georgia (Rustavi 2010). "The building has a single-nave design. During its long history, the Church underwent several important architectural modifications and was repaired by Levan II Dadiani in the 17th century, only to be burnt down by Ottoman Turks in 1736. The building was eventually restored again in the latter half of the same century (Rustavi 2010)."

---

[12] Ibid.

Figure 1: On the left side a picture of the Ilori Church before renovation, on the right side the Ilori Church after renovation.

Source: National Bank of Georgia, Commemoration of the Ilori Church.

Although the church survived the war of 1992-93, during the years after the war the church fell on hard times. As stated before, not much money was available to restore the church, which was still fully functioning. There was a lot of water damage in the church, and because of that it needed to be renovated. Most of the damage was on the outside of the building.[13] When renovations started around 2009-2010, there immediately was criticism from Georgia.

On 26 March 2013, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia Nino Kalandadze said at a briefing that Abkhazia is "working hard to eliminate any Georgian traces' from the cultural heritage (Democracy & Freedom Watch 2013, Abkhazworld 2012)." In addition The Georgian ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia addressed international organizations with an official letter, stating that: "The following alarming fact has recently been confirmed of the occupied territory of Abkhazia, Georgia: St. George's Church in Ilori, built in the 11th centuries and one of Georgia's most important sites of worship, has been coarsely and unprofessionally reconstructed. A Russian-style onion dome, resembling a chimney, has been put on top of the church, which has the shape of a hall. The façade of the church has been whitewashed and its arch unattractively repainted. Even more alarming is the covering of Georgian

---

[13] Interview Garik Sanguliya, Sukhum, May 15th 2013.

inscriptions, on the walls of the church, with paint. The Ilori church is a bright example of Georgian medieval architecture and this type of 'reconstruction' is totally unacceptable." Unesco confirmed these allegations by stating that: "Last year the 11th century Church of Ilori St. George, located in Abkhazia, completely lost (traditional Georgian architecture features) after rehabilitation works (UNESCO 2012:1)."

According to Dr. Viacheslav Chirikba an advisor to the Abkhaz government, the accusations concerning the Ilori church are false. In a statement concerning the Geneva talks on security in Transcaucasia he stated that: "We shall show that no barbarous restoration has taken place at the Elyr (Ilori) church and that, on the contrary, everything was done to the church to make it accessible to people. Then this topic will be closed once and for all,' said Chirikba. 'We are not going to justify ourselves before anyone, since painting the walls of the Elyr (Ilori) church poses absolutely no threat to peace in the region. This is a private matter for Abkhazia, whether to paint or not to paint our own churches (Abkhazworld 2011)." Dr. Viacheslav Chirikba therefore denies the Georgian allegations, and puts argues that the renovations of the Ilori church is a private matter for Abkhazia.

Two years later, it seemed that there actually had been some problems with the renovation, as the Abkhaz position on the issue softened a bit. When asked with the question if Georgian signs of culture have been removed from the Ilori Chuch, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Irakli Khintba says: 'No, well yes I mean in some parts it is. The thing is that these Georgian scripts didn't appear there from the very beginning of the function of this church. This was something that was made after the Georgians settled here. […]That is why we would not say these scripts are the imminent, the integral part of this church. […]So ok, some scripts have been demolished but it does not inflict any harm to the culture or historical value of this subject. I am not a specialist on the issue of reconstruction, but I think that those who were doing this, they very much understood that they didn't do any harm to this object, to this building.' [14] Khintba therefore acknowledges that Georgian inscriptions have been removed, but according to him this happened either by accident, or because they were not an integral and original part of the church. 'Of course in our point of view we do our best to renovate these churches, and indeed a lot have been done, already. But also on the other hand in our society there are some different opinions on this. Some people think that we shouldn't follow Russian matrix of the whole process of renovation and construction. Because Georgians blame us for creating some kind of Russian church, instead of what we used to have before the war. As if before it was some kind of Georgian church […]. No of course not, because it is just a cultural layer. But on the other hand of course we think that this Christian sacred, places like churches from the sixth century in Abkhazia which are very old and of course one of the oldest in the region of Eurasia should be cherished.'[15]

Garik Sanguliya also sees the renovations as something that was firstly necessary and secondly nothing out of the ordinary. He states that the church had already been renovated a lot of times during the

---

[14] Interview Irakli Khintba Sukhum May 15th 2013.
[15] Ibid.

Soviet times, even the Georgians renovated the church themselves. 'We renovate a lot of churches in Abkhazia, we have to cherish those artifacts, as they are part of our history and we should be proud of that. That is why we take great responsibility and carefulness in the renovations of those churches. But you have to understand, those churches date back centuries, so of course renovating these churches is not getting easier.'[16] Thus, the Abkhazian authorities and the departments connected with the renovations of the Ilorich church deny any allegations of intentional destruction of Georgian forms of culture in Abkhazia. Still, it has to be said that after the war of 1992-93, the anti Georgian sentiments have been very strong in both government as in Abkhaz communities. The existence of Georgian culture in the form of churches, inscriptions and such, tend to be seen contamination. These places are seen as being contaminated by 'the other', a foreign (Georgian) influence and brings up associations with the war of 1992-93. Irakli Khintba therefore says: 'So, of course it is very quite understandable in Ilori village or the neighboring villages, […], they don't want to see any Georgian scripts because they are victims of the war.'[17]

It is quite difficult to determine the exact intentions behind the destruction and/or dismemberment of buildings or other cultural spatial discourses in Abkhazia. As mentioned during this chapter, the stories of the Georgian side and the Abkhaz side are entirely contradicting each other. It therefore seems more like a political joust in which both sides accuse each other of lying, distorting the truth and cultural genocide.

Although a purposeful intention cannot be proven (which is also not the intention of this thesis) the result in the end is the same, which is the removal of Georgian elements of culture. The removal of Georgian elements of culture, therefore still have the impact on the ethnic Georgian community residing in the area. Spaces and places with cultural significance are part of certain narratives belonging to a certain group. When removing or altering these spaces and places, you therefore alter or remove parts of these narratives that those groups might deem as important. Especially in such a sensitive region where ethnicity still is of significant importance, these alterations can extent into deep into someone's identity. As Bevan (2006:16) states: "If the touchstones of identity are no longer there to be touched, memories fragment and dislocate – their hostile destruction is an amnesia forced upon the group as a group and on its individual constituent members. Out of sight can become, literally, out of mind both for those whose patrimony has been destroyed and for the destroyers."

The restoration of the Ilori church can therefore be seen as the establishment of a particular régime of truth concerning collective memory. This due to the fact that, as Irakli Khintba stated before, the Abkhaz authorities responsible for the restoration of the church choose to restore it to its 'original' state, which according to them did not include Georgian inscriptions. It is therefore also a manifestation of power, as the Abkhaz authorities determine which parts of history the Ilori Church has to represent. They, together with

---

[16] Interview Irakli Khintba Sukhum May 15th 2013.
[17] Ibid.

agencies concerning cultural heritage, make the choices which inscriptions to keep and to which state they want to restore the building.

Concluding Destruction

This chapter has argued that the destruction of architecture during ethnic conflict is more than just collateral damage. The destruction of space, also dubbed as urbicide by certain scholars, during conflict is seen as part of an ethnic cleansing campaign, as it assures not only the removal of a certain ethnic population, but also the cultural evidence in the region of that particular group. This coincides with nation building, as it strengthens the dominant culture of the ethnic group in power. Furthermore it may cause a rupture between the affected ethnic group and the landscape, as these cultural places have significant meaning to one´s identity.

The difficulty however is to affirm the fact that these forms of destruction actually have strategic logic behind them. While it has been said that the Georgian forms of culture are seen as a painful reminder of the past, and therefore some sort of contamination of the Abkhazian landscape, this does not automatically imply that these forms of spatiality therefore have been removed on purpose in order to ´cleanse´ the region of Georgian culture in order to maintain a hegemony of Abkhaz culture. The end result however is still the same, as forms of Georgian culture have been removed.

IV.   Separation

This chapter seeks to explain the role of boundaries and borders in the construction of sociospatial identities in Abkhazia and how these boundaries are constructed through spatial narratives and discourses. In addition to this, it will look at how the effects of the spatial discourses of the borders and boundaries affect the people living in the borderlands and how this in turn influences the nation building.

Constructed Boundaries

In an intrastate system that is nowadays the best-known example of formalized territories, it is necessary to have boundaries to separate states from each other (Storey 2001:29). Eric Hobsbawm also already contended that actual physical border became of importance during the twentieth century, as by then the European identity as a complex unit became a cultural construction that would always include certain spatial areas and necessarily exclude others (Hobsbawm 1998:220). The same applies to frontiers between states. Where boundaries are mainly taken to refer to a precise line separating territories, frontiers are the zones around the border; the so called borderlands. These frontiers do not exist either in a topographical or in a linguistic sense and the self-conscious linking of place and identity is quite a modern phenomenon that has been rooted in nineteenth-century Europe (Febvre, 1932:296-31, in Spiridon 2006:376).

Robert Sack (1983, 1986 in Storey 2001:15) also rejects the determinist theories of territory as he favors a 'political' theory which sees territorial behavior as 'a geographic strategy rather than a basic instinct'. Sack argues that territories are indeed social constructs embedded in social relations instead of natural phenomena and that territoriality is a component of power (1983, 1986 in Storey 2001:15).These boundaries may be contested and may therefore change over time, disappear or a new boundary may actually be created.

Physical facts of division & Power Boundaries

As Newman and Paasi (1998:187) state; borders and boundaries are of significant importance as the border landscapes of states are the areas in which political processes receive their most concrete territorial and/or geographical expression. This because the borderlands are the geographical areas where two or more political entities come into direct contact. More over, these boundaries have according to Newman and Paasi in fact "been instruments of communication aimed at reifying, but at the same time depersonalizing, power (1998:187)." Physical boundaries between territories are "equally social, political and discursive constructs, not just static naturalized categories located between states. Boundaries and their meanings are historically contingent, and they are part of the production and institutionalization of territories and territoriality (Paasi, 1991:240)."

The physical partition between different territories has immense consequences for the built environment, as well as for the collective memory of the population of both territories. By enforcing divisions, borders and segregation, physical facts are created as 'facts on the ground' (Bevan 2007:133). It creates a particular marking that delineates with walls, fences and voids where the two communities rub up against each other (Bevan 2007::133).

This form of geographical bordering is not merely a physical manifestation, as it "traces order our sense of belonging, barriers, frontiers, walls and wire reinforce this order through physically imposing limits to movement, people, and places (Anderson 2010:42)." Therefore it is also a form of cultural ordering, as it is a distinct indicator of where 'something' begins and where 'something else' ends. The cultural ordering is therefore also carried out by differentiating what is on one side of the border as this differs culturally from what is on the other side. This dual function of bordering is being performed within any geographical border as 'there is always a cultural order, and every cultural order requires and brings into being a geographical border' (Anderson 2010:44). Therefore, "this bordering process attempts to define the organisation and limits of a place, as well as the cultural group who claim it (Anderson 2010:44)."

By bordering a certain area, the authorities are also able to establish control over who belongs where. Groups can therefore be included or excluded as part of a culture or ethnicity, which makes borders an excellent spatial instrument in the process of 'purifying' its territory (Sibley 1995 in Anderson 2010:44). The notion of excluding is of vital importance, as it attributes significantly to the collective identity of a certain group. By creating physical accounts of the group's borders, a strong sense of place is being created as it implies that "this place is ours to defend, a place to live and maybe even die for (Anderson 2010:45)." Borders try to eliminate the grey area where identity and spatial ownership is not explicitly carried out. The border is therefore a place where there is separation as well as a point of contact which creates an 'us' and a 'them' (Newman & Paasi 1998:191).

Demarcation is therefore not simply the drawing of a line on a map or the construction of a fence, checkpoint or other forms of spatiality in the physical landscape (Newman 2006:148). It is the process through which borders are constructed and categories of difference and separations are created in the

physical world, as well as in the minds of people through the implementation of spatial discourses such as borders.The safeguarding and policing of the border for example, is an act that represents the repressive power of the authority in place, as it puts physical emphasis on the territorial boundaries of the (separatist) state and it intensively permeates every square inch of the territory (Ferguson & Gupta 2002:984). Bevan (2007:134) sums this up perfectly by stating that: "Where issues of delineation are concerned, the demolition of architecture is often closely linked to issues of rebuilding and intensified by proximity either side of the line. Where they are in competition, two cultures, ethnicities, ideologies or races existing side by side, but not mixing, create a heightened architectural consciousness regarding the past and future on both sides along the border zone itself, however 'artificial' that zone is historically (or maybe especially so). Memories are buying for physical expression, creating [..] 'intimate enemies'. In general such divisions are about making displacement, uneasy truces or partial victories into concrete statements of possession and validation. Differences are made manifest to intensify ownership. the perception of 'otherness' of those beyond the line is encouraged ad fostered, and homogeneity on the one's own side reinforced."

Besides the manifestation of physical facts of enforced division on the ground that is being put forward by physical partition, boundaries are also part of political processes as they are concrete territorial or geographical expressions that are instruments of communication aimed at reifying, but at the same time also at the depersonalization of power. As Sack (1986:31 in Newman & Paasi 1998:187) "territoriality is easy to communicate since in principle it requires only one kind of a marker or sign: the boundary."

In bordering therefore lies, a significant power relation between the people who constitute the boundaries, and the people who are being affected by this. It can therefore be concluded that borders and frontiers are "elementary spatial structures that assume the function of marking geopolitical discontinuities operating on the levels of the real, the symbolic and the imaginary (Foucher 1991:38 in Spiridon 2006:376)." As these borders are constructed, it is important to realize the power relations that lie behind bordering, and analyze the power structures that are responsible for the creation and maintaining of these boundaries.

A Separatist border

Since 1993 the Inguri River has acted as an informal natural border between Georgia and Abkhazia. The river is 213 kilometers long as it originates in the Caucasus Mountains and flows into the black sea. The water flowing from down from the mountains consists mainly from melt water with the addition of rain water. The river is of great importance to the power supply of Georgia, as the Enguri dam with its accommodating power station ensures 5.46 billion KWh of electricity a year on average (DFW 2012). But the most well know part of the river is the part where the Inguri Bridge connects Georgia with the separatist region of Abkhazia.

During the war of 1992-1993, many Ethnic Georgians had to flee Abkhazia. Some fled over sea. Some went into or over the mountains, but most of them fled over the Inguri, making the bridge over the

Inguri a prop of the Georgian-Abkhaz war. The bridge is at the moment the only legal land crossing point between Abkhazia and Georgia. While the Abkhaz refer to the border as the actual state border between Georgia and Abkhazia, Georgia and most part of the international community refer to it as the administrative border line (ABL). The border opens around 08.00 in the morning, depending on the border guards that are present, and closes at 19.00 in the evening. These times are indicated on a small sheet of paper in Russian on the outside wall of the Russian barracks where passports are checked.

The importance of the border for the Abkhaz state should not be underestimated from a spatial point of view. The Abkhaz side of the border is highly militarized and does also function as an actual state border. If a person would enter Abkhazia from Georgia, he/she would first have to pass a Georgian checkpoint. This checkpoint is informal as it is a police checkpoint where the person has to report his/her self.   As Georgia still considers Abkhazia as a region within its own borders, from a spatial discourse point of view it is therefore important for Georgia to also treat the border as informal. The procedure to enter Abkhazia from proper Georgia is therefore also held as informal as possible on the Georgian side of the border. This spatial discourse is not only present at the Georgian checkpoint at the administrative border, but also on road signs throughout the whole of Georgia. When travelling towards the east of Georgia, Sukhumi will still be indicated on the highway signs, as if it was still possible to go there for Georgians (Figure 2).[18]

Figure 2: Road Sign on the E60 highway, near Tbilisi indicating Sokhumi (Sukhum).

Source: Geolocation

---

[18] The same applies to the capital of South Ossetia, Tskhinvali.

By creating an atmosphere in which nothing has been changed and by using spatial discourses as if Abkhazia is still part of proper-Georgia, it maintains the discourse of an Abkhazia that is still under Georgian authority. This has been done on purpose, as the road signs have been placed quite recently, by all means after 1993.

Before arriving at the last Georgian controlled checkpoint, there is a replica of the "Non Violence" sculpture by Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd pointing towards the bridge and Abkhazia (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Metal sculpture of a pistol with a twisted barrel, a replica of the 'sculpture of non-violence by Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd.

Source: photo taken by Lizaveta Zhahanina (2010)

Just before the Inguri Bridge, there is a last Georgian military bunker with two armed soldiers watching what happens on and on the other side of the bridge. Next to the road there is a small Military garrison with turrets and small bunkers watching over the Inguri River.

The 870 meter long Inguri Bridge is the only official legal border crossing between Georgia and Abkhazia (Figure 4). This bridge was built by German prisoners of war from 1944 and was completed in 1948 (Jeska 2004). During the construction of the bridge, which sometimes is also called 'the bridge of the Germans', 13 German prisoners of war lost their lives. Today the bridge looks desolated in the almost 1km stretch of no man's land between Abkhazia and Georgia. When looking towards the Abkhaz side of the bridge, one can see the Abkhazian flag wave above the hills and trees. When looking back towards the Georgian side, the Georgian bunkers with accompanied with the Georgian flags look more threatening than welcoming. The condition of the bridge is very run down with many holes in its asphalt, while horse carriages transport goods and people from one side to the other.

Figure 4: The Inguri Bridge while heading towards the Abkhazian border crossing.

Source: photo made by author on 13-05-2013.

The UNDP, with support of EU member states made plans to renovate the bridge, as its deteriorating state could cause dangerous situations in the near future. The Abkhaz authorities replied with the statement that they wanted to repair the bridge as they claim the bridge to be on their soil, so if they would be responsible for the repairs this would further support their claim. Georgia evidently opposes the Abkhaz claim, so the UNDP and EU plans, as well as the Abkhaz plans, are still subject to discussion at this time.[19]

On the Abkhaz side of the bridge, there is a first passport check before one enters a path with fences and barbed wire on either side. After a short walk of about 100 meters along the fenced off path, is the final and official passport control (See Figure 5).

---

[19] Interview Rusiko Marshania & Medea Turashvili, Tbilisi, May 31st 2013 .

Figure 5: 3 photos taken of the Abkhazian border crossing on the Abkhazian side.

Source: photos taken by author on 21-05-2013.

This process most time the time takes quite some time as due to many ethnic Georgians (mainly elderly) who travel often between the Gal(i) region in Abkhazia and Zugdidi in proper Georgia where they receive treatment in hospitals and/or visit family. The passport check is done in a small improvised 'container building' with darkened windows so it is not possible to see who is on the other side doing the administration and checking of the passports. The administration and passport checking is actually being done by Russian soldiers, as they spoke with a very strong Russian accent and it also has been confirmed by ICG as they stated that: '[d]uring a recent entry by Crisis Group, one Russian and one Abkhaz official manned the booth, with the Russian clearly in charge – though the Russians at the border wear uniforms identical to the Abkhaz, without visible Russian insignia (ICG 2013:6).'

Since the signing of the border agreement by Moscow, Sukhum and Tskhinvali on April 30th of 2009, Russia has been the main responsible party for the border security at the administrative border between Abkhazia and Georgia. Since then the border has been subject to a complete makeover. According to HRW (2011:48): 'until August 2008 there were four or five official crossing points over the Inguri River and about a dozen unofficial ones, particularly when the river's water level was low. Rules for crossing the administrative border, though arbitrarily applied, were more relaxed.' The agreement was signed as a temporary

measurement until Abkhazia and South Ossetia were able to upgrade their border security themselves (Corso 2009). This was not warmly welcomed by the Abkhaz but instead seen as a 'symbolic blow', as the former Abkhaz president Sergei Bagapsh had been insisting that Abkhaz forces under the formal command of Sukhum would be the 'frontier forces' with the Russians just assisting (ICG 2013:5). Nonetheless, Russia today has full control over Abkhazia's borders. The agreement was even expanded in 2010 to the maritime borders, with the arrival of Russian border patrol boats that are since then being used to safeguard Abkhazia's 215 kilometers long sea border (RIA Novosti 2010).

Almost 4 years after the signing of the border agreement, International Crisis Group has stated in a report that was released in April 2013, that "Russia has clearly solidified its security presence in Abkhazia over the past five years, flouting the commitments it made in 2008 to pull back its troops to their pre- war locations, claiming that the agreements are no longer valid because of the 'new realities' created by diplomatic recognition (ICG 2013:5)." The agreement was still in place in May 2013, as there still was a high military presence on the Abkhaz side of the border, with both Russian and Abkhaz soldiers. It could be said that, because of the fact that Russia is responsible for the safeguarding of the Abkhaz borders, Abkhazia actually loses some sovereignty or legitimacy as it is not solemnly responsible for its security. Many Abkhaz people were actually angry, or at least against the increasing Russian influence in Abkhazia. But since the arrival of the Russian border guards, Abkhazia actually has been able to gain more control over its borders by having more manpower to patrol the border and man the border checkpoints even though this is thanks to the Russian border guards. Abkhaz and Russian soldiers work together at the border, although the FSB is responsible for the examination of the passports at the checkpoints and the Abkhaz soldiers mainly act as observers.

A Symbolic Border

For the Abkhaz people, the border is also mainly something symbolic as ethnic Abkhaz people do not cross the Inguri border into proper Georgia. From al the ethnic Abkhaz people living in Abkhazia that have been interviewed for this thesis, none of them had ever been to the Inguri border, nor did their family members. None of them have been in proper Georgia and were also not planning in the near future. They do not encounter Russian soldiers in the cities where they live so basically the Russian presence and pressure is mainly felt in the border region of Gal, where mainly Ethnic Mingrelian Georgians live and by the Abkhaz authorities who have to deal with the Russian officials. This is also backed up by ICG, as they stated in the 2013 report: "The thousands of Russian troops tend to keep a low profile in major towns. In the course of a week's visit to Abkhazia and hundreds of kilometres of travel, Crisis Group encountered only a few Russian "border guards" at the administrative border line (ABL) and a lone military cargo truck. Some locals said this may be a deliberate strategy, probably designed to minimise incidents or creation of an "occupation

atmosphere" .The exception is the heavy Russian military and FSB border guard presence along the ABL, on the edge of the Gali district. After several years of work along rugged, swampy or otherwise difficult terrain, they have "demarcated" what in Soviet times was merely an unmanned administrative line and sealed off the boundary with concertina wire and trenches (2013:20)."

The spatial discourse that the Inguri border represents is therefore not immediately associated with direct security. For Abkhaz people it mainly responds to the safeguarding of the Abkhaz identity, as the Abkhaz border is (one of) the physical facts of the existence of an Abkhaz state. This is then also one of the most fundamental aspect of state building; the establishment of physical control over the territory of the particular state which is being stressed by having the territory demarcated and therefore owned. This establishment of physical control over one's own territory has actually not been fully accomplished until 2008. Although Abkhazia had won the war in 1993, it still lacked control over some parts of its claimed territory. The Kodori Gorge in northeastern Abkhazia had not been under Abkhaz control from 1993 until 2008 when it was seized after an Abkhaz military operation during the 2008 war in Georgia.

In addition to the arrival of the Russian presence at the border, there also have been extensive improvements of the border checkpoints on the Abkhaz sides. Since 2009-2010 there have been major improvements on the Abkhaz side in order to strengthen the border checkpoint and to make it look more like a proper border[20]. As David Newman (2003:20) argues: "the stronger the barrier function of the border, the more powerful the imagined, the more abstract the narrative of what is perceived as lying on the other side. Perceptions of borders usually focus on what exists on the other 'invisible' side of the line of separation. Borders exist in our mind by virtue of the fear we have of the unknown of the 'there' and which, in turn, causes us to stay on our side of the border in the 'here'."

This is very much present in the Abkhaz border case, as the former border checkpoint before 2010 consisted of some damaged concrete buildings, fences and a single turret making it a more a military checkpoint than a proper border checkpoint (see figure 6). As the earlier description of the borders shows, this has now been replaced with an improved infrastructure that in the near future will be replaced with a proper border infrastructure similar to the Russian-Abkhaz border.

---

[20] Interview Rusiko Marshania, Tbilisi, May 31st 2013.

Figure 6: Abkhazian border crossing before 2010.
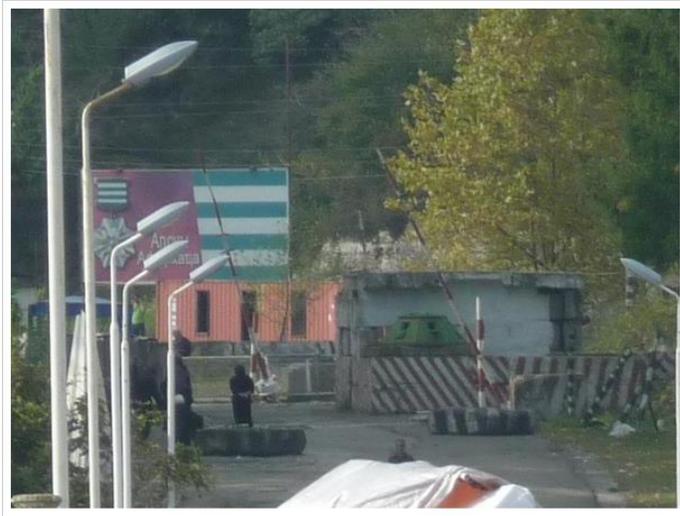
Source: photo taken by Ivan Kruchkoff (2009)

The ethnic Abkhaz people therefore feel that the stronger and formal the border is, the safer they are.[21] This also because of the fact that during Shevarnadzes and Saakashvilis terms, there were paramilitary groups crossing the Inguri River into Abkhazia trying to destabilize the border region by for example planting mines.[22] In addition to the presence of the paramilitary groups, the border region also had to deal with criminal organizations that transcended the Abkhaz-Georgian border. For those organizations, before 2008 it was very easy to cross the border and terrorize and intimidate the people living in the border region and smuggle goods from one side of the Inguri River to the other.[23]

Although there has been much criticism on the Russian presence at the administrative border, it also has to be said that it has contributed to the legitimacy of the border. The presence has brought a sense of stability at the border and it has drastically reduced the amount of corruption of the border guards. Before the signing of the agreement, many of the people crossing the border station, mainly IDP's, were the victims of harassments of the Abkhaz border guards[24]. With the Russian border guards, this has almost completely stopped as for example bribes are not necessary anymore in order to cross the Inguri border.

This does not however mean that the border has become easy to cross for the IDP's who live in the borderlands. For them the border is not just a symbolic, but a real physical manifestation that has an immense influence on their everyday life

---

[21] Interview Rusiko Marshania, Tbilisi, May 31st 2013.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.

A Practical Border

While for the ethnic Abkhaz people the border is therefore mainly of symbolic importance as it enforces the feeling of independence, for the ethnic (Mingrelian) Georgian people living in Abkhazia the border is much more affecting their lives. An estimated 250,000 ethnic Georgians were excluded from participation in Abkhazia's political, economic and social life, as most were forcibly displaced during the war of 1992-1993 (ICG 2006:19). Many of the ethnic Georgians who had to flee their homes because of the violence are now living in the border region of Samegrelo near the town of Zugdidi in artificial villages (Swiss Cooperation Office South Caucasus 2012). During the period of 1993-2013 there has been a slight increase in people who fled Abkhazia to Georgia due to short episodes of violence, although according to Abkhaz Authorities, an estimated 60,000 people have returned to Abkhazia (Abkhaz World 2009).

According to the IDMC, as of December 2012 there were up to 280,000 IDP's in Georgia. The internal displacement monitoring centre (IDMC) in addition states that, "the sustainability of returns remained questionable in 2012. Despite road repairs, infrastructure construction and humanitarian assistance in Abkhazia's Gali district, returnees faced poor housing conditions, insecurity and limited access to basic livelihoods and services (IDMC 2012)."

The reason why the Abkhaz authorities try to enforce the border is mainly to prevent the return of Georgian IDP's[25]. Many ethnic Georgians tried to cross the Abkhaz-Georgian border by avoiding the checkpoints, which has become significantly more difficult since the arrival of Russian border guards. "The sealing of the ABL has left many locals who do not possess Abkhaz passports feeling increasingly isolated, fearing loss of contact with relatives on the Georgian-controlled side. The new regime has also led to the deaths of several critically ill patients lacking permits to cross into Georgian territory (ICG 2013:19-20)." Ethnic Georgians residing in the Gal region therefore want the border to be as transparent and open as possible[26]. Article 6 of the citizenship law of Abkhazia allows dual citizenship only to persons of Abkhaz ethnicity, while all others "have the right to obtain citizenship of the Russian Federation only" as their second citizenship. According to HRW (2011:36), this provision is clearly intended to deny ethnic Georgians in the Gal district the right to retain their Georgian citizenship when acquiring Abkhaz passports. The importance of having Abkhaz citizenship is obvious, as only citizens of Abkhazia are officially entitled to certain civil and political, as well as some social and economic rights. Furthermore an Abkhaz passport is a required document for jobs in the public sector, including for teachers and medical personnel (HRW 2013:37).

The issue of citizenship does not only cause problems within the borders of Abkhazia, but are also intertwined with the issues concerning the freedom of movement that ethnic Georgians are also encountering. Abkhaz authorities are afraid of losing too much power, as the return of all the IDP's would

---

[25] Interview Rusiko Marshania, Tbilisi, May 31st 2013.
[26] Ibid.

mean that the ethnic Abkhaz population would diminish significantly in percentage. This is also one of the reasons that in May 2013, the Abkhaz authorities have suspended issuing Abkhaz passports to ethnic Georgian residents of the region fearing that the process might result into, as some Abkhaz officials put it, 'Georgianization of Abkhazia' (Civil Georgia 2013). The opposition group, Forum of People's Unity of Abkhazia, in addition argued that the 'massive' passportization process was carried out in 'detriment to the national security' and was fraught with risk of "losing sovereignty and territorial integrity (Civil Georgia 2013)." According to Civil Georgia, Stanislav Lakoba, the secretary of the Abkhaz Security Council, told lawmakers that distributing passports to ethnic Georgians without strict observance of the law would 'explode' Abkhazia from within.

Above all, as Appadurai claims, national ethnic minorities "blur the boundaries of national people hood," a cardinal transgression for which they are not to be forgiven (Appadurai 2006:45 in Dechaine 2009:49). They are the embodiment of the anxiety of incompleteness of the nation state and therefore the minorities do problematize the meaning of 'us' and 'them'. Although the Abkhaz authorities have been trying to impose Abkhaz passports and therefore taking on the Abkhaz nationality officially on the ethnic Georgians, it is highly doubtful that they will be seen as first class Abkhaz citizens[27]. Furthermore, the ethnic Georgians in the Gal district are not sympathetic towards complete assimilation, as they still want to practice their own culture, traditions, rituals and language. As Lasha Kakhiani an ethnic Georgian living in Gal says: 'We just want to be able to live according to our own culture and traditions. We want to speak our language, as all of these things define who we are. Without all of these things we would be lost.'[28]

The border therefore plays a vital role in a mechanism that Kellerman (1993) terms as 'tight control'. The mechanism of tight control involves the creation of particular laws that are meant to "regulate the movement and activities of particular ethnic groups in specific places (Anderson 2010:106)." This is used in order to enclose minorities in specific areas, so that mainstream groups can remove their ability "to take and make place in line with their cultural beliefs (Anderson 2010:106)." The minority, have to assimilate over time due the combination of isolation and policies set up by the local (Abkhaz) authorities to suppress the ethnic Georgian tendencies to stress their ethnicity.

The fact that borders are a very important and efficient instrument in the process of purifying and excluding of a certain cultural and/or ethnic group is apparent from the fact that Abkhaz authorities do not allow ethnic Georgians crossing the border into Abkhaz territory and the difficult and slow return of IDP's of the civil war and the 2008 conflict. Many Abkhaz people argue that this is due to the fact that it is simply not wise to let the ethnic Georgians come back to Abkhazia due to the fact that many among those who participated in the war are reluctant to face their former enemies and victims which could cause renewed tensions.

---

[27] Interview Lasha Kakhiani, Gal, May 17th 2013.
[28] Ibid.

Concluding Separation

This chapter has shown the importance of borders and boundaries in the process of nation building. First of all, having a legitimate border is important as it simply is the physical evidence of the state, as it is the demarcation of where the nation ends and another begins. Having a border through natural formations such as mountains and/or rivers is sufficient, but by having a legitimate border crossing point enhances the spatial discourse of a legitimate nation/state. The stronger, and/or more genuine a border looks like, the more abstract the notion becomes that what lies on the other side of the border, is indeed *different*.

The current state of the border between Abkhazia and proper Georgia does cause some discussion, as the Russian FSB is currently responsible for controlling the border. It could therefore be argued that Abkhazia is not in full control over its own borders, which could affect the legitimatization of Abkhazia as being in full control over its own borders. This was also felt by the Abkhazia population at first, as they were against the increasing Russian influence. This stance changed though, after it became clear that the Russian presence at the border actually brought more security.

Besides the fact that the border contributes to the Abkhazian national narrative, it also has an instrumental function. The border is an instrument in the process of who is allowed into a certain territory, and who is allowed to leave. In the case of Abkhazia, this mainly refers to the ethnic Georgian population residing in the Gal region. It seems that the Ethnic Georgians in the Gal region are seen, or at least portrayed, as a 'destabilizing' factor and sometimes also as foreign, by the Abkhaz authorities. The border therefore safeguards the control over the ethnic Georgian population, especially regarding the return of Georgians to Abkhazia. The concept of 'tight control' hereby plays a important part, as it allows the Abkhazian authorities to control the arriving and leaving of the Georgian population. In addition it contributes to the (forceful) assimilation of the Georgian population, as 'tight control' brings the possibility to isolate a certain group.

V.   _Remembrance_

'What is the advantage to the present individual, then, of the monumental view of the past, the concern with the classical and the rare of earlier times? It is the knowledge that the great which once existed was at least possible once and may well again be possible sometime; he goes his way more courageously, for now the doubt which assails him in moments of weakness, that he may perhaps want the impossible, has been conquered.'

-Friedrich Nietschze, On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life (1980:16).

This chapter will deal with the narrative construction of through spatial discourses, how this contributes to the collective identity of the population in Abkhazia and how this in its turn contributes to the state building of the de facto Abkhaz state. While there are many monuments in Abkhazia that are linked to the 1992-93 conflict, this chapter will focus on Glory Park, a military cemetery monument situated in the capital of Abkhazia, Sukhum.

Monuments

Publicly sited monuments offer a particularly useful way into researching the phenomenon of remembrance, as they provide a tangible manifestation of some 'memory work' process (Burch & Smith 2007:917). Monuments are therefore more than merely pieces of architecture, as they also contain meaning which contributes to a particular narrative. As Allison (2013:146) states, "Monuments […] are a form of discourse conveying meanings about the past; they tend to be erected by governments and are frequently symbols of hegemony as well as of the events they are designed to commemorate, but it is the circumstances and politics of their creation and, most especially, their reception, which endows much of their meaning." "In modern times, and with the consolidation of nation states, we have become accustomed to memorials and monuments that document the emergence of nation states, transforming prolonged historical processes into a sequence of events punctuated by turning points (Khalili 2005:37)."

Not only the actual monument is of importance, the geographical place where the monument is situated is also of high importance as this also contributes meaning. As James Young (1995:84 in Allison 2013:149) states: "A monument necessarily transforms an otherwise benign site into part of its content, even as it is absorbed into the side and made part of a larger locale. In this way, a monument becomes a point of

reference amid other parts of the landscape, one node among others in a topographical matrix that orients the rememberer and creates symbolic meaning in both the land and our recollections." In addition to this, monuments also gain meaning through the alignment on the axe of time. A monument and/or building might be unveiled on a certain date that has a particular meaning or certain celebrations and/or ceremonies might take place near the monument/building on a significant date.

This as events, places and people can be used in the nation-building process, "as nations require a history built around these elements in order to sustain their existence and meaning in the eyes of their nationals (Storey 2001:76)." "A certain tradition of images, cults, customs, rites and artifacts, as well as certain events, heroes, landscapes and values, come to form a distinctive repository of ethnic culture, to be drawn upon selectively by successive generations of the community (Smith 1991:38, in Storey 2001:76)."

Monuments take these elements and immortalize them and put them in public spaces so it becomes part of everyday life. "Monuments form part of a discourse of public memory, of representations of the past, which usually foreground wars and heroes; they constitute examples of known forms or 'genres' recognizable at public level (e.g. the statue, the obelisk, etc.). For those it addresses, a monument has antecedents, a discursive context within which it can be placed (Allison 2013:148)". According to Allison (2013:148): "in the Soviet Union, where the culture of memorialization was constantly at work in the service of the state, this was especially rich and nuanced." Building monuments that commemorate national events or individuals is therefore a major practice of constructing national consciousness in the modern era (Torek 2008:345). "These monuments enable the nation-state to construct space as national landscape (Handelman and Shamgar Handelman 1997 in Torek 2008:345), and to mobilize national identification from its citizens. By placing the hegemonic national narrative in the public space, it creates a concrete representation of its sovereignty, provides validity and legitimacy to its political claim for a territory, and mobilizes future sacrifice for the nation (Torek 2008:345)."

Mourning

As has been stated before, monuments are important for the collective memory of a certain group, as they can address a certain event that is deemed important. Certain monuments do not only address an event, but can also be the center of a ritual that contributes to the narrative of the collective memory of a certain group. Cemeteries are an important form of spatiality for the ritual of mourning. The ritual of mourning through monuments in combination with war cemeteries is something with a long history. Europe has many monuments dedicated to the soldiers that died during for example the First and Second World War, and war cemeteries are also extensively present. The United States has Arlington National Cemetery as most important burial ground for soldiers, and has a rich history of monuments commemorating wars such as for example the American Civil War.

Large groups that mourn after their members share a trauma and experience losses (Volkan 2000 in Barkan & Karn 2006:119). The remembering through erecting monuments can be used as a way through which large group mourning manifests itself to modify some existing societal processes or initiate new ones (Volkan in Barkan & Karn 2006:119). Large-group mourning can therefore exhibit itself in evolving political ideologies, such as nationalism. This happens especially when losses are caused deliberately by others through events as violent outbreaks such as a war (Barkan & Karn 2006:120).

War cemeteries, that have the shared function of firstly being a place of mourning and secondly being a monument for the collective identity of a community, are a fascinating conjuncture of a spatial discourse of the private space and the communal space. They offer family members a place to mourn their lost sons and daughters but also provide a communal narrative, a 'history of the community (Khalili 2005:32)'. As Khalili(2005:32) argues in his study of the Palestinian commemoration in the refugee camps of Libanon: "if the deceased in a cemetery are incorporated into a national narrative, the burial places acquire the holiness of the nation atop their aura of religious sanctity. That the body of a dead person ends up engulfed in the soil of a place ties the body to the place and further territorializes a person; if that soil belongs to the nation, then the 'man-land' relation at the core of nationalist ideologies is reaffirmed in the burial."

The contribution of monuments that commemorate fallen soldiers to the collective identity and therefore the state building of a community can according to Reinhart Koselleck (1979 in Pickford 2005:156) be specified in three ways:

1. "The dead, the killed, the fallen are identified in a certain respect—as heroes, victims, martyrs, victors, followers, and also even as vanquished; furthermore as keepers or bearers of honour, faith, fame, loyalty, duty; finally as guardians and protectors of the fatherland, humanity, justice, freedom, the proletariat or the particular constitution."
2. "The surviving spectators themselves are confronted with an identification to which they should or must relate themselves. '*Mortui viventes obligant,*' says the simple maxim, which can be filled out according to the identity structure given above. Their cause is also ours. The war memorial does not only remember the dead, it also reclaims the lost life in order to give a meaning to the process of surviving."
3. "Finally there is the case that is included in all those named, but that in itself means at once either more or less: that the dead are remembered—as dead."

Therefore, a monumental cemetery commemorating fallen soldiers of a certain country creates a very distinct narrative concerning the dead in correlation with the collective identity of a population. The dead buried at such a cemetery are not merely deceased people, as they are seen as the children of a particular country who gave their lives for the future of that same country. The people buried at such a cemetery are the direct object of the collective identity narrative. The fact that they are buried there automatically gives them the labels such

as victims, martyrs and heroes. This also contributes to the narrative, as only the fallen of a certain population (nation, ethnicity etc...) are seen as such, enforcing the 'Us vs. Them' narrative. By labelling their own fallen as heroes and martyrs, it labels the other party as the aggressors, enemies etc.

The people visiting the cemetery are at least as important. They are part of the process that is being engaged at the cemetery as they are active partakers in the ritual. These people are part of "performative representations of violent confrontations' which are considered public rituals in which an antagonistic relationship is being staged (Schröder & Schmidt 2001:10)." A crucial part of the significance of the monument therefore lies in its addressivity (Allison 2013:148). The publics who are touched by it in different ways may have a dialogic relationship with it, which enhances the ritual the monument is involved in.

Glory Park in Sukhum, Abkhazia: A Cemetery for Heroes

Glory Park (Slavy Park) is a monumental burial site in Sukhum remembering the Abkhaz dead of the 1992-93 civil war (See Figure 7).

Figure 7: Monument at Glory Park in Sukhum, Abkhazia.

Source: photo taken by author on 15-05-2013

The park is situated south of the center of Sukhum, roughly 150 meters from the promenade and the gravel beach, situated at the Sukhum bay that leads into the Black Sea where locals and tourists do their sunbathing.

From the sky, Glory Park has the resemblance of a cross, with the monument depicting a sword at the heart of the cross (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Map of central Sukhum, with the location of Glory Park indicated with a red circle
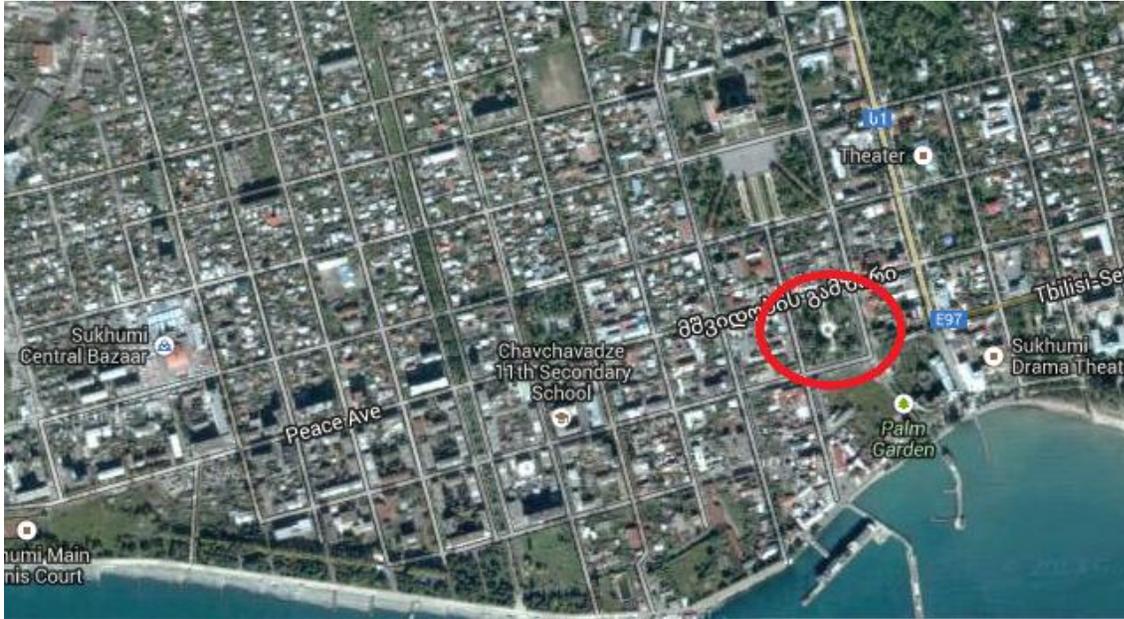
Source: Google Maps

At the pedestal of the sword (Figure 9), are the names of the soldiers who died during the war, engraved in gold colored letters on black marble plaques. On the northern side are the burial stones with the names of the soldiers that lie buried there. On the western side of the memorial, there are 14 flags of Abkhazia, 7 on each side of the path. In the northwestern side of the park, there is a little stone (See Figure 10) with the text: "'this is a monument erected in honor of a hero - General S.P. Dbar", written in Abkhaz. General Dbar[29] was one of the military leaders during the 1992-93 war and was awarded with the title: Hero of Abkhazia. On the 19th of June 2013, it was announced that on the 20th anniversary of ´victory day´, the busts of two Abkhaz servicemen named Sultan Sosnaliev and Sergei Dbar will be installed at Glory Park, Sukhum (Adyghe Youth Council 2013). Currently, with the help of the ICRC, the Abkhaz government is carrying out a program to identify the remains of the missing people and reburying them at Glory Park.

---

[29] General S.P. Dbar (1946-2002) was an Abkhaz military leader during the war of 1992-93 and was awarded with the 'Hero of Abkhazia' title for his actions during that war.

Figure 9 & 10: The Sword monument and the stone commemorating General S.P. Dbar.

Source: photos taken by author on 15-05-2013.

The Abkhaz website for tourism states that: "in the center of the city, between the Prospekt Mira and the Nestor Lakob street lies the Glory Park (Park Slavy), the republic's main site for both mourning and celebrations. The Park is dedicated to the patriots who died fighting the Georgian invaders during the national conflict of 1992-1993. A monument depicting a stylized sword stuck in the ground is located in the center of the Park. It was created by sculptor Amiran Adleiba and has more than one meaning: a sword jammed vertically into the ground symbolizes both the end of a battle and the glory of those who fell during it (Abkhaz Committee for Resorts & Tourism)." Some people interpret it in the way that it is the symbol of the end of the war. 'The sword symbolizes the end of the war that has been established through the [violent] sacrifices of the heroes that are buried at Glory Park.'[30] The sword symbolizes that that anyone who comes with a sword, will be attacked by that very sword. The sword is damaged to symbolize the victims of the war of independence. The sword is cast into the ground to show that Abkhaz heroes will never be forgotten.[31] Although this is the most common interpretation of the monument, any other people interpret it the way they want to as the monument is meant to be open for interpretation.[32] Garik for example tells the story of soldiers playing with swords that resemble that of the one at Glory Park: Swords were part of the equipment of soldiers during the war. When they were not fighting, they would often play with the swords by throwing them into the ground. This was a scene that was captured many times on camera, and therefore

---

[30] Interview Garik Sanguliya, Sukhum, May 15th 2013.
[31] Interview Rustam Anshba, Sukhum, May 16th 2013.
[32] Interview Garik Sanguliya, Sukhum, May 15th 2013.

became a vivid image of the war. This was not only the case with the war of 1993-92, but also with prior wars.

Besides the obvious function as a cemetery, Glory Park also lives up to its name as it also functions as a park. Next to the gravestones there are benches on which people sit quietly or talk and laugh with each other. During the fieldwork done for this thesis, people from all ages visited Glory Park, children playing, adolescents talking to each other, groups of teens drinking beers but also elderly strolling around the park or the women in black visiting the graves of their husbands and/or children. It is therefore not a place that has been isolated from public live, but in contrast has been integrated in the everyday life of the people living in Sukhum.

The integration of the dead into the lives and celebrations of the living was taken up by the political institutions, which incorporated a visit to the martyrs' cemeteries into Abkhaz national holidays and public demonstrations and transformed the individual mourning ritual of visiting the graves of a lost son, into national ones. '[T]his monument (Glory Park) when it was erected it was done with a purpose. When there are certain days, certain holidays or if you for example want to conduct a conference, first all the participants go to Glory Park and put flowers at this monument., Because, I wouldn't call it a tradition, but it is just part of life. Because it is important to remember it (The Abkhaz-Georgian War) there as it is a materialized memory that is always with us.'[33] This is a very deliberate choice, as where once the visit to the burial place of a family member was a private affair, now it has been removed from this private space and has been transformed into the public, national sphere by incorporating the deceased into the national en political environment.

Glory Park, just as other memorials and monuments in Abkhazia that have been erected to remember the Abkhaz-Georgian War of 1992-93, is a sign for the younger generations who have not seen and experienced the war. The monument gives pictorial information of the war which influences the population by placing it amidst of the community and its rituals. The monuments are reminders when, why and how the war happened and also an indicator of the fear for normalization of the relations with Georgia. According to Rusiko Marshania, authorities are afraid of this normalization, as this could imply that there is a chance of reintegration into Georgia.[34] This because when Georgia is seen as ´the other´ and therefore the enemy, the Abkhaz population will never support the reintegration into Georgia. This therefore should be countered by keeping the discourse, of Georgia as the enemy, alive through monuments such as Glory Park in Sukhum. As the deputy minister of foreign affairs, Irakli Khintba, said: '[...]Unless we don't have this enemy such as Georgia, I think it will be very difficult for us to redo something in our identity, to fill this gap. […] If we are talking about today's identity, it consists of, like I said this cultural component and this political component as well as this struggle for independence and the creation of the independent state. After August 2008 when we were recognized by the Russian Federation, first of course there was glory and happiness, but

---

[33] Interview Irakli Khintba, Sukhum, May 15th 2013.
[34] Interview Rusiko Marshania, Tbilisi, May 31st 2013.

then a lot of people started to think; ok what is next? What to strive to? I would say that in some sense this achievement has led to the diminishing of the degree of cohesion within the Abkhaz society. Because we felt a bit more relaxed in a sense, and we also came across the absence of idea or the nation aim.'[35]

As the Abkhaz state is not yet fully developed, the authorities therefore want to stress the importance of the war and its legacy, as this creates cohesion among the Abkhaz population. This is of crucial importance, as the nation/state building process in Abkhazia is not yet fully done. While the recognized independence of Abkhazia by Russia after the South Ossetia war of 2008 has brought the accomplished of *the* uppermost important national aim of Abkhazia with the corresponding security, it has also brought a gap, an absence of a common national aim that brings forth national cohesion.

The Martyrs of Glory Park

As was argued in the first part of this chapter, the people who are buried at a ceremonial military cemetery such as Glory Park are heroes and martyrs of the country. This because these ´heroes´ are buried into the national narrative by being buried at a national memorial (see figure 11). These soldiers are seen as martyrs, heroes of the Abkhaz nation and are mythologized as the symbols of the nation's past when they fought and died for its freedom by committing these 'glorious' deeds on its behalf. As Storey (2001:78) argues: "the veracity of the role of individuals or the nature of key events is not what is important. Rather, it is the mythological interpretation which is placed upon them. Events and people become 'traditionalized' in order to celebrate the nation."

Figure 11: Gravestone of 24 Abkhazian soldiers buried at Glory Park, Sukhum.

Source: photo taken by author on 15-05-2013

In addition, this mythical status that is being assigned to those buried at Glory Park gives them a symbolic immunity. If it is being proven that soldiers who are buried at Glory Park committed atrocities such as rape, ethnic cleansing etc, it is very unlikely that these soldiers would be removed or even blamed for it.[36] Instead, it is more likely that the authorities, but also the people living in Abkhazia, will try to do everything in their power to protect the memory of their fallen heroes and not to let any black spots spoil the memory. It has to be said that this is something that is not just significant to the case of Abkhazia, as the remembrance and celebration of soldiers is very common in countries all over the world. Even in the Netherlands there is still discussion if Dutch ´heroes´ such as Michel Deruyter[37] and van Heutsz[38] should be honored and commemorated through spatial discourses such as statues, monuments and/or street names. While in the Netherlands some statues are being removed, this seems highly unlikely this will happen in Abkhazia

---

[36] Interview Rusiko Marshania, Tbilisi, May 31st 2013.

[37] Michiel Adriaenszoon de Ruyter (1607-1676) was a Dutch Admiral and one of the most famous naval heroes. He is well known for his many naval victories, including the (in) famous Raid on the Medway where he burned a large part of the British fleet. In addition he is seen as a symbol of Dutch colonialism and slavery.

[38] Joannes Benedictus van Heutsz (1851-1924) was a Dutch Lieutenant General and Governor General of the Dutch Indies from 1904-1909. He is held responsible for multiple massacres in the Dutch Indies, such as the massacres at Atjeh during the Atjeh-War, where around 100,000 locals lost their lives (Van Lieshout 2005).

somewhere in the next 100 years.[39] This has not only to do with the fact that the conflict ended just 20 years ago, but also because of the Abkhaz culture.

In the Caucasus the legacy of a soldier is being passed on to the family for many generations. Not only the direct family such as siblings, parents and children are being seen as heroes, but also the next few generations that will follow will share in the ´glory´ that the deceased soldier has brought.[40] Especially the people who have died during the war are considered legendary heroes, as this war was fought for Abkhaz independence, the survival of the Abkhaz state and therefore every Abkhaz person owes them an indescribable amount of gratitude. These family members are for example being invited by schools to tell about these heroes in classes that have been named after them (Al Jazeera 2009). This martyrological commemoration enables the martyrs and/or the relatives of the martyrs to "present themselves as possessing a higher rank of the imagined hierarchy of [Abkhaz] national importance (Torek 2008:340)." "This pattern is expressed in commemorative practices by the interweaving of local martyrology, with the national narrative and the presentation of local martyrs contributions to national success (Torek 2008:340)." A whole social hierarchy has been build around these soldiers that have died during the war and their families.

Of course the people in Abkhazia know that certain atrocities have been committed, although this is not discussed in a public sphere, you can still feel it in public comments and suggestions. But even if it would be discussed openly, most of the Abkhaz would argue that the end justifies the means, and that the atrocities can therefore be legitimized. The Abkhaz argue that they were not the ones who started the war, and therefore they are the victims. Furthermore, when atrocities such as ethnic cleansing are discussed, these events are always mirrored to what the Georgians did. The Abkhaz soldiers enjoy therefore a form of immunity in the Abkhaz community. '[O]f course those who took part in the war, the veterans, they create a separate, special stratum within Abkhaz society. And of course if you are a hero of the war, if you would commit a crime no one would chase you or prosecute you because you are a hero of the war. It is a special social structure that was created during the war and is still in place.'[41] These social realities are everyday reminders of the war, and it shows that although it has been almost 20 years since the war ended, it still plays a huge role in the Abkhaz society.

When talking about the physical reminders of the Abkhaz-Georgian war that are still very much present in for example Sukhum, Irakli Khintba the deputy minister of foreign affairs of Abkhazia, said that : 'It [physical reminders of the '92-92 war] is the physical preservation of the memory. And also with the women in black, the mothers of those who perished during the war who still visit their son's graves. So of course that is something that will never let us forget about the war. And also in the schools we have these desks, memorials and also we have those at the roads. Of course this is something that defines us as a post

[39] Interview Rusiko Marshania, Tbilisi, May 31st 2013.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Interview Irakli Khintba Sukhum May 15th 2013

war society. And the war is a huge pillar of our identity.'[42] These women in black that visit the graves of their sons and husbands are one of the most striking pictures of national military cemeteries in Eastern Europe. As said by Irakli Khintba, these women are also present at the Glory Park. They come to the graves of their sons or husbands, fully dressed in black clothing including a black headscarf. Some of them walk up to the grave of their relative and most of the time go sit on their knees and cry. Sometimes they just stand in front of the grave stone, lay down flowers, or go and sit on a bench next to the memorial. It was striking to see that 6 out of 10 women that have been observed over a 5 day period visited the memorial and graves every day. Although the war has already been over for almost 20 years, the people visiting Glory Park are the physical evidence that it still very much present in the minds of the people in Abkhazia. These women are important to the national mourning process, as they are the everyday physical manifestation of the individual and national mourning process. "When the state presents such grief as a rupture in need of a remedy, it attempts to transform the suffering inherent in mourning for the dead into a heroic national narrative where no death is wasted, and all death eventuates in the glory of a unified nation (Khalili 2013:32)." 'And that's why when you try to touch upon this issue and when you try to question something, this is kind of a bible for us, for Abkhazia. And especially the history of our war, if you try to question something, to look different on some events during the war, you will get the fiercest and most painful reaction. Because, you are trying to touch upon the very essence of the people.'[43] This corresponds with what Schröder and Schmidt (2001:11) argue in regard to several characteristic elements of violent imaginaries: 'the identification of 'our' side with the survival and well-being of every single individual: the struggle is of vital importance for the life of the group and the lies of each of its members' Therefore, the message that this monument carries out is not only meant for the present as it also gives new generations a message for the future: 'The new generation who was born after the war, they never saw it. They were brought up in the atmosphere of this [of the Abkhaz-Georgian war]; from the kindergarten they knew what the war was and meant. I think it is a very important piece of our identity and of course the victory in war is the achievement of the people of Abkhazia. An achievement that we did as a historical event and [furthermore] we established our sovereign state. And this is of course also something that feeds our aspirations our self esteem and our goals and how we want to achieve these goals. Without this I cannot imagine the Abkhaz nation, it is impossible. Absolutely impossible.'[44]

---

[42] Interview Irakli Khintba, Sukhum, May 15th 2013.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.

Concluding Remembrance

This chapter has discussed the influence of monuments, in particular the monument of Glory Park, in the nation building process of Abkhazia. First of all, monuments provide a tangible manifestation of some 'memory work' process. They address certain events that happened in the past, and help embedding these events into the national narrative. Monuments have the ability to carry out these national narratives in open space and into everyday life. Monuments are the reminders of the past which makes them vital parts of a nation building process as all nations require a past to justify their current existence and to provide a rationale for territorial claims. This is also the case with Glory Park, as it carries out the narrative of the Georgian-Abkhaz war of 1992-93, in which the Abkhazian people state that they won their independence.

The fact that Glory Park, next to a monument, also is a burial site gives it an extra dimension. By burying these soldiers into a ceremonial burial ground, they become part of the national narrative. They lose in a way their individuality, as they are now being mourned not only by their relatives, but by the whole nation. It therefore also functions in rituals such as public holidays and other remembrance events.

VI.   Conclusion

Although this September already marks the 20th anniversary of the end of the Georgian-Abkhaz war of 1992-93, it seems that the war is still very much alive in the minds of the people living in Abkhazia. This is not at least due to the spatial discourses that have been discussed in this thesis. This thesis has discussed the physical and discursive discourses concerning the Georgian-Abkhaz war, that (re)designed, (re) named and molded the social space at a material level in the territory currently controlled by the Republic of Abkhazia. The primary dynamic of this concern has been the nation building of the Republic of Abkhazia by converting spaces into expressions of 'Abkhazness'. The Abkhazian state is the entity that is responsible for this, as they are responsible for the choices that are being made in Abkhazia. Besides the facts that these forms of spatiality are physical reminders of the war, they also have a significant influence on the Abkhazian population as they come with their own social implications. Especially the implications concerning the ethnic Georgian minority currently residing in Abkhazia are of importance, as they are being seen as a 'threat' to hegemonic Abkhaz domination of urban and rural space. Spatiality in that case is being used to counter these forms of contested presence. These spatial discourses are very obvious part of certain nation building efforts, and therefore also contribute significantly to the nation building process that is still underway in the Republic of Abkhazia.

First of all, the spatial discourses discussed in this thesis provide ´physical evidence´ of the Abkhaz state. The border for example, is the physical demarcation of a state, which therefore makes it a very important focus point of the Abkhazian government to put emphasis on. By making and treating the border as a legal border point, it contributes to the legitimization of the Abkhazian state. This is in contrast to the situation on the Georgian side of the border, as they treat the border as a military checkpoint. Nothing indicates that the person passing by the checkpoint is leaving Georgia as the Georgian authorities treat the border merely as leaving a region of Georgian and entering another one. The example of road signs in Georgia that indicate Sukhumi and Tskhinvali are still reachable for Georgian citizens, while in reality it is impossible for normal Georgian citizens to visit those cities. The monument of Glory Park has this same physical evidence, as it carries out memory work concerning the Abkhazian state by remembering people of the Georgian-Abkhaz war of 1992-93 and the Abkhazian people who lost their lives during that war.

Independence therefore does not only come in the *grande* gestures such as international recognition by the most dominating countries in the world. Independence is also being carried out in the smaller arenas, such as a church on a lonely mountain, a river originating in the Caucasus, a bridge that has been associated with war, or a park situated in the capital of a country that has not been recognized by the international community. Sometimes the independence of a nation seems to live more in the streets, the buildings,

infrastructure and therefore in the minds of people, instead of the international arena. Spatial discourses therefore create cohesion among the Abkhaz people. It creates this notion of the Abkhaz state to which they all belong to. Monuments that are of vital importance in the narrative of the Abkhaz state, as they depict the suffering and losses the nation had to go through before they could gain their freedom Glory Park is the physical evidence of the Abkhaz-Georgian war and serves as a reminder at what cost it came and who have been responsible for the deaths of those who lie buried in Sukhum. One of the aims behind the erection of monuments by governments can therefore be seen as creating the notion and fostering the feeling that the public population is uniform and that they share a common memory. Through spatial discourses such as monuments, the community feels 'connected' to the soil of the homeland. The reason why the particular territory belongs to a certain group is because importance is being attached to that specific territory. By burying their heroes in that soil is all the more a form of attachment to that soil. Monuments such as Glory Park therefore serves as a legitimization of the territorial claim and the existence of an Abkhazian state as all nations require a past to justify their current existence and to provide a rationale for territorial claims. The monuments provide this national past as it shows the struggle the Abkhazians had to go through as a nation in order to establish their independence.

In addition to the obvious physical presence of the border, it also has significant implications in the border region of Gal. The border ensures the Abkhazian government of having control within its territory, although today that is with the help of the Russian military. It is therefore able to use 'tight control' on the (ethnic Georgian) population residing in the Gal region. With this form of 'tight control' it is able to influence the population more efficiently. This goes hand in hand with the removal of certain forms of Georgian culture, and the addition of other cultural elements such as the Russian dome at the Ilori Church. 'Tight control' makes it easier to establish a hegemonic Abkhaz culture in the region which in turn contributes to nation building. The hegemonic of Abkhaz culture in a particular area does in its turn create legitimacy of the Abkhaz ownership of that particular area. When there are no elements of Georgian culture that the ethnic Georgian community can relate to, they may not feel connected to the soil anymore. This is primarily done as the relative large amount of ethnic Georgians living in mainly in the Gal region, are seen as a threat to the stability in the region by Abkhaz authorities.

With the recognition by Russia and a few other countries, the cohesion among the population of Abkhazia seems more important than ever. As Irakli Khintba already stated when discussing Abkhaz identity, now that the fear and reality of the foreign Georgian aggressor is ebbing away, a gap has emerged where this fear of annexation once existed. It seems that this poses some serious implications for Abkhazian authorities

Although all three case studies have a distinct character and have their own aspects and spatial discourse, there are also a few very important similarities that seem to be of great importance for the nation building efforts of Abkhazia. In all the cases, one of the primary goals and/or results is that 'the other' is involved and put into the centre of attention. In all the cases, Georgia plays a dominant role in the narratives

that the spatial discourses contribute to, and cannot be underestimated. This is not unexpected as the 1992-93 Georgian-Abkhaz war is one of the main pillars of the Abkhazian identity. The spite against Georgia is therefore also one of the aspects that bring forth the cohesion under the Abkhazian population. It can therefore be sad that ironically, it seems that Georgia is a very important and maybe even an essential part of the Abkhaz identity. The importance of Georgia in the Abkhaz identity creates a confusing dichotomy, as most of the Abkhazians want to get rid of everything that has any connection to Georgia, but on the other hand Georgia plays a vital and even indispensable part in the nation building process of the Republic of Abkhazia. The linkage with Georgia as the arch-enemy of Abkhazia that is being kept alive with spatial discourses, such as Glory Park, has such a strong connection to the Abkhaz community. Not only due to its presence in the capital, but also because of the rituals in everyday life where the monument takes part in. The grieving mothers and widows that still visit the monument daily, and the laying down of flowers on certain national days keep the hurt that according to the Abkhaz, the Georgians are responsible for, alive.

Abkhazia has been the subject of a lot of controversy. The recognition by Russia in 2008 has not brought them any close to full worldwide recognition, besides the two island states of Naura and Tuvali, and the Latin American countries of Nicaragua and Venezuela. Although this might create the image that Abkhazia still is that isolated war torn country it was during the nineties, in reality functions as a normal state although it relies more on Russia than other states. Within the Abkhaz state, there are also many processes in progress that are characteristic for nation states, such as in this case the process of nation building. It could even be argued that a state which does not enjoy full international recognition has more interests in nation building efforts than fully recognized countries. Although this was not the purpose of this research, it has to be said that the nation building progress in Abkhazia was very much present. These spatial discourses are a vital part of this process, as this thesis has shown that they contribute to the narrative of the Abkhaz nation. These spatial discourses keep the national history of Abkhazia alive, and also make sure these narratives are being practiced over and over again through their central position within Abkhazian society.

When the tanks will roll past the former ASSR government building on the 30th of September 2013 during the military independence day parade, and thousands of Abkhazians wave their Abkhazian flags in the air, the war will once again be in the minds of those people, and will therefore still not be forgotten.

.

VII. Annexes

A. Terminology

Names:

English	Georgian	Abkhaz	Russian
Abkhazia	Apkhazeti (აფხაზეთი)	Apsny (Аԥсны́)	Abkhaziya (Абхазия)
Sukhumi	Sokhumi (სოხუმი)	Aqwa (Аҟәа)	Sukhum (Сухум)
Gali	Gali (გალი)	Gal (Гал)	Gal (Гал)
Inguri	Enguri (ენგური)	Egry (Егры)	Ingur (Ингур)
Ilori	Ilori (ილორის)	Elyr (Елыр)	Ilori (Илорская)
Ochamchira	Ochamchira (ოჩამჩირე)	Ochamchyra (Очамчыра)	Ochamchira (Очамчира)

B. List of Interviews:

This is a list of the individuals that have been interviewed during the research for this thesis. Not all of the people listed below have been actively been quoted, but have regardless of that had an immense contribution to the process of my research.

1 March 2013   Tbilisi   Dr. Alexander Rondeli   President of GFSIS

14 May 2013   Sukhum   Brief group interview with 10 students of International Relations at the Abkhazian State University

15 May 2013   Sukhum   Dinara Smyr   Deputy Minister of Culture of the Republic of Abkhazia

15 May 2013   Sukhum   Garik Sanguliya   Head of the Department of the Protection of the Historical and Cultural Relics of the Republic of Abkhazia

15 May 2013   Sukhum   Irakli Khintba   Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Abkhazia

16 May 2013   Sukhum   Rustam Anshba   Student International Relations at the Abkhaz State University and Employee at the Foreign Affairs office of the Republic of Abkhazia

13-15 May   Sukhum   Madina Khagush   Student International Relations at the Abkhaz State University

17 May 2013	Gal	Lasha Kakhiani	Local resident of Gal
March-May	Tbilisi	Medea Turashvilli	Analyst at International Crisis Group Caucasus
March-May	Tbilisi	Bakari Batarashvili	Employee at the National Bank of Georgia & Assistant at Economics Department of Tbilisi State University
31 May	Tbilisi	Rusiko Marshania	Member of IDP network "Synergy"

Meetings-

29 May 2013	Tbilisi	Work in Progress: Addressing Past Injustices: How to Deal with Georgia's Painful Past? Meeting organized by CRRC Georgia, American Councils and ARISC at International School of Economics.
1 June 2013	Tbilisi	'The Sochi Project' at Tbilisi Photo Festival 2013

VIII. Bibliography

Abkhaz World (2009) 'Abkhazian Refugee Situation', Abkhaz World Website, September 2009, online available at: http://www.abkhazworld.com/Pdf/Abkhazian_Refugee_Situation.pdf.

Abkhaz World (2009a) 'A history erased - Abkhazia's archive: fire of war, ashes of history', Abkhaz World Website, September 2009, online available at: http://www.abkhazworld.com/articles/conflict/151-a-history-erased.html

Abkhaz World (2011) 'Viacheslav Chirikba: "Painting the walls of the Elyr (Ilori) Church presents absolutely no threat to peace in the region', *Abkhaz World Website*, March 2 2011, online available at: http://www.abkhazworld.com/news/politics/620-chirikba-elyr-ilori-church.html.

Abkhaz World (2012) 'The Abkhazian authorities attach great importance to the preservation of historical and cultural monuments on the territory of the Republic', *Abkhaz World website*, March 28 2012, online available at: http://www.abkhazworld.com/news/misc/834-the-abkhazian-authorities-attach-great-importance.html

Adler, M (1978) *Naming and Addressing: A Sociolinguistic Study*, Helmut Buske, Hamburg

Adyghe Youth Council (2013) 'The Busts of the Heroes of Abkhazia Sultan Sosnaliev and Sergei Dbar will be installed in the Park of Glory by the Victory Day' *Adyghe Youth Council website*, June 19 2013, online available at: http://www.ab-ad.org/index.php/society/item/140-id145102.

Al Jazeera (2009) 'Abkhazia: A Forgotten Country' *People & Power*, Documentary, 13 May 2009, online available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0JK8BNkCOAI.

Allison, C (2013) 'Addressivity and the Monument: Memorials, Publics and the Yezidis of Armenia', *History & Memory,* Vol.25, No.1, pp.145-181.

Anderson, B (1991) *Imagined Communities*, Verso, London.

Anderson, J (2010) *Understanding Cultural Geography: Places & Traces*, Routledge, Abingdon.

Appadurai, A (2006) *Fear of Small Numbers: An Essay on the Geography of Anger*, Duke University Press, Durham.

Babitsky, A (2012) 'The Fate of the Bedia Church', *Ekho Kavkaza,* 4 February, available online at: http://www.ekhokavkaza.com/content/article/24473008.html.

Barkan, E & Karn, A (2006) *Taking Wrongs Seriously: Apologies and Reconciliation,* Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Baumann, G (1999), *Ethnicity: Blood or Wine? The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic and Religious Identities*, Routledge, London/New York.

BBC (2009) "Russia Blocks UN's Abkhazia Role" *BBC News Website*, 16 June 2009. Available online at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8102097.stm

Bevan, R (2007) *The Destruction of Memory*, Reaktion Books, New York.

Bhatia, M (2005) 'Fighting words: naming terrorists, bandits, rebels and other violent actors', *Third World Quarterly*, Vol.26, No.1, pp.5-22.

Bourdieu, P (1996) *Symbolic Power*, Pax forlag, Oslo.

Brass, P (1996) *Riots and Pogroms*, Macmillian Press, London.

Brubaker, R. (1996) *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Brubaker, R (2002) 'Ethnicity without Groups' *European Journal of Sociology,* Vol.43, No 2, pp.163–89.

Bruggen van, A & Hornstra R (2010) *Empty land, Promised land, Forbidden land,* The Sochi Project.

Budryte, D. (2005) Taming *Nationalism? Political Community Building in the Post-Soviet Baltic States*, Ashgate, Aldershot.

Burch, S & Smith, D (2007) 'Empty Spaces and the Value of Symbols: Estonia's 'War of Monuments' from another Angle, *Europe-Asia Studies,* Vol.59, No.6, pp.913-936.

Civil Georgia (2013) 'Sokhumi Suspends Issuing Abkhaz Passports to Ethnic Georgians' *Civil.ge*, 14 May 2013, available online at: http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=26053 .

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (1993) Briefing on Current Situation in Georgia and Implications for U.S. Policy. Briefing, 25 October 2013, available online at: http://besarion.wordpress.com/2011/05/21/briefing-on-current-situation-in-georgia-and-implications-for-u-s-policy-1993/.

Cooper, M (1994) 'Spatial Discourses & Social Boundaries: Re-imagining the Toronto Waterfront', *City and Society Annual Review*, pp.93-117.

Cornell, S (2001) *Small Nations and Great Power: A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus*, Curzon Caucasus World, Richmond.

Corso, M (2009) 'Georgia: Russian Border Guards in Abkhazia, South Ossetia Pose New Challenge for Tbilisi' *Eurasianet.org*, May 11 2009, Online available at: http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav051209c.shtml

Coward, M (2009) *Urbicide: The politics of urban destruction*, Routledge, New York.

Davis, D (2002) 'Destruction and Desecration of Sacred Sites during Wars and Conflicts: A Neglected Travesty', *Journal of Church and State*, Vol.44, No.3, pp.417-424.

DeChaine, R (2009) 'Bordering the Civic Imaginary: Alienization, Fence Logic, and the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps' Quarterly Journal of Speech, Vol.95, No.1, pp.43-65.

Demmers, J (2012) *Theories of Violent Conflict*, Routledge, London & New York.

Democracy & Freedom Watch (2012) 'Georgia wants a stop to heritage vandalism in Abkhazia' *Democracy &*

Freedom Watch website. March 31 2012, Available online at: http://dfwatch.net/georgia-wants-a-stop-to-heritage-vandalism-in-abkhazia-63247

Democracy & Freedom Watch (2012a) 'Enguri hydro power station is still on Georgian hands' *Democracy & Freedom Watch website*. November 7 2012, available online at: http://dfwatch.net/enguri-hydro-power- station-is-still-on-georgian-hands-49699.

Durkheim, E (1933) *The Division of Labor in Society*, The Free Press, New York.

Edwards, M (2013) 'Abkhazia: Recognizing the Ruins' Open Democracy Website, 22 March, online available at: http://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/maxim-edwards/abkhazia-recognising-ruins.

Einsiedel, S. Von (2005) 'Policy responses to state failure', in Chesterman, S., Ignatieff, M. and R.Thakur (eds) *Making states work: State failure and the crisis of governance*. United Nations University Press, Tokyo.

Fearon, J & Laitin, D (1996) "Explaining Interethnic Cooperation" *American Political Science Review,* Vol.90, No.4, pp.715-735.

Fearon,J & Laitin, D (2000) "Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity" *International Organization* , Vol.54, No.4, pp.845-877.

Febvre, L (1932) *A Geographical Introduction to History.* Trans. E.G. Mountford and J.H. Paxton. Routledge, London.

Ferguson, J & Gupta, A (2002) 'Spatializing States: Toward an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality' *American Ethnologist*, Vol.29, No.4, pp.982-1002.

Flick, U (2006) *An introduction to qualitative research*. Sage, London.

Forty, A & Kuchler, S (2001) *The Art of Forgetting,* Materializing Culture, Oxford.

Foucault, M. (1977) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison.* Penguin Books, London.

Foucault, M (1980) *Power/Knowledge*, Pantheon Press, New York.

Foucher, M (1991), *Fronts et Frontiers: Un Tour du Monde Geopolitique.* Fayard, Paris.

Gellner, E (1997) *Nationalism*, Phoenix, London

Giddens, A (1986) *The Constitution of Society*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Graham, S (2004) 'Postmortem City: Towards an Urban Geopolitics', *City*, Vol.8, No.2, pp.165-196.

Gupta, A & Ferguson, J (2002) "Spatializing States: Toward an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality" *American Ethnologist*, Vol.29, No.4, pp.981-1002.

Handelman, D, Handelman, L (1997) 'The Presence of Absence: The Memorialism of National Death in Israel.' In, Eyal Ben Ari and Yoram Bilu, eds.,*Grasping Land: Space and Place in Contemporary Israeli Discourse and Experience. Suny,* Albany.

Handler, R (1994). *"Is 'Identity' a Useful Cross-cultural Concept?"* in John R. Gillis (ed.), *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Held, D (1996) 'The Decline of the Nation State" in Geoff Eley and Grigor Suny (eds.), *Becoming National: A Reader*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Hobsbawm, E (1997) *On History.* Weidenfeld & Nicholson*,* London.

Horowitz, D (2002) *The Deadly Ethnic Riot*, University of California Press, Berkeley.

Human Rights Watch (1995) *Georgia/ Abkhazia: Violations of the Laws of War and Russia's Role in the Conflict*, Online available at: http://www.hrw.org/reports/1995/Georgia2.htm.

Human Rights Watch (2011) *Living in Limbo: The Rights of Ethnic Returnees to the Gali District of Abkhazia*, online available at: http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/georgia0711LR.pdf.

Ignatieff, M (1999) "The Narcissism of Minor Difference", in *The Warrior's Honor*, Vintage, London.

Ignatieff, M (2002) 'When a Bridge is not a Bridge' *New York Times*, 27 October, available online at: http://www.nytimes.com/2002/10/27/magazine/when-a-bridge-is-not-a-bridge.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm.

International Crisis Group (2006) "Abkhazia Today," *Europe Report* , No. 176, 15 September.

International Crisis Group (2008) "Georgia and Russia: Clashing Over Abkhazia", *Europe Report*, No.193. 5 June.

International Crisis Group (2013) "Abkhazia: The Long Road to Reconciliation" *Europe Report*, No.224, 10 April.

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (2012) 'Internal Displacement in Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia', *Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre website*, available online at: http://www.internal-displacement.org/publications/global-overview-2012-europe-central-asia.pdf

Jabri, V (1996) *Discourses on violence: conflict analysis reconsidered*, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York.

Jeska, A (2004) 'Die Brücke der Deutschen' *Eurasisches Magazin,* 26 March 2004, Online available at: http://www.eurasischesmagazin.de/artikel/Die-Bruecke-der-Deutschen/20040307

Jones, R (2011) 'Border security, 9/11 and the enclosure of civilization' *The Geographical Journal*, Vol.177, No.3, pp.213-217.

Kellerman, A (1993) *Society & Settlement: Jewish Land of Israel in the Twentieth Century*, State University of New York Press, Albany.

Khalili, L (2005) Places of Memory and Mourning: Palestinian commemoration in the refugee camps of Libanon, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, Vol.25, No.1, pp.30-45.

King, C (2001) " The Benefits of Ethnic War: Understanding Eurasia's Unrecognized States" *World Politics*,

Vol.53, No.4, pp.524-552.

Kolstø, L Blakkisrud, H (2006) Living with Non-recognition : State- and Nation-building in South Caucasian' *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol.60, No.4, pp.483–509.

Kosseleck, R (1979) "Kriegerdenkmale als Identitätsstiftungen der Überlebenden," in *Identität*, ed. Marquard, O & Stierle, K, Fink, Munich.

Kundera, M (1988) *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, Harper, London.

Lieshout van, M (2005) 'Monument voor grofgebekte houwdegen', De Volkskrant.nl, 23 June 2005, Online available at: http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2844/Archief/archief/article/detail/645837/2005/07/23/Monument-voor-grofgebekte-houwdegen.dhtml.

Lomsadze, G (2013) "Abkhazia: Vanuatu Changes Its Mind Again" *Eurasianet,* 18 March 2013, Online available at: http://www.eurasianet.org/node/66703.

Lynch, D (2002) "Separatist States and Post-Soviet Conflicts" *International Affairs*, Vol.78, No.4, pp.831-844.

Lynch, S (1972). *What Time is this Place*. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press.

Malek, M (2006). State Failure in the South Caucasus : Proposals for an Analytical Framework. *Transition Studies Review*, 13(2), pp.441–460.

Miller, D (1995) *On Nationality*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Mills, M (2013)'"Are You Writing Our Book Yet." War, Culture, Structural Violence, and Oral Historical Representation," in Kreyenbroek, P and Allison, C (eds.) *Remembering the Past in Iranian Societies,* Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden

Mutimer, D. (2007) 'Critical Security Studies, A Schismatic History', in A.Collins (ed.) Contemporary Security Studies. 53-47. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Newman, D (2003) "On Borders and Power: A Theoretical Framework," *Journal of Borderlands Studies* , Vol.18, No.1, pp.13-27.

Newman, D (2006) "The Lines that continue to separate us: Borders in our 'borderless' World" *Process in Human Geography*, Vol.30, No.2, pp.143-161.

Newman, D & Paasi, A (1998) "Fences and neighbours in the postmodern world: boundary narratives in political geography" *Progress in Human Geography*, Vol.22, No.2, pp.186–207.

Nietschze, F (1980) *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life,* Hacket Publishing, Indianapolis.

Ragin, C (1994) *Constructing Social Research*, Pine Forge Press, Thousand Oaks.

RIA Novosti (2010) Russia Builds up Sea Border Patrols around Abkhazia, *RIA Novosti Website*, 12 August 2010, available online at: http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20100812/160178366.html

Ricoeur, P (1995) 'Reflections on a New Ethos for Europe', *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, Vol. 21, No.5.

Riedlmayer, A (1995) Killing Memory: The Targeting of Bosnia's Cultural Heritage, Testimony Presented at a Hearing of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, U.S. Congress, April 4', *Community of Bosnia Foundation*. Available online at: http://www.haverford.edu/relg/sells/killing.html.

Ross, M.H. (1986). A Cross-Cultural Theory of Political Conflict and Violence, *Political Psychology*, 7(3), 427-469.

Rustavi (2010) 'Russian occupants violate Georgian monument in Abkhazia' *Rustavi 2 Broadcasting Company,* 18 November, available online at: http://www.rustavi2.com/news/news_text.php?id_news=39396&pg=1&im=main&ct=0&wth .

OECD (2008) " Concepts and Dilemmas of State Building in Fragile Situations, from fragility to resilience" 11-51. Paris: OECD.

Orwell, G (2008) *1984*, Penguin Books, London.

Osborne, B (2001) 'Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration: Putting Identity in Its Place' *Canadian Ethnic Studies Journal,* Vol.39, No.3, pp.39-78.

Paasi, A (1991) Deconstructing Regions: Notes on Scales of Spatial Life, *Environmental Planning*, Vol.23, pp.239-256.

Pickford, H (2007) 'Conflict and Commemoration: Two Berlin Memorials' *Modernism/modernity*, Vol.12, No.1, pp. 133-173.

Prochorov, A (1979) *The Great Soviet Encyclopaedia*, Soviet Encyclopedia, Moscow.

Sack, R (1983) Human Territoriality: a Theory, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol.73, No.1, pp.55-74.

Sack, R (1986) *Human Territoriality: its Theory and History*, Cambridge Press, Cambridge.

Sayyid, B & Lilian, Z (1998) '*Political Analysis in a World without Foundations'* in Scarbrough, E. and E. Tannenbaum (eds.), Research Strategies in the Social Sciences: a Guide to New Approaches, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Schröder, I & Schmidt, B (2001) *Anthropology of Violence and Conflict*, Routledge, London and New York.

Scott, J (1998*) Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. Yale University Press, New Haven.

Sibley, D (1995) *Geographies of Exclusion*, Routledge, London.

Sica, A (1986) "Locating the 17th Book of Giddens", *Contemporary Sociology*, Vol.15, No.3, pp.344-346.

Smith, A (1991) *National Identity*, University of Nevada Press, Reno.

Smith, A (1996) "The Resurgence of Nationalism? Myth and Memory in the Renewal of Nations", *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 47, No.4, pp 575-598.

Smith, D (2004) Trends and Causes of Armed Conflict. In Alex Austin, Martina Fisher and Norbert Ropers (eds) *Transforming Ethnopolitical Conflict: The Berghof Handbook*, pp.111-127. Wiesbade:Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

Smith, G. (1999) *The Post-Soviet States: Mapping the Politics of Transition*, Arnold, London.

Smith, G, Law, V, Wilson, A, Bohr, A & Allworth, E (1998) Nation-building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Smith, A & Williams, C (1983) 'The National Construction of Social Space', *Progress in Human Geography,* vol. 7 No.4, pp. 502-518.

Snyder, J (2000) From *Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict*, Norton & Company, New York.

Sontag, S (2003) *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Picador, New York.

Spiridon, M (2006) 'Identity Discourses on Borders in Eastern Europe' *Comparative Literature,* Vol.58, No.4, pp.376-385.

State committee on resorts and tourism of Abkhazia Republic, The (2012) *'The Glory Park'*, Online available at: http://abkhazia.travel/en/sukhum_places/111.html

Storey, D (2001) *Territory: The Claiming of Space*, Pearson, Harlow.

Swiss Cooperation Office South Caucasus (2012) *Vulnerable Households' Accommodation and Community Infrastructure Rehabilitation Project in Samegrelo*, Embassy of Switzerland, available online at: http://www.google.nl/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CC8QFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.swiss-cooperation.admin.ch%2Fsoutherncaucasus%2F%2Fressources%2Fresource_en_215765.pdf&ei=rHnNUbTqBOX80QW8uoGYBg&usg=AFQjCNH8bYfF1pxhK-ueEXN19u2ux4smWA&bvm=bv.48572450,d.d2k

Tirtosudarmo, R (2006) 'Population, Ethnicity and Violent Conflict', *Population Review*, Vol.45, No.1, pp.6-22.

Trier,T, Lohm, H & Szakonyi, D (2010) Under *Siege: Inter-Ethnic Relations in Abkhazia*, Hurst & Company, London.

Torek, S (2008) 'Cautious Commemoration: Localism, Communalism, and Nationalism in Palestinian Memorial Monuments in Israel', *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* Vol.50, No.2, pp.337-368.

Unesco (2012) Key Facts and Figures on Georgia / Unesco Cooperation , *Unesco Fact Sheets*, Available onlinte at : www.unesco.org/eri/cp/factsheets/GEO_facts_figures.pdf.

Van Dijk, Teun. (2001) "Critical Discourse Analysis" in Tannen, D. Schiffrin D. and Hamilton H. (eds.), *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 352-371.

Väyrynen, T. (1997) 'Securitised Ethnic Identities and Communal Conflicts: A Need for Problem-Constructing Conflict Resolution?' *Peace and Conflict Studies,* Available online at: http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/pcs/vayryn.html

Volkan, V. D. (2000) 'Traumatized Societies and Psychological Care: Expanding the Concept of Preventive Medicine.' *Mind and Human Interaction* Vol.11, pp. 177–194.

Waal de, T (2002) 'Abkhazia: Cultural Tragedy Revisited'*, Insitute for War & Peace Reporting*, 28 March 2002, Availaible online at: http://iwpr.net/report-news/abkhazia-cultural-tragedy-revisited.

Webber M (2009) "The Kosovo war: a recapitulation.*" International Affairs* 85(3), pp. 447–459.

Weber, M (1922) *Economy and Society.* Mohr, Tübingen.

Zajda, J (2009) ' *Nation-Building, Identity and Citizenship Education: an Introduction'* in Zajda, J, Daun, H and Saha, L (eds.), Nation-Building, Identity and Citizenship, Springer, Dordrecht.

Zaprianov, D (2012) *Is the Destruction of Urban Structures a Form of Violence?* n.d. Available online at: http://www.e- ir.info/2012/06/15/is-the-destruction-of-urban-structures-a-form-of-violence.