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THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NORTH CAUCASUS FOR THE BLACK SEA'S REGIONAL SECURITY

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MASTER'S THESIS

ISTANBUL, JANUARY, 2018

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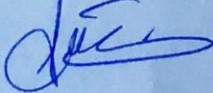
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Hereby declare that this Master's Thesis is my own original work and that due references have been appropriately provided on all supporting literature and resources.

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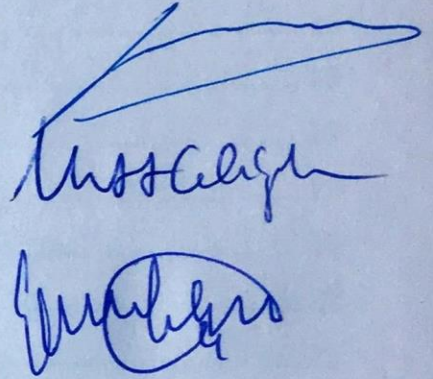
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ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

This work entitled **"THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NORTH CAUCASUS FOR THE BLACK SEA'S REGIONAL SECURITY"** prepared by **AYSU AYDEMİR** has been judged to be successful at the defense exam held on **10/01/2018** and accepted by our jury as **MASTER'S THESIS.**

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ABSTRACT

AYDEMİR, AYSU. *THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NORTH CAUCASUS FOR THE BLACK SEA'S REGIONAL SECURITY*, MASTER'S THESIS, Istanbul, 2018.

Since ancient times, the North Caucasus lands have been home to many ethnic cultures, societies, and states. Today it is a gateway, which opens Russia to the South Caucasus, Asia and the Middle East and a buffer zone and borderline, which prevents it from outside threats especially from the Southern border. The North Caucasus, also an important area, which acts as a hub between the Caspian Sea, and the Black Sea. Yet these geopolitical characteristics are only one face of the North Caucasus, at the other face of the region shown us with multi-ethnic conflicts, unmanageable radical religious and nationalist movements, underdevelopment, and a gap between democratic and welfare life standards. As all of these situations show: The North Caucasus region of Russia is still a strategic region that preserves its importance today with its positive and negative characteristics. In the light of this information, the main aim of this thesis is to examine the importance of the sub-region of North Caucasus for the security of the Black Sea Region. It also attempts to answer the question "What is the importance of the North Caucasus for the Black Sea Region in the context of regional security?". The main sources referenced to obtain information consist of the examination and observations of primary sources and secondary sources such as articles, theoretical approaches, books and activities of decision-makers in both the Black Sea and the North Caucasus region and policy reports related to the region. Therefore, qualitative data collection techniques such as observation and document analysis are the basis of this thesis.

Keywords: Black Sea Region, North Caucasus, Regional Security, Regional Security Complex Theory

ÖZET

AYDEMİR, AYSU. *KUZEY KAFKASYA'NIN KARADENİZ BÖLGESEL GÜVENLİĞİ İÇİN ÖNEMİ*, YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ, Istanbul, 2018

Eski zamanlardan beri, Kuzey Kafkas toprakları birçok etnik kültür, toplum ve devlete ev sahipliği yapmıştır. Bugün, Rusya'yı Güney Kafkasya, Asya ve Ortadoğu'ya açan bir geçit, bir tampon bölge ve özellikle güney sınırında dışarıdan gelen tehditleri engelleyen bir sınır çizgisidir. Kuzey Kafkasya, aynı zamanda Hazar Denizi ile Karadeniz arasında bir köprü görevi gören önemli bir alandır. Yine de bu jeopolitik özellikler Kuzey Kafkasya'nın sadece bir yüzüdür, bölgenin diğer yüzü bize kendini çok etnik çatışmalar, yönetilemez radikal dini ve milliyetçi hareketler, azgelişmişlik ve demokratik ve refah yaşam standartları arasındaki boşluk ile göstermektedir. Bütün bu durumların gösterdiği gibi: Rusya'nın Kuzey Kafkasya bölgesi hala olumlu ve olumsuz özellikleriyle önemini koruyan stratejik bir bölgedir. Bu bilgiler ışığı altında, bu tezin ana amacı, Kuzey Kafkasya alt bölgesinin Karadeniz bölgesinin güvenliği açısından önemini incelemektir. Ayrıca, "Kuzey Kafkasya'nın bölgesel güvenlik bağlamında Karadeniz Bölgesi için önemi nedir" sorusuna cevap vermeyi de amaçlamaktadır. Bilgi edinmek için başvurulan başlıca kaynaklar, Karadeniz ve Kuzey Kafkasya bölgesinde karar alıcıların makaleleri, teorik yaklaşımları, kitapları ve faaliyetleri gibi birincil kaynakların ve ikincil kaynakların incelenmesi ve gözlemleri ile bölgeyle ilgili politika raporları içermektedir. Dolayısıyla, bu tezin temelini, gözlem ve belge analizi gibi niteliksel veri toplama teknikleri oluşturmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Karadeniz Bölgesi, Kuzey Kafkasya, Bölgesel Güvenlik, Bölgesel Güvenlik Kompleksi Teorisi

INTRODUCTION

> And because the condition of man is a condition of war of everyone against everyone, in which case everyone is governed by his own reason, and there is nothing he can make use of that may not be a help unto him in preserving his life against his enemies; it follows that in such a condition every man has a right to everything, even to one another's body. And therefore, as long as this natural right of every man to everything endured, there can be no security to any man, how strong or wise so ever he be, of living out the time which nature ordinarily allowed men to live. (Hobbes, 2009, p.67)

In his famous work *Leviathan*, Thomas Hobbes describes the situation of man and the confusion of security between them within these words. Security concerns are the most natural and ancient anxieties that societies, states, and individuals face.

In every period of the international order, the anarchic structure of the international system is an important factor for the security policies and behaviors of international actors. According to this, all actors in this structure must ensure their existence and ensure their continuity; and oppose elements that threaten their entity. On the other hand, especially after the era of the Cold War, the concept of security has undergone a very complex and extensive change. Rather than emphasizing only a military and interstate concept; which is dominantly examined as a sub-title of the war studies, military studies or strategic studies; today, security comprises of many different levels ranging from the individual level onto the national level and finally the global level (Palfreeman, 2004).

The development of the "regional security" approach is one of the results of these post-Cold War structures. This approach showed its first examples in the 1950's and 1960's. A study conducted by one of the then Copenhagen school's dubbed "Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT)" is one of the most remarkable studies done in this area. As Barry Buzan explains, "Regional Security Complex Theory enables one to understand this new structure and to evaluate the relative balance of power, and mutual relationship within it between, regionalizing and globalizing trends" (Buzan and Weaver, 2003,p.3).

In the light of this information, the main aim of this thesis is to examine the importance of the sub-region of North Caucasus for the security of the Black Sea Region. It also attempts to answer the question "What is the importance of the North Caucasus for the

Black Sea Region in the context of regional security?". Drawing from the above information, two important sub-questions "Why is the Black Sea regional security important?" and "How did the social, ethnic, economic, and political characteristics of the North Caucasus link with those of the Black Sea region?" have also been considered as sub-topics of this thesis.

In this context, as it can be seen, the security risks play a crucial role in the formation and development of the Black Sea Region. In this dissertation the term security corresponds to two meanings for the Black Sea Region: the first is the security of domestic politics which also, have a huge impact on the foreign policies of the actors, the second is the security of territorial sovereignty or external issues of actors.

Speaking at a comparative angle, the cause of domestic conflict; at various levels; in most Black Sea countries, is more or less the same. Some of these main causes can be listed as weak democratization progress, multi-ethnic issues, and economic instability. These problems are more visible especially in the South Caucasus part of the region. According to the *Freedom House* reports, most of the South Caucasus countries in the Black Sea region have low freedom rates, which make them categorizable as "not free" or "partly free".[1] In that light, the real problem of these countries is not the absence of constitutional or legal regulations. Their key problem, on the other hand, is that the current state organs do not act in accordance with the law. When the general profile of the South Caucasus countries is examined, the main remarkable problem is the weakness of checks and balances between legislative execution and judicial power which has resulted to high rates of corruption, poor representation of minority groups and the weakness of the principle of transparency. Moreover, ethnic and social divisions in these countries also have a huge impact on their domestic political atmosphere. However, it will be a big mistake to say that these problems are only endemic to the South Caucasian countries and only to less developed democracies in the region. It should be kept in mind that almost all the Black Sea countries, even the European Union member states, are tasked with political issues

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1 Azerbaijan: Freedom Status: Not Free, Aggregate score: 16 Freedom rating: 6.5, Political Rights: 7, Civil Liberties: 6 (2016); Georgia: Freedom Status : Partly free, Aggregate score 64, Freedom rating:3.0 Political Rights :3 Civil Liberties: 3 (2016); Armenia : Freedom Status : Partly free, Aggregate score:46 Freedom rating:4.5, Political Rights:5, Civil Liberties:4 (2016).

of the same kind. Even though Romania and Bulgaria became full members of the European Union in 2007, they still had suspicions on their suitability for membership. For that reason, therefore, the Commission decided to establish the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism (CVM) tasked with the duty of observing and supporting the progress of the two countries (European Commission, 2017). The weaknesses of these countries can be considered almost similar with those of their South Caucasian counterparts, considering the same aspects of: bad governance, corruption and the weaknesses of checks and balances to their government systems.

The regional problems of the Black Sea region are as many as the domestic problems of the actors in the region. In three headings, the main problems of the region include: firstly, the clash of interests, secondly, frozen conflicts and lastly, the ineffectiveness of collectivity and collaboration in the region.

1.*Clash of interests*: The geography that encompasses the Black Sea region also has the feature of being of the intersection of many different actors. The region has great prospects because of the wide market opportunity it offers derived from natural gas and oil reserves. This poses the possibility of constant active conflict (Weaver, 2011). As a result, it causes a power struggle between the actors in the region (Ivan, 2012).

On one hand, Russia wants to protect the general control of the region, dominate the flow of the energy trade, feel safe in the military direction, and be confident of the possible regional and global threats it may face (Çelikpala, 2010). On the other hand, especially after its expansion in 2004, the European Union and NATO became much more active actors in the region. Basically, the Western or in other words the Transatlantic Community (Çelikpala, 2010) wants to promote democracy, prosperity, peace, and stability in the region. As it is understood, they want to ensure their own security and guarantee the ability to meet energy demands without a problem. However, the European Union and NATO's active presence in the region disturbs Russia. This situation has shown itself most recently in the crisis of Ukraine. Throughout the Ukrainian crisis, which began late 2013, Russia supported separatist groups and wanted to strengthen its presence in the region; which has been in existence for many years. According to Hatem Cabbarlı, the real problem between Russia and Ukraine is not the fate of history; but the European Union and NATO, which have become increasingly stronger in the region with the effort and tendency of westernization and democratization of Ukraine (Cabbarlı, 2016).

2.*Frozen conflicts*: Border issues in the region have a deep historical background for Black Sea countries. At the time of the Soviet Union and after its collapse and especially that of territories under its control, the Soviet regime faced many economic, political and human costs in Black Sea region. Huge groups of people were displaced or forced to migrate, many social conflicts arose because of political missteps which caused the birth of unchecked mistrust and hostility, which have continued even today between neighbor nations. Currently, some of these conflicts have since been resolved, however some of them still remain frozen. Today there are primarily four "frozen conflicts" in need of resolution within the region namely: Georgia's trouble with Abkhazia and Ossetia, the puzzle of Nagorno-Karabakh between Azerbaijan and Armenia, Transnistria's problem in Moldova and lastly the recent Ukrainian crisis for which reconciliation has not been achieved. In all cases, the sides clash for self-determination versus territorial integrity. The thing here is, the future of problems, which are described as frozen in the region is yet a question of fact and no prospective time for the end. Each of these issues is presented as a workaround, there is the potential to return to an active conflict at any point in time (Shelest, 2012).

3. Ineffectiveness of Collectivity and Collaboration in the region: Geopolitically, the Black Sea region is home to a land that collects and promotes a diverse array of different actors, in terms of international issues such as the economy, security, energy, human rights or the environment. Even so, this rich potential of the region cannot be utilized by the actors for the high level of advantage. In this context, unfortunately, established organizations in the region also do not seem to offer help by creating awareness of regional action as Dimitrios Triantaphyllou mentions: "Inclusive organizations – like the BSEC, which was designed to promote a consensual economic agenda – did not deliver, due to conflicting interests. At the same time, organizations bearing some resemblance to 'alliance formation', like GUAM, also failed to produce positive results, as their agenda – to entangle the regional hegemon– did not provide the incentives to promote cooperation among them" (Triantaphyllou, 2009,p.233).

Last but not least, the security factors of such a versatile zone are not only dependent on actors, the problems and reciprocal relations we had already mentioned above. As within the matter of this theses, every sub-subject in the Black Sea region and global threats in the world such as terror also has a very effective role in regional security.

Terror, which continues to increase without restraint in many parts of the world and especially in the Middle East in recent years, has become a growing threat to all national states, all communities, and all regions. It is hard to find a community where these rapidly growing groups cannot find sympathizers or supporters (Al-Shishani, 2014).

The Northern Caucasus region of Russia is, unfortunately, the most real example of this situation. In 2005, the rapport of the northern republic, which was presented by Dmitry Kozak to the president of the time, Vladimir Putin, describes the region as follows "There is a sharp growth of radicalism and extremism, a widening of the gap 'between constitutional democratic principles and the processes taking place in reality'. In the end, it 'could lead to the appearance of a macro-region of social, political and economic instability' which will include all the Caucasus republics and part of Stavropol Territory" (Melvin, 2007,p.1). In addition to positive changes, the region still maintains its critical position. It was announced that one of the terrorists of the last Ataturk airport attack in 2016, who murdered 41 people and injured 239, was Dagestani Vadim Osmanov, a native member of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) (Palazzo & Winch, 2016). In October of 2016, Germany took 14 Chechen Russians into custody following an investigative operation conducted by the German police (BBC,2016). Undoubtedly, after the Chechen wars, the huge group of people who are attending a global terror organization from the Caucasus region, took the attention of the international community again to Russia's North Caucasus region.

No one is able to give a clear number of those who join radical groups in the Middle East. The Commonwealth of Independent States assumes that the number of people from the former Soviet community is around 5,000 (Oliphant, 2016). Nevertheless, in 2015 the President of the Republic of Chechnya, Ramazan Kadyrov, announced that almost 500 people were in these groups from Chechenya (The Moscow Times, 2015). In 2016, Russia's Prosecutor General announced the number of participants in all Russia as 3,500. (The Moscow Times, 2016) .These groups of foreign fighters whose exact numbers are unknown represent a big trouble for future of the region (Panagiotis Gavras, 2010).

As it is well known, the North Caucasus has been one of the most problematic regions in Russia for many years (Cornell,1997). Although the regionally identified terrorist incidents constitute the vast majority of security concerns in the North Caucasus, in fact, the security problem in the region is much more extensive. Northern Caucasus is a very

complex region with multi-ethnic conflicts, unmanageable radical religious and nationalist movements, underdevelopment and gap between democratic and welfare life standards (Baev, 2012).

On the other hand, the issues in the Northern Caucasus region are far from being just the problem of Russia. Relations with neighboring states in areas such as energy, trade, and politics, increase the importance of the North Caucasus day by day, especially for the Black Sea region.

After this introductory part, the thesis consists of four parts. The first part will focus on the theoretical observation and explanation on the definition of security and security approaches and the second on the North Caucasus historical background and its effect on inside security conditions and terror threats of today's North Caucasia. The third part will be on the importance of Black Sea security and the link between North Caucasus. The last part of the study will be the conclusion.

In general, this thesis is a study, which does not report much numeric value and that is weighted towards qualitative data. In this context, the main sources referenced to obtain information consist of the examination and observations of primary sources and secondary sources such as articles, theoretical approaches, books and activities of decision-makers in both the Black Sea and the North Caucasus region and policy reports related to the region. Therefore, qualitative data collection techniques such as observation and document analysis are the basis of this thesis. The methodological purpose of the thesis includes a holistic view aimed at revealing and interpreting information from various sources. Because of this situation, the methodological part of this thesis also mentions the questions of external and internal dynamics of the Black Sea region's security as well as historical background of North Caucasus, which are effective in the shaping of North Caucasus' security problems of this day.

CHAPTER 1

SECURITY

From the beginning of human history, security has been the leading concern of all periods and all civilizations. This concern is such a great concern, that it has affected the internal and external political structure of each era, has initiated wars, established partnerships, cooperation, or grouping of allies and has been the foundation of the confidence and oppositely the lack of confidence between the parties. There is no doubt that implicitly or explicitly, security and understanding of actors on security is the main feature that shapes the international order. Although there are initial threats, wars, armed conflicts or violence that come to mind about security, today's renewed value judgments have developed a much more comprehensive and much broader framed security concept. The classical definition of the security concept which derives from the insistence of high international relations issues such as national state interests and military superiority has lost its efficiency. It is a common fact that the soft power aspects now cover the content of the security issue much more than ever.

Nevertheless, at the same time this situation, just as it is in many social science concepts and terms, making it difficult to explain the security term because of its wide frame area. When looking in general, it is obvious that a common agreement on a security concept has not been achieved amongst scholars, politicians and other actors in the international system. On the other hand, for many studies especially political science, international relations and related subjects, building a definition for security (or at least to draw a framework of it) is very important. According to David A. Baldwin "Identifying the common elements in various conceptions of security is useful in at least three ways: First, it facilitates asking the most basic question of social science. Second, it promotes rational policy analysis by facilitating comparison of one type of security policy with another. Third, it facilitates scholarly communication by establishing common ground between those with disparate views" (Baldwin, 1997, p.5).

Referring to Baldwin, this first part of the thesis aims at explaining the development process of the concept of security especially after the Cold War period; and it is also

trying to examine some theoretical approach of the Copenhagen School's Regional Security Complex theory, which regards as the main theoretical approach of the thesis.

In this sense, in very basic definition, the terminological meaning of the term security described as "A term which denotes the absence of threats to scarce values" (Evans and Newnham,1998, p.39).On the other hand, most social scientists and theorists have many different approaches amongst each other on the concept of security and its characteristics. Still, there is not a common agreement on whether security is a goal, issue, area or a discipline all by itself (Haftendorn, 1991).

One of the earliest studies in this area the "national security as an ambiguous symbol", Arnold Wolfers mentions that "security, in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked" (Wolfers, 1952, p.485). According to him, security is something that could be measured by the absence of threat or ability of defense from a possible threat. Concordantly with this situation for him, domestic factors such as national character, tradition, preferences, and prejudices of a nation as effective as external factors for security. Wolfers mentions other different levels in his study, in addition to the state level. He however, puts more emphasis on a "national security" approach towards security.

On the other hand, in his study of "The concept of security", Baldwin describes security as a conceptually unheeded, neglected and contested concept. In his explanation, contrary to Wolfers', he argues that security can be an ambiguous concept but without some specifications. Related to this, the main questions of Baldwin's explanation on security are "Security from whom" (the individual, the state or the international system etc.) and "security for which values" (physical, economic and so on) (Baldwin, 1997). Besides these questions, Baldwin also underlines five more questions for specifying the concept of security which are: How much security? Security from what threats? Security by which means? Security at what cost? and Security in what period of time?

In other respects, Richard Ullman criticizes the handling of security concerns only in the state and militarist center. According to him, studies on security, which are frameworks only based on these two perspectives, were a great misstep and kept themselves away from reality. For Ullman, there are two major dangers of such a mistake "First, it causes states to concentrate on military threats and to ignore other, perhaps more, harmful

dangers. Thus, reducing their total security. Second, it contributes to a pervasive militarization of international relations that in the long run can only increase global insecurity" (Ullman,1983,p.129). For Ullman, security can also be a "consequence" rather than a "goal" and he mentions that it is, therefore, a priority to address the threat, which endangers the existence of security when dealing with security. With his own expression: "security is an action or sequence of events that. (1) threatens drastically and over a relatively brief span of time to degrade the quality of life for the inhabitants of a state, or (2) threatens significantly to narrow the range of policy choices available to the government of a state or to private, non-governmental entities (persons, groups, corporations) within the state" (Ullman, 1983, p.133). With this new definition, Ullman brings a different perspective to security. By adding the non-state objects to his definition of security, he took the first step towards defining of security for everyone (Individual, society, nation, groups etc.) and security for everything related to them (such as state, company, environment etc.).

It can be said that the greatest factor in the expansion of the field of study of many researchers, such as Ullman, is "the end of the Cold War". With the end of the Cold War, many issues that have not been able to find enough room for themselves, (such as women's rights, environmental issues, economic problems or epidemics) due to the military hot agenda between superpowers, have come to be covered by international relations and security (Açikmeşe, 2011).

1.1. REGİONALİSM AND THE COPENHAGEN SCHOOL

During the pre-Cold War and Cold War period, the concept of security was examined under the domination of state-centric military studies. As Baldwin mentions "If military force was relevant to an issue, it was considered a security issue; and if military force was not relevant, that issue was consigned to the category of low politics. Security has been a banner to be flown, a label to be applied, but not a concept to be used by most security studies specialists" (Baldwin, 1997,p.9). Post-Cold War international structure was the most important factor which changed this situation. With the end of Cold War, the ability of superpowers to influence the rest of the world has weakened and the return of the superpowers to their internal dynamics has led the countries under the influence of these

forces to establish a more individual administration (Buzan & Weaver, 2003). This situation has also supported the development of new theoretical explanations and approaches on security studies such as globalism and regionalization after the Cold War.

1.1.1. Regionalization of Security

In the light of these developments, "regional security" or the "regionalization of security" emerges as a phenomenon increasingly important as well. When most regionalization practices are examined, it is seen that security concerns are at the root of these formations. As Bjön Hettne mentions, the "security concern" (caused by the risk of spillover of a local conflict or inward impact of any problem in the region to local units) is one of the main reason that motivating actors for cooperating (Hettne, 2008).

On the other hand, this new phenomenon of regional security also brings new debates to the international relations study area.

Free from any doubt, theoretical conceptualization of facts that are observed in practice is one of the most important and most difficult tasks for social science disciplines. In this context, the concepts of regionalism; one of these facts, which expresses different meanings for many disciplines within social sciences. On one hand, interdisciplinary character of concept, while on the other many different types of explanations in itself, cause complications while making a general definition for regionalism (Hettne, 2006). While analyzing and studying especially in particular branches such as international relations, global political economics or international economics, each branch and almost every scholar approaches the concept of regionalism from their point of view.

In terms of international relations studies, although the first examples were on the 1950s and 1960s, the concept of regionalism has shown huge development especially after 1980 which is named as "new regionalism" (Laryea, 2013). When considered from this point of view we will see that classical regionalist approaches were more state-centric approaches, which are at the same time defense-centered from security threats. In fact, it is a natural result of the Pre-1980 international political atmosphere; having said that, the Cold War and the bipolar world order have great influence on the development of the classical regionalist approach (Laryea, 2013). However, the concept of "new regionalism" developed post-1980 has come to life after the period of Eurosclerosis and

more concern on economic development than with security (Hettne, 2006). In this sense, we can say that regionalism which has developed in recent times are socially and politically contracted units by international actors in the areas of social, economic, political and organizational cohesiveness (Hurrell, 2009).

In addition to the development in which it has shown itself, regionalism is at the same time developing as an alternative to globalization. In very basic definition, globalization is convergence, cross-border flows, international interconnectedness and integration of goods, services and labor as well as economies, industries, markets, cultures, policy making, capital, and information (Laryea, 2013). Unfortunately, such a large scope also brings with it a great deal of confusion. On one hand, socio-political progress in the international system made it a necessity for collaboration; on the other hand, the actors, who are in the international system, still, had a non-homogeneous structure for such a wide range of collaboration. In this sense, globalization and regionalism are two alternative approaches which are products of same historical and logical process. Both aim to soften the boundaries between states. However compared to globalization, regionalism is less complicated and easier to implement in the first place (Telò, 2007).

In the study conducted by Edward Mansfield and Helen Miller region was basically defined as "A group of countries in the specified area" and "Region and regionalism hinge on the importance of geographical proximity and on the relationship between economic flows and policy choices" (Mansfield & Milner, 1999, p.590). According to another scholar, Andrey Hurell, "the core of the theory of regionalism focuses on the impact of rising levels of regional social and economic exchange and the links between economic integration, institutions, and identity" (Hurrell, 2013, p.130).

1.1.2. The Copenhagen School

The foundation of the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, founded by the Danish parliament, was established in 1985 as an independent institute for multi-lateral research in the field of peace and security. In very basic and general terms we can say that the basis of the Copenhagen School's approach on security is shaped by its critics on the view that the traditional and realistic theoretical approach in the 1980's considered the state as the only actor and use of military force is the only main threat in security analysis. According

to Sinem Açıkmeşe, since 1987, the Copenhagen School has been trying to steer itself away from the realistic tradition in the sub-disciplines of the security studies (Açikmeşe, 2011). In contrast to this state-centric and military based view, scholars such as Barry Buzan, Jaap de Wilde, and Ole Wæver, who are the founders and chief investigators of the school, have concentrated their efforts on multi-actor and multi-faceted approaches to security studies (Açikmeşe, 2011).

1.1.3. Regional Security Complex Theory and The Copenhagen School

According to Buzan and Wæver's study of "Regions and Powers the Structure of International Security: The ending of the Cold War had three major impacts on regionalization process. First, it's broke the hegemony of superpowers, especially over North-east Asia territories. Second, by round out ideological conflicts and collapse of Soviet power, it changed both the nature and the intensity of global power influence into third world regional security complexes. Third, it helped to increase of non-military issues and actors in security agenda (Buzan and Weaver, 2003).

The Copenhagen School accepts this three factors as the foundation of new security structure. The approach of Copenhagen School can be categorized in the side of neo-realism (on the materialist side) and globalism (on the constructivist side) (Buzan and Weaver, 2003).

In the light of this perspective, the Copenhagen school has brought in three major approaches to literature. Which are securitization and desecuritization, sectoral security and the regional security (Baysal & Lüleci, 2011).

a. Securitization and de-securitization: The main goal of the securitization theory is to respond to the question of "what makes an event, threat or situation a security concern?" According to Copenhagen School, answer to this question is hidden in the discourse. For the Copenhagen School thinkers, security is a "speech act". According to them, anything that poses a situation, or a threat translates to a real security problem. The main thing is whether it is discursively described as a threat or not threat (Baysal &Lüleci, 2011). More precisely, a security problem arises when decision-makers, such as the state elites, perceive and pronounce an event politically as a threat outside the public sphere (Miş, 2014). To be explained in its most general form, it is called securitization if the active

actor to express a situation as a threat in his/her discourse and the measures which are taken regarding this situation are called de-securitization.

b. Sectoral Security*:* As we mentioned earlier, the Copenhagen school does not consider only military problems as a threat. Rather than this, it focuses on five different sectors which are military, political, economic, social and environmental. These sectors are identified as "a set of units whose major processes of securitization, de-securitization, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed or told apart from one another" (Buzan and Weaver, 2003, p.491).

c. Regional Security*:* In their book of Regions and Power, Buzan and Weaver argue that there are two dominant approaches to analyzing security. The first one is national; which Buzan and Weaver find open to criticism because it is focused on a national state-centric level of analysis. In such a level of analysis the think inside the box approach to issues mostly underestimates some of the factors on security. The second is the global approach which is also open to criticism because it is useful for a very small area of the security concern and is not expansive enough to cover most of the state holistic concerns on security. This is because of its large-scale method of analysis. In their study of the "regional security complex theory" (RSCT) the Copenhagen School, by developing a new understanding, assumes that regional level analysis is useful for a unit of analysis that can be negligible of both of national and global approaches. For Buzan and Weaver:

> The most well-established function for RSCT is as a framework organizing empirical studies of regional security. The theory specifies what to look for at four levels of analysis and how to interrelate these. The four levels are:
>
> 1. Domestically in the states of the region, particularly their domestically generated vulnerabilities (is the state strong or weak due to the stability of the domestic order and correspondence between state and nation? (Buzan 1991) The specific vulnerability of a state defines the kind of security fears it has (Weaver 1989) – and sometimes makes another state or group of states a structural threat even if it or they have no hostile intentions);
>
> 2. state-to-state relations (which generate the region as such);
>
> 3. The region's interaction with neighboring regions (this is supposed to be relatively limited given that the complex is defined by interaction internally being more important. But if major changes in the patterns of security interdependence that define complexes are underway, this level can become significant, and in situations of gross asymmetries, a complex without global powers that neighbors one with a global power can have strong interregional links in one direction); and finally

4. The role of global powers in the region (the interplay between the global and regional security structures). (Buzan and Weaver, 2003, p.51)

To put it simply, the theory of "regional security complex" serves as a bridge between global and local units in understanding the power balance and contradictory relations within this new order. As we mention before, according to this theory, the term security complex refers "a set of units whose major processes of securitization, desecuritisation, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed or resolved from one another" (Buzan and Weaver, 2003, p.491). The theory of regional security complex is based on the foundation that security threats affect the immediate surroundings more than distant ones.

In conclusion as Buzan and Weaver mention the Regional security complex theory is useful for three reasons. Firstly, it did not give a very wide or very narrow view. For that reason, it offers an ideal perspective for handling the security subject and issue. Secondly, it is appropriate for an approach based on experimentation and observation. Finally, it provides a theory-based approach to regional analysis.

CHAPTER 2

THE NORTH CAUCASUS

When viewed from a geographical perspective, it is possible to describe the Caucasus region as a water corridor, a buffer zone, or a junction between north-south and east-west roads. Alongside being a center for the Black Sea region, it is in the middle of Europe and Asia and through the Caspian Sea, it is involved in the interaction between East and Central Asia. When all these are taken into account, there is no doubt that, the region is so strategic in terms of international relations (Bölükbaşı, 2007).

On the other hand, as A.Arkın Bölükbaşı mentions The North Caucasus, which is the entrance gate of the Caucasus, carries the characteristic of the critical land area, which has the main strategic importance, which can provide control of the region (Bölükbaşı, 2007). The Northern Caucasus corridor is indispensable and vital. It is set to become dominant over the South Caucasus and/or to become the commercial, economic and energy balance for the region.

With these aspects considered, the Northern Caucasus region has been one of the few regions of the world that have preserved and maintained its importance and even one of the few places that have guided history.

Until the dissolution of the Soviet Russia, the North Caucasia and Transcaucasia[2] (Southern Caucasus) have shared a common destiny. If we consider this period as a history of sole Caucasus land, the region was under the three superpower struggles of sovereignty: Russia, the Ottoman Empire and the Persians. Although the powers directing the region have now left their place to new national states, today the influence of these historical subdivisions can observed undeniably on the political, social and cultural structure of the Caucasus.

According to sources, the orientation of Russia to the region happened after the era of the two major Islamic authorities of the 16th century; the Ottoman empire and the Persians.

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[2] "Transcaucasia" is a translation and is the equivalent of the term of the word "Закавказье (Zakavkazje)". The word refers to the region that encompasses Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. This form of the term is mostly used by the commentators from the Russian perspective (Gamkrelidze, 1998).

Before this time, Russia did not show any worthy attempts within the region. In this context, the Persians followed a proliferation in the east of the Caucasus, which took into it's side the Georgian Kingdoms of Kartli and Kakheti, The Muslim Khanate of Yerevan and Nakhchivan, up to the Dagestan. On the other hand, The Ottoman Empire advanced along the shore of the Black Sea and dominated an area encompassing Circassia and Kabardian inland. Moreover, these periods are based on the struggle of the two Islamic authorities over each other's progress (King, 2008).

In the other aspect, the North Caucasus has been in interaction with Russia for more than 400 years and today the region is named Southern Russia. In that regard, starting from the 16th century to this day; from the era of Tsarist Russia to that of Soviet Russia and on the post-Soviet period; all administrative, ideological and political experiences of the Russians have had a huge and visible impact on North Caucasia.

However, for Russia, it has not been that easy to establish dominance in the region and bring it to the present day. The conflicts between the Persians and the Ottomans in the first place, the increasing interest of the Europeans in the region, as well as the resistance forces in the regions; especially in the east of the North Caucasus from Chechnya, Dagestan and Ingushetia; were among the biggest problems Imperial Russia faced in that period (Melvin, 2007).On the other hand, the complexity of the ethnic, cultural and social structures of the region was also a challenging factor at that time (King,2008).

The second part of the thesis is devoted to the definition and explanation of the Northern Caucasus. It aims to focus on the issues, starting with the Tsarist period, and continue with the Soviet period, the post-soviet period and lastly Putin's administrative period and today's Northern Caucasus structure. The purpose of this chapter is not to present a chronological point of view to the historical development of the Northern Caucasus. The main reason for including historical development in this section is to show the effects of the historical background of the region to today's North Caucasus and to create a more comprehensive view.

2.1.TSARIST RUSSIA AND THE NORTH CAUCASUS

There is no doubt that especially in terms of commercial, social, political and military; the geography of the Caucasus has a very deep place in the history of Russia (Kerimov,

2012). In this context, Russia established its first interactive relations with Northern Caucasia in the 16th century. When the characteristic of this first period was examined there were two major factors affecting the relations between Russia and the North Caucasia. The first is the active trade in the region that also encloses the Caspian basin. The second is the balance politics followed by the Caucasian peoples, who have remained among the great powers of the time. As a matter of fact, the repressive politics of Russian domination of the region are hardly visible until the end of the Napoleonic Wars of 1815. Russia, who afraid of leaving the southern border too weak during the Napoleonic Wars, began to implement a more comprehensive policy in the region shortly after this first period. Undoubtedly, the most important person who authorised this process was General Alexei Petrovich Ermolov who was appointed by Tsar Aleksandr (1) to prevent and stabilize the new regions that were included the Russian territory and to gain new territories and privileges in the Caucasus (Kerimov, 2012).

The words of Ermolov are in fact the sign how of a great conflict in the Northern Caucasus was hard at hand.

> I want the fear that my name will cause, better protect our boundaries than our calories. My saying must be an inevitable decree than death for the mountaineers. Humility in the eyes of these Asians is considered a sign of weakness. Moreover, I am totally treated with irresistible cruelty under the influence of human emotions. The execution of a highlander while saving the lives of hundreds of Russian soldiers, it prevents thousands of Muslims from betraying us. (Kerimov, 2012, p.40).

Loyal to these words, during the time of the General Ermolov he followed the repressive policies that had never been implemented until his time. Especially in territories of Chechnya, Dagestan and the North-Western Caucasus. He carried out repressive military operations. This repressive attitude continued in the following periods as well.

That first adventure between Tsarist Russia and Northern Caucasians started in the 16th century and went on up to the 19th century. It included countless warfare and forced the immigration of 500,000 indigenous Caucasians into Ottoman territory in the year 1864 (Melvin, 2007). The most important results of this period led to the establishment of diaspora links, which have preserved their relations up until today.

2.2. SOVIET ERA

The Russian revolution; the heaviest result of the First World War for Russia, which happened in 1917 and concluded with the downfall of the Russian tsarist regime; opened a new door for Russia and the territories where it was dominant. The most important effect of this period in terms of the North Caucasus was that the people of the region were provoked by external factors against imperial Russia. The North Caucasus showed intense resistance against the Russians in the framework of the ideologies such as national sovereignty and independence that the First World War gave to the whole world. After an uncertainty and conflict situation that lasted until 1923, its place has taken on a relative quiescence. The new Soviet Russian regime, founded in 1917, emphasized two important factors for dominance in the region: one is right of self-governing and the other is religion. After winning the trust of the region's elite and receiving support for the revolution from them, the Soviet Russia continued to occupy the region, just like the Tsarist Russia, with its divide and conquer ideology. Soviet Russians, who had set up self-dependent elites in the region, had banned and closed religious institutions that the people had been able to mobilize since they wanted to minimize all kinds of religious and social unity in the region. Although these oppressive policies had been applied until the Second World War, the War changed that situation and Russia began to soften up social politics, especially in the area of religion. However, this process brought about the beginning of an unprecedented persecution of Northern Caucasus, after the Germans separated from the region in 1943 and with the accession of the Stalin. As Neil J. Melvin mentions, on the grounds that they have allied with the Nazis, between the 1943 and 1944, all the ethnic peoples of the region including the Balkars, the Circassians, the Chechens and the Ingushes were subjected to a compulsory migration and to settlement policy and there have been many casualties in this process (Melvin, 2007).

This process has led to territorial disputes between native nations that have laid the foundation for instability in the region over the coming years. As will be explained later in the chapter, these conflicts have continued until the recent history, and even today, they show themselves.

2.3. THE POST-SOVIET ERA AND THE FIRST CHECHEN WAR (1994-1996)

After a while, the gradual weakening of the central authority and economic weaknesses led to the disintegration of Soviet Russia in the same way the Russian tsarism. This was the second disintegration period; which Russia had experienced in the same century after the tsarist Russia. It is a fact that it was impossible to avoid the search for new identities and uprisings along with this disintegration which caused the weakening of the central authority of Russia, which is dominated by a very large geography (Bölükbaşı, 2007).

The Caucasus region was one of the regions where this situation was most intense. Just like the Southern Caucasus countries, the Northern Caucasus region also showed great resistance to gain their independence. As a result, Russia, at the threshold of its dissolution, could not produce constructive and promising solutions to the uprisings in Northern Caucasus. The new regime remained weak, particularly in the face of cutting off nationalist movements, building a regular state structure and preventing the spread of religious sects (Melvin, 2007).

This weakness soon showed itself in the First Chechen War. In 1991, Chechnya declared its independence under the presidency of Dudayev. This caused great chaos among the large ethnic groups in the region. In 1994, Russia started to intervene in the region. All this ended in 1996 with the death of Dudayev.

Besides the loss of life and property, the most important consequences of this First Chechen war include: the increase of the Russian authority in the region, the growth of Radical Islam and the increasing irregularity of the functioning of state organs in the region.

2.4. THE PUTIN ERA AND THE SECOND CHECHEN WAR (1999-2009)

When Putin came to power in the year 2000, he faced problems that would make his reign very difficult. All these problems, which had caused the disintegration of the Soviet were seen in all national and international fields, especially in the areas of security, administration and economics. As a consequence of this situation, the first steps of Putin's internal policy were focused mainly on centralization, federal reform and the destruction of the effectiveness of some regional powers and oligarchs. In regard to foreign politics,

he mainly aimed at re-establishing the Russian state and bringing Russia where it deserved to be economically and politically on the international platform.

In this context, the North Caucasus played a critical role for Putin in terms of both internal and external politics. That is why from the very beginning of his presidency, he made it a historic goal for him to remove the Northern Caucasus problem for Russia (Taylor, 2007). When Putin came to power, the region was in a chaotic position that had been caused by the unresolved issues from the first Chechen War and a power vacuum. Similar problems were spreading to nearby areas and the region was under the threat of global radical groups spreading like Al-Qaeda (Melvin, 2007).This situation forced Russia to intervene in the region again in 1999 and the Second Chechen War started. But compared to the first war the biggest difference of this period was the spreading existence of international terrorist organizations in the region. Especially in the second Chechen War, the conflict between Russia and native groups in the region has moved away from the struggle of an ethnic uprising and independence and has become a symbol for the internationally radicalized Islamist jihadi groups.

2.5. NORTH CAUCASUS TODAY

From the other side, Putin's takeover of Russia also has been a critical turning point for the North Caucasus. The Putin government, which was aware of all the problems and conflicts of the region, augmented seven federal administrations that were created in 2000 and increased them to eight, in 2010, and separated the Northern Caucasus federal district from Southern Federal distinct (Akinin, 2016). He mentioned in his speech, in a meeting on the Development of the North Caucasus Federal District *"*The government must prove that it is capable of guaranteeing security, justice and the rule of law. It must provide stability, strengthen interregional accord and interfaith relations. We need to achieve a decisive watershed in the economic and social development of the North Caucasus." (The Russian Government, 2010).

Even though they are federally separated; the term North Caucasus in this thesis refers to the combination of all the Northern Caucasus Federal District and some part of the South Russian Federal District of Russia, because of their historical, social and cultural ties. In this context, the Northern Caucasus region mentioned in this thesis refers an area between

the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, which includes the seven republics (Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachai-Cherkessia, Adygea and North Ossetia) and the Krasnodar and Stavropol Krai of Russia.

The population in this region corresponds to 10.63% of the total Russian population. Respectively, Krasnodar, Stavropol, Dagestan, Chechnya and Kabardino-Balkaria are the first five most crowded areas of the region. The region has the feature of being the most concentrated area of Muslims in all Russian territory. It is also one of the least ethnic Russian territories. Outside the Stavropol region, according to 2010 census, there is no region where the ethnic Russians are the majority amongst native ethnic groups.

The regional economy is based on agriculture and husbandry. After the strategy of the "State program: North Caucasus Federal District Development to 2025" many improvements were observed in the region. The program aims to find solutions to problems by increasing regional development, that is why strategy avails many different areas ranging from security, to social , economic and cultural developments (Akinin *et al.*, 2016). The main aim of the program being to improve living standards the region.

Undoubtedly, the 2025 program provided the most development in areas of agriculture and husbandry. The region "produces 45% of grape supplies in Russia, more than 10% of crops, fruits, and vegetables and more than 5% of sugar-beet. There are 11% of cattle and 40.8% of sheep of all Russia in the farms of the district. The district supplies 7% of milk and 44.2% of wool produced in the country" (Akinin *et al.*, 2016, p.202). Besides that, electronics, tourism and automotive industries are expected to develop in the region.

However, the functionality of the strategy plan is still a matter of debate. Especially with the recent outbreak of migration, terrorism and other problems which have left an open door to much criticism. Although positive developments are taking place in North Caucasus, the region is still confronted by emerging problems and conflicts, hailing from the past. Economic, social and ideological problems that have triggered security concerns in the region.

2.6. MAIN SOCIO-POLITICAL ISSUES OF NORTH CAUCASUS

2.6.1. Nationalism/ Ethnic-Clashes Over the Region

The concept of nationalism, which shaped both national and international politics in modern times, is one of the contradictory terms in social sciences (Hutchinson, Smith, 1994). The question about how national identity is formed, how it develops, whether it is natal, or whether it is acquired later, is yet to have an exact answer. It is known that the idea of nationalism, which has started to spread all over the world especially after the end of the First World War, shown its effect rapidly after the Second World War and has been an occasion to many conflicts. Therefore, the construction of nations played a big role in this political atmosphere. One of the most affected state from this situation is Russia, and nationalist conflicts played a major role, especially in the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the post-soviet period.

According to the demographic report of 2015 Russia, there about 180 different ethnic groups live together in Russia. The non-Russian ethnic groups constitute more than twenty percent of the population, which means a huge percentage of Russia. As we already mentioned before, the Northern Caucasians are some of the most crowded ethnic populations in Russia comprising more than 10 percent of the population. Ruling in a multi-ethnic region is one of the hardest things for state governments. In fact, the history of Russia, which has been full of wars, serves as one of the greatest evidences of this situation. On the other hand, changes have been observed over time according to the political atmosphere of the era of the nationalism of the North Caucasus. It is possible to observe two different nationalism episodes in this region. The first one is the nationalist attitude of the people of the region against Russia. Secondly, nationalist differences among the different ethnic groups living in the region.

As mentioned earlier, starting from Tsarist Russia up until the Russian federal state, Russia was in a conflict with the North Caucasus in terms of religion, sovereignty or self-governing. It is a fact that such historical conflicts are triggering the rise of nationalism in the region however, it is possible to observe the different dimensions of the alienation that is felt in the Caucasus today without conflict between the two nations. Many political practices that are said to have been applied for security in the region are damaging the democratic presence of the people of the region in Russia. Lack of elections in the region

and the appointment of regional administrators by Moscow (Dzutsev, 2013), the influences of the military interventions, as well as the socio-economic situation in the region being run behind the scenes from the Russia, makes the people feel that the region is marginalized compared to other parts of the Russian Federation. Although the administration of Putin is a slug on for more advanced politics, the region is in a vicious cycle of social, economic and political direction (Melvin, 2007). The security concerns in the region hamper normalization, while the non-normalized order hampers development in the region. This situation increases the opposition and lack of trust of local people to Russia.

Another cause of ethnic and nationalist problems in the region is the conflict of interests between the different ethnic groups in the region. In the Soviet period, the people of the region accused of cooperating with the Nazis and in 1943-1944, were displaced and exiled and were subjected to a mixed policy of inhabiting, as a punishment. In this period in the North Caucasus and South Caucasus many ethnic groups land was handed-over after exile. According to King, this policy also was part of the demographic engineering of the Russia (King, 2008). In this way, Russia distinguishes the people who are close to each other in language, culture and social direction on one hand and implements its own sovereignty policy on the other. The peoples who are particularly hostile to each other have been brought together so that the administration of the region becomes easier.

In 1957, exiled people were officially rehabilitated and returned to their homelands. Nevertheless, this caused more chaos. The return of close to 50.000 families to their homes caused territorial conflicts between the parties (Melvin, 2007). Especially in the areas of Ingushetia, North Ossetia, Kabardey-Balkar and Karachay-Cherkessia regions, serious problems were encountered. These people lost absolute or a major part of their land when they returned to their homeland and in this manner, the ethnic hostility towards each other increased. Because of this situation, there have been constant conflicts between the Ossetians and the Ingushes, including the communist era, and massacres begun to take place. Similarly, political conflicts continue between the Balkars and the Kabardians. Balkars still claim that enough rehabilitation has not been done and they have consequently not received their rights. Besides these examples, the situations are almost the same for each region. In conclusion, ethnic conflicts in the North Caucasus have a structure and background that can easily flare up (Gündüzhev, 2013).

2.6.2. Integration

Integration is another important problem of the Northern Caucasus. We encounter three important factors when we pay attention to this problem. They include: historically ever-changing governing and ideological systems in Russia which have not found a place of identity for non-Russian people, the active search for independence in the 1990's and its influence on North Caucasus and lastly the strength of local cultures belonging to the region.

In fact, the search for identity is the most precious thing that affects the political atmosphere in Russia after the Soviet Union. Russia, which has lost its sovereignty over a very large geography, has been torn apart by the most important issue of internal and external politics; whether it is a Western state or an Eastern state. Eurasianism and Atlanticism are the two opposing advocates of this situation (Bölükbaşı, 2007). The region most affected by different opinions among decision makers in this period was no doubt the Northern Caucasus. Although Eurasianism became the dominant political ideology of the Putin era, increased global terror and security threats especially after the September 11 attacks, deeply affected the integration process between the two sides of the region.

On the other hand, as the 1990's were in all Caucasus, there was a worrying changing process in the North Caucasus. The decline of the Soviet influence was the most important thought that triggered the idea of independence in the region. At that time "In Karachai-Circassia, in 1991 alone, five entities proclaimed themselves independent (including two from Cossack). In Kabardino-Balkaria, in 1991–1992 and again in 1996, an intensive process of division of the republic along ethnic lines was undertaken, with appropriate polls, the organization of a referendum, and "land delimitation." The Confederation of the Caucasus Highland Peoples was also actively promoting the idea of a "Common Caucasian Home" (Markedonov, 2010,p.2).

The Chechens and the Dagestanians became the biggest symbol of this period with their struggle.

Finally, as many experts agree, ethnic ties in the Caucasus are very high. As Bölükbaşı mentioned "The people of the North Caucasus have an extreme sense of belonging and racism. No mountaineer accepts any second measure of value right along with his own ethnic identity" (Bölükbaşı, 2007, p.79). But it can be observed that this situation has

changed recently. Even if young people accept their national identity as an ethnic identity, they also accept Russian identity as a secondary or upper identity. According to a survey done at the Kabardey- Balkaria. Young people identify themselves more confidently as 'Russian citizens', which gives them the basis for combining both identities. In answer to the question of 'Who do you feel you are first and foremost?', 43 percent of young people answered 'Russian citizen'; the group giving this answer was composed of 45 percent Kabardian, 34 percent Balkars and 54 percent Russians (Khamdokhova, 2012).

2.6.3. Xenophobia / Anti-Caucasus Groups in Russia

In fact, when the whole story is viewed in reverse, the Caucasus is a center of interminable wars, insurrections, conflicts, under-development and national problems throughout the history of the Russians. Ethnic and national concerns that are valid in the Caucasus are as well as valid for some Russian politicians, academicians, and even part of the public. Boris Sokolov, for example, states that the "North Caucasus is not a strategic precaution for Russia." He mentions that:

> the worst for the region is that almost all the mountainous regions of the North Caucasus are in a civil war, and it is possible to say that they stay in Russia only by the presence of hundreds of thousands of military and police forces. For these reasons, there is no rational reason for the North Caucasian republics to remain in the Russian Federation. Sokolov argues that the republics outside North Ossetia and the Republic of Adygea, which are heading towards Russia, should be given their independence and claiming that Russia should inevitably pull this heavy burden from Moscow's shoulders. (Bölükbaşı, 2007, p.86)

Besides, it is known that some extreme nationalist groups in Russia are not satisfied with the socio-economic expenditure of the Russians in the North Caucasus. The slogan "stop feeding Caucasus" became popular when protests started in 2011. In a survey conducted in 2016, asked the question of "what feelings do you personally experience toward people from the southern republics living in your city, region? the participants responded as: 2% respect, 3%Affection, 15% Annoyance, 18% contempt, 5% fear, 60% No particular feelings and 1% it is difficult to say. In the same survey for the question of "What is your attitude towards the idea of Russia for Russians?" answers were given as follows : 14% I support it, it's high time to make it a reality, 38% It wouldn't be bad to implement it, but within reason, 21% Negative, it's pure fascism, 21% I'm not interested in it and 6% It is difficult to say (Levada Center, 2016).

2.6.4. Economic, Social and Political Problems

In a 2010 meeting on the development of the North Caucasus Federal District Prime Minister Vladimir Putin stated that:

> We were victorious together then and we brought back peace. Now we need to take the next steps and as it turns out, these are no less difficult. Sometimes these problems are only overcome with great difficulty and expense. I'm talking about corruption. By the way, this is not specific to the North Caucasus. As you know, we're talking about this problem in terms of the entire country. We also need to overcome substandard living conditions, poverty, unemployment and a devil-may-care attitude among the authorities - everything that hinders a peaceful existence today in the North Caucasus. The government must prove that it is capable of guaranteeing security, justice and the rule of law. It must provide stability; strengthen interregional accord and interfaith relations. We need to achieve a decisive watershed in the economic and social development of the North Caucasus It is obvious that we need to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government policy in the region by a considerable amount. (The Russian Government, 2010)

Only 9 months after this speech was made, the Russian government issued the "Strategy for the Socioeconomic Development of the North Caucasus Federal District Until 2025" (Holland, 2016).

The main expected outcome of this program was to develop the economy of the North Caucasus Federal District and to modernize the social sector of the district's regions as follows:

- Stronger social, economic and political security in the region and smooth, balanced socio-economic development of the North Caucasus Federal District;

- Considerable improvement of the investment environment, even for foreign investors, and the creation of new centers of economic growth in the priority industries of the North Caucasus Federal District;

- modernized social infrastructure, including the education system, healthcare, and the housing sector, as the basis for a major improvement of the quality of life in the district.

According to the program, Federal budgetary allocations in 2013-2020 are stipulated at 234.9 billion rubles, including 221.7 billion rubles of expenditure commitments and 13.2 billion rubles of additional funding. The estimated forecast of the financial resources of the regions' consolidated budgets and extra-budgetary funds amounts to 16.3 billion

rubles of allocations from the regions' consolidated budgets and 2.28 trillion rubles from extra-budgetary funds (as of 2025) (The Russian Government, 2012).

The course of the strategy has opened a road for progress and development in the region, but there is still a question over whether these developments are at the desired level and are sustainable. The region is still not an area where democratic rights and freedoms are fully implemented. Leaders in the Northern Caucasus are still appointed by Moscow. Corruption is still one of the biggest problems in the region, noting; money transferred to the region is wasted by illegal methods such as corruption (Holland, 2016). In addition to all these, the area is still on the verge of insecurity. As Edward C. Holland mentions "Although the absolute number of conflict events in the region has declined in recent years, high-profile attacks continue to occur both in the North Caucasus and point north" (Holland, 2016, p.52).

2.6.5. Radical Islam

The first meeting of the North Caucasus with Islam dates to the 7th century. The Arabs entered the Caucasus for the first time in this period. But spreading and accepting Islam into the region covers a period more than ten hundred year. Because in the Caucasian communities, which had their own understanding of local religions, it took some time to accept Islam. For example, while the Dagestan region was more favorable to Islam since early periods, Chechnya and its neighbors, did not accept Islam until the 15th -16th centuries. This situation is further increased as we move towards the Western North Caucasus. The spread of Islamic religion in the region lasted until the 18th century (Cohen, 2014). It is not a coincidence that Islam spread rapidly especially in the 17th century. The pressure that the Tsarist Russia began to apply to the region during this period accelerated the spread of Islam in the society. "In this chaotic environment, teachings of the Naqshbandi such as the importance of maintaining the sharia in private and common life and the need for Muslim rulers to protect and maintain the Ummah, led to a movement of integrity and solidarity based on religious identity among the peoples of the North Caucasus" (Türker, 2013, p.144).

On the other hand, the latter period, which is the dissolution of the Soviet Union, increased the desire to establish an independent state based on Islamic foundations.

Nevertheless, the Islamic understanding of the North Caucasus people of the 18th century on the ground did not contain radical scars but was based on an understanding of ethnic identity that is mostly a combination of religious and national elements. This was the case even for the first Chechen war.

Two important events in the Caucasus affect the radicalization of Islam and the radical adoption of Islam. One of them is the Second Chechen War and the other is the September 11 attacks in America (Türker, 2013).

In the second Chechen war, Wahhabism became the most used term by Russian politicians and the press (Al-Shishanil, 2006). The most intriguing element separating traditional Salafism from Wahhabism is the tendency to violence. In the 1990s, there was no tendency of any religious imam or leader to have a violent tendency (Al-Shishanil, 2006). Besides that, it was observed that foreign jihadists increased in the region during the end of first Chechen war. According to the work of Murad Batal Al-Shishani, a large number of foreign Arab fighters, aged 20 to 40, from Saudi Arabia, Egypt Kuwait and other nations came to Chechenia (Al-Shishanil, 2006). These militants did not see much effect in the first Chechen war to the Caucasus, as the first Chechen war in the past was, in fact, a national war of independence.

The real influence of foreign fighters was in the post-war period and manifested itself in the Second Chechen War. Organizations such as Black Widows, where women received military training, were also influenced by non-Chechen fighters. But the foreigners in the region have lost their influence over time due to the lack of a strong link between local culture and Islamic Arab culture as well as economic troubles (Al-Shishanil, 2006).

The greatest impact of the September 11 attacks was manifested in the discourses of the government and decision-makers. In this period, the state elites have shown the situation in the Caucasus as a terrorist act which is far from being a struggle for independence, and describe it as a involves a great threat (Türker, 2013).

However, even the dynamics are links to that period; the foundations of today's radical Islam in the Caucasus are much more distinct and global, different from ever before in the two Chechen Wars (Türker, 2013). The biggest difference is that the war between the radical groups in the North Caucasus and Russia has come out of the border of Russia and the North Caucasus territory, especially after the war in Syria and the establishment of Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS). Caucasus-born terrorists, especially as a

part of international terrorism with the call of their leaders, have become a threat both to Russia and to the entire region. In 2016, Russia's Prosecutor General announced the number of participants in all Russia as 3,500 (The Moscow Times, 2016).

CHAPTER 3

THE BLACK SEA REGION AND THE NORTH CAUCASUS

As already mentioned in the first part of the thesis, classical regionalism that was constructed in the pre-1980's period was tended to count main regional actors as nation states. Yet the approaches on "new regionalism" differ from classical regional approaches in this context. New regionalism brings on an interpretation that increases the number of regional actors. When viewed from this perspective, the regional actors have a wide range of nation states to regional organizations, non-governmental organizations to individuals. Björn Hettne counts even the region itself as an active actor in his study (Hettne, 2006).

From this aspect, the Black Sea Region has the feature of being a common area of conflict and interest for many actors. Geographically, the Black Sea Region is one of the largest regions and has a huge territory between the European Union and the Caspian Sea. This geographical characteristic also brings highly key international political and economic importances to the region. Further from a basic geographical definition on the other side, its strategic importance is more complicated and includes so many different features in its side. In the context of national states, actors in the Black Sea region are treated in two approaches. The first cluster only includes countries with coasts to the Black Sea (Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine and Abkhazia). The second cluster, on the other hand, includes all the countries that are members of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova Romania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine) (Manoli, 2011).

Although politics and success are questionable; in the context of the organizations, it is a very rich region as well. In addition to the Black Sea Regional Cooperation (BSEC), which was established in 1992, the GUAM Organization for Democracy and Economic Development, the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Operation in Europe (OSCE) are some of the only main organizations active in the region (Weaver, 2011).

These national-states and governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, state leaders, political elites, decision makers, business associations and every single element of their relations also playing an important role for the region.

As it stated in Copenhagen School's "Regional security complex theory " (RSCT), the regional point of view gives us an alternative perspective from unipolar or globalist approaches. According to Buzan "The central idea in the RSCT is that, since most threats travel more easily over short distances than over long ones, security interdependence is normally patterned into regionally based clusters: security complexes" (Buzan and Weaver, 2003, p.4). The point of view of this theory enables ones to build a balance between extremely specified unipolar approaches and extremely wide globalist approaches.

In this sense, this chapter will examine what the Northern Caucasus means for the region, according to its relations with actors in the region. In this context, this chapter will not mention actors one by one, with their links to North Caucasus, but rather it is going to cluster them according to some territorial and characteristic links. Therefore, it will mention Russia's, South Caucasus', and Europe's (the European Union's) relations with the North Caucasus under separate titles, as a territorial unit and on the other hand examine diaspora relations as well.

3.1. RUSSIA AND THE NORTH CAUCASUS

The second chapter has already mentioned the internal dynamics of the North Caucasus and Russian Federation relations. This section aims to analyze and examine the interaction between both internal and external politics of the Russian Federation and the role of North Caucasus.

Most of scholars agree that the North Caucasus is the most problematic and underdeveloped region of Russia, however it is also one of the most valuable one, considering its economic, military and demographic potential. As Markedonov emphasize "It is, above all, a territory made up of ethnic political and religious interactions that, under certain circumstances, might play a role in the strengthening of Russia and its global positions" (Markedonov, 2013,p.2).

After the collapse of the Soviet, Russia has lost a very large geographical area and population in the entire Caucasus, economically and militarily weakened and misplaced its dominance in the region. In response to this situation, the western counterpart, the greatest opponent of Russia, has begun to increase its power and influence, especially in the former Soviet places. In the aspect of Russia, this situation did not offer any other choice than to reestablish its existence in Europe and Asia for its security and the global effectiveness (Bölükbaşı, 2007). Accordingly, the remaining North Caucasus territories have increased the importance of using both the Eurasian identity and the security of the border in the south for Russia. This region has crucial importance, to be affected least by the damage of ethnic and geographical conflicts in the region of the Transcaucasia, as well as to be able to take measures against the NATO alliance, which is gaining strength in the region.

On the other hand, today it is accepted that the energy sector is the most prestigious sector that has the power to enforce politically and economically. For this reason, Russia attaches great importance to energy transfer, which gives it a great voice especially in the Black Sea region. Both the Caucasus region in general and the North Caucasus region privately have a strategic provision for Russia in terms of energy.

One of the most important pipelines in the Northern Caucasus is the Baku-Novorossiysk oil pipeline from Azerbaijan. The remaining 1411 km on the territory of the Russian Federation passes 153 km away from Chechnya. The other important oil pipeline is the Tengiz - Novorossiysk oil pipeline. Including Kazakhstan, Oman, and Russia, the line provides Kazakhstan oil to the world market. Another important energy project passing through the North Caucasus is the Blue Stream. The line that supplies the energy flow directly between Russia and Turkey without any intermediary states and has an economically large precaution. All these energy channels and the security of future planned projects depend directly on the socio-political stability of the North Caucasus for Russia (Gündüzhev, 2013).

To put it all in simple terms, the North Caucasus is an indispensable strategic geography for Russia in the aspects namely, (1) it serves as a gateway to the Middle East through the South Caucasus and provides great advantage for Russia in a very large political and economic frontier, (2)being the homeland to a very large Muslim population that enables

Russia to be active in the world politics, (3) being a center for the Eurasian identity and (4) it's important both in terms of transfer and supply of energy.

3.2. TRANSCAUCASIA AND THE NORTH CAUCASUS

When we look at the general literature, we see two distinctions as the Southern and Northern Caucasus. However, we will see that the whole Caucasus region has many historical, social, religious and cultural ties. This resemblance to the regions that are so close to each other is no doubt not surprising. Both regions have a high interaction rate between each other. This is a fact for today's economic and political structure as well. Although the North Caucasus is sheltered within the borders of Russia, the region still has potential to influence the South Caucasus Region.

In one hand, from the geopolitical point of view, the most important region that forms the main road for the spread of Russia to the south is the North Caucasus region. Russia, which legitimizes its military presence through conflicts in the region, is a source of fear to the Southern Caucasus countries and especially in the security context, the region also expresses geopolitical importance for the Southern Caucasus. The importance of ethnic, political, and cultural similarities between the two regions clearly show themselves in the border issues within the Southern Caucasus. The most striking example of this, the Georgia-Abkhazian war. It is known that the peoples of the North Caucasus, especially Circassians who have ethnic ties with the Abkhaz people, supported resistance in Georgia in that period. This example means importance in two respects. The first, an ethnic group under its sovereignty, has led to an unofficial occasion for Moscow's intervention in Georgia (As a matter of fact, Russia recognizes the independence of Abkhazia.). The second shows how high the potential for the spread of any ethnic conflict in the whole region is (Alert, 2012).

On the other hand, (as an economic zone) the region has a distinct value. The Northern Caucasus is a natural buffer zone more particularly for the developing economies of the Transcaucasia such as Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia, between Russia and its neighboring markets (Ukraine, Belarus and Baltic states), especially on energy and trade (Caferov and Aslanli, 2016).

3.3. EUROPE AND THE NORTH CAUCASUS

In fact, the traces of Europe in the North Caucasus were seen in the first half of the 19th century. Iran, Turkey, and Russia in this period weakened their dominance in the region because of socio-economic reasons. The region attracted the attention of Europe, especially England and France, causing them to prevent the expansion of these three countries particularly Russia (Trapsh, 2007).

It is possible to examine the relations between Europe and the region after this period, especially in terms of security. Nevertheless, the areas covered by Europe scope of security are very broad. The security concept covering the arm's race among the countries in the past; but today, particularly after 09/11, for Europe, security became an area covering more issues, such as energy security, human rights, democratization, internal threats, terrorism, drugs, weapons mafia, human trafficking and illegal immigration (Yılmaz, 2013). In this sense, both the safety of member states and allies of the European Union have a first order precaution. In that context, we can list Europe's greatest concern for the North Caucasus as: energy security, border security, human rights, and democratization as well as illegal trade and migration.

The Black Sea region, especially Russia, is Europe's most important energy provider. According to 2016 data, over 30% of European crude oil demand is provided by Russia (European Commission, 2016). However, the recent spreading policy of Russia, especially the Ukraine crisis, and conflicts of interest with the West have raised concerns about energy security. European actors turned to projects like the Southern Gas corridor to reduce its dependence on Russia." Although the EU tries to diversify its energy needs and create a free energy market, the dominance of Russia in the region is hampering it." (Yılmaz, 2013, p.10). Moreover, the North Caucasus is the greatest gate of Russian domination in this region.

Besides the dominance of Russia, the threat of terrorism, which continues in the region, is also creating a negative effect for many projects. The 390.3 km North border of Azerbaijan, the key country for these projects, passes through the North Caucasus. This adds a distinct sensitivity to developments because the North Caucasus is the source of terrorist acts and the most militarized region of Russia (Caferov and Aslanli, 2016).

Besides energy security, the spread of terrorism into the region is a general anxiety for Europe. According to Ariel Cohen "it is a shared interest of the United States, Europe,

and Russia to make sure that the North Caucasus remains stable and does not become a breeding ground for terrorist activity" (Cohen, 2014, p. vi). Because on the occasion of its geopolitical condition, the North Caucasus has very close ties with a huge area from the South Caucasus to the Middle East. Any possible security gap in this territory has potential to affect directly or indirectly many actors in the region

On the other hand, Europe is a place where many activists from this area live. According to Al-Shishani, part of the guerrilla warfare in Syria consists of the young Chechens who live in Europe and do not go home for various political reasons (Al-Shishani, 2014). The ethnic and ideological ties of these groups to the region are among the factors that pose a threat to Europe (Kerchove, 2011).

However, it would be wrong to explain the relationship between the European and the Northern Caucasus Region as only energy and terror security. The region is also an important investment center within the international market and economic relations. The Western part of the region like Krasnodar are places where foreign capital is relatively more visible. There are many agricultural enterprises, mostly supported by Germany and Italy in the region (Trapsh, 2007).

3.4. DIASPORA LINKS

Throughout the centuries, human history has witnessed the relocation of various groups of people due to various reasons (war, natural disasters, famine, etc.). This has led to the spread of sociologically interrelated ethnic, cultural and religious groups around the world and comprised the basis of the diaspora. The most basic definition of the diaspora concept is refers to a population which's huge part has grown out of their motherland for several generations but social, cultural and emotional ties with their motherland have not been broken (Coşgun, 2014).

The forced migration of the people of the Northern Caucasus, which began in 1864, can be divided into two periods. First was the migration into the Ottoman Empire in 1864, particularly covering the Western Northern Caucasus people (Kabardey, Abkhaz, Adygea and others). The second is the migration of the people of the Eastern Northern Caucasus (Chechen, Dagestani, and Ossetians), covering the years of 1877-78. As a result of these

migrations, the people of the North Caucasus settled in the territories of today's Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Jordan, that were the Ottoman lands of that day (Gafarli, 2014).

Diaspora associations even today play a prominent role in the political and economic relations of the region. For example, in Chechnya and the Abkhazian wars, these groups have always supported their own ethnic minorities which caused tensions between the parties (Akın, 2013). In the Sochi Olympics, Circassian ethnic groups all over the world protested and criticized the Olympics. Because they regarded, the organizing of the Olympic Games in Sochi, where most of North Caucasians had died and been exiled, as a disrespectful act to them and their painful history (Tharoor, 2014).

Besides this, diaspora groups linked to the North Caucasus have very important political economic and social potential for the region and these links can play an important role in the development of the region (Trapsh, 2007).

As an example, to diasporic relation, the position of Turkish-Caucasian businessmen and politicians in relation to the two countries today has a great importance for the development of both countries as well as for the region.

The population of the Circassian diaspora in Turkey could not be clearly determined. However, it is generally estimated to be between 2 and 3 million (Coşgun, 2014). The Northern Caucasus diaspora has maintained relations with its homelands for many years. These relationships are more prominent especially during the events of two Chechen Wars, and Abkhaz War. But today the dialogue between the two regions is mostly provided by civil society, collaborations and various state organs. The cooperation on education at the beginning of these dialogue. The "Great Student Exchange" project, which has been in force since 1992 by Turkey, is being conducted with 57 states and communities. the regions among the Northern Caucasus in this project are Adyghe, Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia, Kabarda Balkar and Karachai Circassia (Coşgun, 2014). Another important project carried out together with the region is the "Sister City" project. Sister City "is a relation established between municipalities in order to resolve their common problems and develop close friendly relations with the purpose of cooperation" (Union of Municipalities of Turkey,2018). Adygea, Dagestan and Kabarda Balkaria are among the main regions covered by this project. Beside these projects diaspora groups in Turkey continues their relationship with the region in economic and social areas. The

increase of such relations and the increase of employment, will support the development of the region, will bring positive results in terms of development in the region.

CONCLUSION

Especially after the Cold War, the regionalist perspective has become one of the consultee approaches in the area of international security studies. The Cold War period represents a bipolar period in terms of political, ideological and security areas. In response to this, the post-Cold War period corresponds to a turning point for a period that many international actors have a voice in particular areas. One of the most important reasons for this situation is the reduction of the superpower's dominance and the increase in the formation of new states and actors in the international arena after the end of Cold War (Buzan & Weaver, 2003). This change has motivated the actors in the system to produce new perspectives and policies, especially in the context of security. Regional security perspective has emerged as a product of these developments. And so, in international relations, the "region" has become both a level of analysis and a unit of analysis (Korkmaz, 2010).

In this context, the Copenhagen School has a significant place in the formation of the theoretical sub-structure of "regionalism". The most important feature of the Copenhagen School is that it criticizes the state-centered thinking of classical international relations theories and involves different issues beyond military subjects into security circle. In "The Regional Security Complex Theory" they have developed, this issues as follows: military, political, economic, social and environmental. The most important another argument of the Copenhagen School is that the security threats that occur in these sectors are influence actors more actively when they had a regionally related relationship. In other words, RSCT argues that especially states or other actors in international relations, which share geographically common interest region are linked. With this approach, the Copenhagen School is an alternative to narrow-minded state-centered views and broad extensive approaches like globalism. It is also beneficial for it has a construct that can be observed and experiment and give chance to make a theory-based approach to issues (Buzan and Weaver, 2003).

When interpreted from this approach, for the Black Sea region, which has many actors with common interests in military, political, commercial, social, environmental and similar issues, the security is rising its importance and increasing the interdependence of the agents it hosts. The atmosphere which appeared after the collapse of USSR even today

shows its effects across huge territories in the Black Sea Region. As most of the national, territorial and inter-state problems were not solved and stay "frozen" -such as Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh (Oskanian and Averre, 2016) new conflicts are emerging in the region as well – such as the Ukraine crisis. It is a fact that, a functional balance has not been established yet instead of the power gap that arises after the dissolution of the Soviets. On the one hand, the willingness of especially the Southern Caucasus countries to cooperate with the west is increasing, while on the other hand, Russia intends to maintain its sovereignty and this situation causes conflicts of interest in the region. Besides the conflicts between each other, complications such as weak democratization, corruption, poverty, inequality or illegal trafficking are some of the main problems of most of the countries in the region. Unfortunately, most of the regional organizations like BSEC or GUAM are still not effective in solving problems and fostering the development of the region. However, the Black Sea region also has a huge economic potential and increasing importance especially in the energy sector. After the end of 1990's the Black Sea economies experienced big changes (Gavras, 2010). On one hand, establishments of new states and with their liberal, market-oriented economic choices globally increased the importance of markets of the Black Sea Region. On the other hand, The Black Sea Region is one of the most strategic and important places for energy production. It serves as a bridge between the energy resources of Asia and the Caspian Sea and the energy demand of the west.

Black Sea Regional security has great importance for particularly three reasons. First, the transfer of energy between the Caspian Sea and Europe in a safe and sustainable manner. This is directly related to the political, economic and social structures of the countries involved in energy transfer in the region. While the western side of the Black Sea Region is dependent on the outsourcing of energy, on the other hand especially the Russia and the Southern Caucasia countries economically dependent on the marketing of the energy. All economic, political or social problem which has potential to block this transfer has great risks for the region. Second, the Black Sea Region is home to many states and ethnic cultures that are different from political, economic, religious and national aspects. The unsolved or not satisfied problems comes from the past and new emerge problems between the actors adversely affect the stability in the region. All these security complexes cause concerns for effective or beneficial political or economic relations in the

region. Lastly, the threat of terror another source of security concern in the region. Especially for Europe, the Black Sea region forms a buffer zone and border between the terrorist movements that exist in the Middle East (Koçer, 2007). Besides, it is known that there is a danger that certain sub-regions and ethnic groups in the Black Sea Region are under the target area of terrorist organizations.

In this regard, the North Caucasus area inside the Russian Federation territory is one of the subjects, which is at the center of these security concerns.

The Northern Caucasus is geopolitically located in a region, which is bordered in the north by Russia, to the south by the Transcaucasia, the Caspian Sea to the east and by the Black Sea to the west. With its geopolitical characteristic, both the proximity of the region's energy sources and the neighborhood borders, are at the heart of the Black Sea Region. On the other hand, the greatest characteristic features of such an important region are underdevelopment, the lack of social political and economic prosperity, weak democratization, border and minority problems etc.

The biggest reflection of these problems in the region is the increased tendency to terrorism and radicalization. When compared to the past, radical mobility in the region has taken on a very different outlook these days. Rather than a national religious mobilization, many groups in the North Caucasus Region, especially those with a majority of young people, have become the subject of international terror this day. The unemployment, income injustice, unfair functioning of governmental institutions and corruption are among the most important reasons pushing young people into such groups. In particular, security concerns are increasing for the North Caucasus, where local radical groups in the region are connecting with global terrorist groups. In 2014, the ISID threatened to include the Chechen Region in its self-proclaimed caliphate sovereignty *(*RT Questions More, 2014).

The global terror is only one side of the problems that exist in the region. As a sub-region, Northern Caucasus resembles a little mockup of the Black Sea Region in the context of conflicts and security. Not terminated satisfactorily; border issues, prevalent bad governance and corruption, ethnic clashes, ever-increasing terror threat and other troubles in the region await their solutions, as is the situation in the Black Sea Region countries. With its similarities and differences, advantages and disadvantages North Caucasus has a considerable amount of importance for Black Sea's Regional security. The region has a

vital position in terms of energy projects, especially between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea Region. As well as, border security of the South Caucasus countries directly interlinks with the North Caucasus. In this context, the North Caucasus is far more than just a troubled neighbor in terms of political, economic and social, but at the same time legitimizes the Russian power in the region. The potential of radical Islam to spread to the region also makes it necessary to have much more comprehensive policies and collaborations in the region.

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