

# opción

Revista de Antropología, Ciencias de la Comunicación y de la Información, Filosofía,  
Lingüística y Semiótica, Problemas del Desarrollo, la Ciencia y la Tecnología

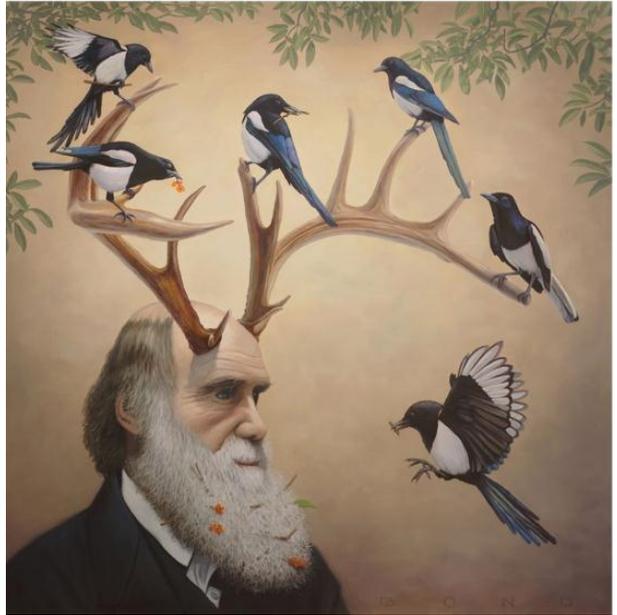
Año 35, 2019, Especial N°

# 22

Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

ISSN 1012-1537/ ISSNe: 2477-9385

Depósito Legal pp 198402ZU45



Universidad del Zulia  
Facultad Experimental de Ciencias  
Departamento de Ciencias Humanas  
Maracaibo - Venezuela



# Relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of South Ossetia

**Viktoriya Aleksandrovna Pavlova<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Kazan Federal University  
[vichka\\_belova@mail.ru](mailto:vichka_belova@mail.ru)

**Mansurov Timur Zufarovich<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>2</sup>Kazan Federal University  
[timur-man333@mail.ru](mailto:timur-man333@mail.ru)

## Abstract

The purpose of the study is to identify the characteristics of relationship development between the Russian Federation and the Republic of South Ossetia after the armed conflict that occurred in 2008 via the system and institutional approaches as the research methodology. As a result, the analysis carried out in the article shows that the relations between Russia and South Ossetia are developing in a positive way. In conclusion, there will be a deepening of the integration process between the countries in question, periodically accompanied by minor contradictions and conflicts.

**Keywords:** South Ossetia, Russia, Integration, Associated, Relations.

## Relaciones entre la Federación de Rusia y la República de Osetia del Sur

### Resumen

El propósito del estudio es identificar las características del desarrollo de las relaciones entre la Federación de Rusia y la República de Osetia del Sur después del conflicto armado que ocurrió en 2008 a través del sistema y los enfoques institucionales como metodología de investigación. Como resultado, el análisis realizado en el artículo

muestra que las relaciones entre Rusia y Osetia del Sur se están desarrollando de manera positiva. En conclusión, se profundizará el proceso de integración entre los países en cuestión, acompañado periódicamente de pequeñas contradicciones y conflictos.

**Palabras clave:** Osetia del Sur, Rusia, Integración, Asociados, Relaciones.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The study of the relationship between the Russian Federation and the Republic of South Ossetia attracts considerable attention of domestic and foreign scholars in connection with the role that these countries play in the transformation processes on the post-Soviet space and the development of statehood on the territories that have not received international recognition. Special importance is attached to the study of the integration process between states that became possible after the recognition of the independence of South Ossetia. This problem has not been studied extensively in modern literature, which prompted the author of the work to study it.

It should be noted that after the armed conflict in South Ossetia in 2008, the relations between the Russian Federation and the unrecognized state underwent significant changes. They affected both the level of the national development of the republic, including certain spheres of life, and the attempts to integrate it into the international community. After the signing of a number of treaties and agreements between two countries, their ties became much stronger, especially in

the sphere of military-political security, and the possibilities for the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict resolution became more uncertain. As South Ossetia is identified with Russia, in particular, with the republics of the North Caucasus, develops various projects with it, the problem of reintegration of the former autonomous territory of Georgia is becoming increasingly complex. This is indicated both by the practically associated relations with the Russian Federation and by the various attempts of the unrecognized state to get close to the latter and become the part of it.

## **2. METHODS**

The issues raised in the article are particularly relevant in the context of economic and political process consideration in the post-Soviet space, the integration between Russia and the unrecognized states. The study of integration processes between a small and large state, acting as a patron state, introduces some clarifications and adjustments to the understanding of the terms unrecognized state and associated state, combining the combination of features of this kind of entities. At the same time, as practice shows, their content may vary depending on the level of relations between states at one time or another, as well as the political status of the unrecognized states. An appropriate research methodology is needed for detailed consideration of these issues.

The article uses the system and institutional approaches as the research methodology. The system approach allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between Russia and South Ossetia, developing in the direction of strategic partnership and alliance and comprising the content of the integration process between the countries. The use of the institutional method contributed to the study of the legislative framework influence, as well as intergovernmental institutions and organizations that determine the level and form of associated relations between Russia and South Ossetia (CHANDEL, RHETSO, MALIK & KULSHRESHTHA, 2018).

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In particular, two treaties contributed to the strengthening of relations between two countries: The Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between the Russian Federation and the Republic of South Ossetia (2008) and the Treaty of the Russian Federation and the Republic of South Ossetia on Alliance and Integration (2015). According to the content of the first document, the parties agree to cooperate in trade and economic, scientific and technical, banking and financial, social and humanitarian spheres, in the fields of education, health, telecommunications, culture, art, tourism and sports, etc. (MANSUROV, IVANOV, BOLSHAKOV & TERESHINA, 2018).

At that, the most important focus of the treaty is the provision of peace, stability and security in the region, which, of course, is dictated by the existing inter-ethnic conflict and Georgia orientation towards relation development with Euro-Atlantic structures. As the relations of the two countries show, the parties implement the unification of legislation in the economic, civil and tax spheres, as well as in the field of social protection and pensions gradually, which indicates the transfer of relations between Russia and South Ossetia to a qualitatively new level, deepening the integration ties between them (MARKEDONOV, 2004: GALVÃO & HENRIQUES, 2018).

A significant result of relationship development between two states can be represented by close cooperation in the field of foreign and military policy, implying, on the one hand, Russia assistance in unrecognized republic promotion into international structures, including the development of relations with individual countries, and on the other hand, presupposes an alliance in the military sphere. Today, there are several treaties in the field of military cooperation, and the security of South Ossetia is provided by the armed forces of the Russian Federation (GERRITS & BADER, 2016).

The second treaty was the consequence of the natural development of relations between two states, given their close historical, cultural and spiritual ties, and brought them to the level of strategic partnership and integration. The document mainly enhances the interaction of countries in certain areas related, inter alia, to

migration policy, the improvement of conditions in the field of social protection, pensions, material welfare of citizens, the quality of medical services, education quality improvement, language development program implementation, etc. (ARESHEV, 2017).

Today it seems obvious that the revision of the borders of one of the former Soviet republics and the recognition of the independence of the two former Georgian autonomies contributed to the change of South Ossetia citizen attitude towards domestic development, national project and relation development with other states (PANKOVA, 2010).

However, unlike the other unrecognized republic of Abkhazia and because of the limited territory and the level of economic development, South Ossetia generally seeks to unite with Russia or to maximize the rapprochement of relations between two countries, and alternative ways of development seem to be unpromising. The political leaders, performing competition in election campaigns, selected individual problems of domestic development as the main object of criticism of opponents, and the attitude towards Russia always remained the same, which was the only foreign policy guide and ally of the South Ossetian Republic, and the focus on this factor gave significant privileges to the candidates put forward (SUSHENTSOV, 2014: LATSCH, 2018: MUYAMBIRI & CHABAEFE, 2018).

It should be noted that recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia by Russia and the formation of two partially recognized

republics changed the format of relations between the states in the Caucasus region, which they will have to take into account. At that, there is no reason to talk about the significant development of international relations in South Ossetia. Today, it is recognized in addition to Russia by such countries as Venezuela, Nicaragua, Nauru, and also Syria, in which the political crisis is far from resolved.

Despite the fact that diplomatic missions and consular offices of the South Ossetian Republic are open in these countries, its status may be revised depending on the development of the political or economic situation in these countries. The complexity of newly formed state promotion into international integration structures, even in the post-Soviet space, is explained by its unrecognized status, the resistance of a number of former Soviet republics that do not want a repetition of such a scenario of relation development on their territory and the complication of relations with the world community. This is confirmed by the fact that not even one of Russia closest allies (Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, etc.) supported it in terms of international recognition (ASMUS, 2010).

As the analysis of socio-economic and political process development in South Ossetia shows, its entry into the Russian Federation is also problematic. The referendum, which took place on April 9, 2017 on the same day as the presidential elections, to rename the state to Republic of South Ossetia - State of Alania, reflecting close identification ties with the North Caucasian republics, did not help

either. Under the conditions of international pressure and economic sanctions, Russia will not take any steps in this direction. This requires the situation change in the entire Caucasus region, and possibly close to the entire post-Soviet space, primarily for the relations between Georgia and Russia (for example, the rejection of Abkhazia and South Ossetia instead of Georgia accession to the EU and NATO, the construction of military bases of the North Atlantic alliance in Georgia and Ukraine, the development of the conflict in Ukraine at the worst scenario for Russia, etc.).

Certain efforts in the development of international relations of the unrecognized republic are undertaken by the countries of the European Union. At the end of 2009, the policy of engagement without recognition was proposed for two former Georgian autonomies as the consequence of the situation after the five-day war and the attempts to change it. According to the German expert S. Fisher, this was the only way to preserve communication channels. Indeed, in the conditions of the most acute relations between Russia and Georgia, as well as the lack of meaningful results of the negotiations in Geneva on the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict, this approach could transform conflict in the long run and remove many of the contradictions between Georgian, Abkhaz and South Ossetian society. This policy would open the channels for the development of social, cultural, educational and even economic ties, albeit on a limited scale, and also facilitate the movement of citizens of the unrecognized state and European countries.

At the same time, the policy of engagement without recognition provoked sharp resistance from the Georgian authorities and the unwillingness to implement it in South Ossetian society, despite the recent increase of its democracy level. The representatives of various spheres (sociologists, political scholars, journalists, human right activists), despite their support of the authority or opposition on various issues of state development, agree on the self-determination of their republics and maintaining relations with Russia. Therefore, in my opinion, in order to develop the trust of the European authorities with the authorities of the unrecognized state, some overtures to the latter are necessary.

In this regard, it is necessary to agree with the opinion of the Irish researcher Donnaki O'Bakhoin that the EU should have independent approaches to two republics. The European Union needs, in terms of mediation and interaction with the Abkhazians and Ossetians, to move away from the position when it actually begins every discussion or statement with the support of the Georgian position. Certainly, the EU countries will have to take into account the new realities in the South Caucasus region, but this does not make unrealizable and does not cancel the possible ways of transformation and conflict resolution by joint actions, including Russia and Georgia, starting from solving security issues and ending with the so-called red lines of Georgia South Ossetian opposition.

Speaking about the development of integration between Russia and South Ossetia, it should be noted that it represents one of the forms of associated relations, including their various characteristics. Keeping mutual interest, the small state transfers some part of its powers to the large state (primarily in the field of defense, foreign policy, financial and monetary spheres). With a common currency and citizenship and formally preserving sovereignty and independence, South Ossetia, at the same time, is not a member of the United Nations and is not recognized by most states of the world. The legislation of the republic corresponds to the legislation of the Russian Federation in many areas, but at the same time, South Ossetia has freedom of action in domestic affairs. However, unlike other similar states, as well as Abkhazia, it is practically not focused on independent development and seeks to become part of the patron state.

Today, the relations between two countries are characterized by a special form of integration, representing the combination of processes taking place within the framework of a union state and a regional organization. There are no supranational bodies between them, as, for example, in the Union State of Russia and Belarus, but in some areas, for example, in military-political and economic, the relations of Russia and South Ossetia are much closer than within the European Union. At the same time, the South Ossetian Republic has not overcome such a level of integration as the customs union (there is lighter customs regime), and only a free trade zone exists between two states.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

The analysis carried out in the article shows that the relations between Russia and South Ossetia are developing in a positive way. South Ossetia has concluded a number of agreements between two countries, as well as with individual North Caucasian republics, which contribute to the deepening of the integration processes between them. The factor of ethnopolitical conflict is no longer so important in South Ossetian society. The influence of the Russian Federation on the development of domestic processes seems more significant than the position of the Georgian authorities. And the deeper the relations between the countries develop, the weaker is the process of reintegration of the unrecognized state into Georgia.

At the same time, Russian recognition of the independence of South Ossetia, like Abkhazia, is not an end in itself, and under certain, but rather weighty grounds, the status of these republics can be revised. Here not only the dynamics of events in the Caucasus region can play a role, but also background factors (the deterioration of the situation with south-east Ukraine conflict, in Transnistria, in Syria, etc.), depending in part on the development of Russian-Western relations. Nowadays, Russia and Georgia see quite differently both the status of the unrecognized republic itself and the development of the situation around the conflict. Therefore, there will be a deepening of the integration process between the countries in question, periodically accompanied by minor contradictions and conflicts.

## 5. SUMMARY

The analysis shows that the recognition of South Ossetia independence and the change of the status quo in the South Caucasus region contributed to strengthening the identity of two countries, in which Russia acts as a reliable guarantor of security and stability of the unrecognized republic. The improvement of the economic and political situation in South Ossetia could be facilitated by the development of relations with other countries, including Georgia, but in the foreseeable future, such a development of events seems unlikely. This is largely due to the difference in the views of Russia and Georgia on the situation in the region.

Georgia perceives Russia as the country that occupied part of its territory, seeks to break quasi-colonial relations with Moscow and become the part of the democratic West. Russia regards the South Caucasus region as the space of vital national interests, and perceives Georgia attempts to join the Euro-Atlantic structures as a threat to its security. Georgia develops the idea of a normative liberal empire. Russia is seen by it as a hopelessly backward country, which is on the wrong side of history and keeps Georgia from making progress.

Russia, in its turn, proposes to proceed from the new prevailing realities in the region and develop relations on their basis. But this is a dead-end road. A pragmatic approach is needed, based not on confrontation, but on cooperation in the interests of each other,

overcoming negative stereotypes and prejudices. In this regard, Russia could take the first step, aimed not only at deepening the integration processes between the countries, but also at more complete development of South Ossetia, which is largely hampered by the ongoing inter-ethnic conflict.

## 6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

## REFERENCES

- ARESHEV, A. 2017. "Russia Reaffirms Recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia". URL: <https://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2013/07/27/russia-reaffirms-recognition-of-south-ossetia-and-abkhazia.html>, free access. Checked on 27.04.19. UK.
- ASMUS, R. 2010. **A little war that shook the world: Georgia, Russia, and the future of the West**. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. P. 254. UK.
- CHANDEL, S., RHETSO, A., MALIK, S. L., & KULSHRESHTHA, M. 2018. "The association between Body Physique and Physical Fitness: a cross-sectional study among a tribal community of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, India". **International Journal of Applied Exercise Physiology**, Vol. 7, N<sup>o</sup> 1:11-20. UK.
- GALVÃO, M., & HENRIQUES, R. 2018. "Forecasting Movie Box Office Profitability". **Journal of Information Systems Engineering & Management**. Vol. 3, N<sup>o</sup> 3: 22. Netherlands.

- GERRITS, W., & BADER, M. 2016. "Russian patronage over Abkhazia and South Ossetia: implications for conflict resolution". **East European Politics**. Vol. 32. N<sup>o</sup> 3: 297-313. UK.
- LATSCH, A. 2018. "The Interplay of Emotional Instability and Socio-Environmental Aspects of Schools during Adolescence". **European Journal of Educational Research**. Vol. 7, N<sup>o</sup> 2: 281-293. USA.
- MANSUROV, Z., IVANOV, V., BOLSHAKOV, G., & TERESHINA, A. 2018. "Specifics of Integration Processes Development between Russia and Abkhazia". **HELIX**. Vol. 8. N<sup>o</sup> 1: 2191-2195. USA.
- MARKEDONOV, S. 2004. "What are the ways of involvement without recognition?" **EU policy problems in Transcaucasia**. URL: <http://politcom.ru/22445.html>, free access. UK.
- MUYAMBIRI, B., & CHABAEFE, N. N. 2018. "The Finance–Growth Nexus in Botswana: A Multivariate Causal Linkage". **Dutch Journal of Finance and Management**, Vol. 2, N<sup>o</sup> 2: 03.
- PANKOVA, D. 2010. "South Ossetia and Abkhazia in the context of associated relations". **Scientific Works of the North-West Institute of Management at the RANEP**. Vol. 1. N<sup>o</sup> 1: 249-256. Russia.
- SUSHENTSOV, A. 2014. "Three Dilemmas of Russian-Georgian Relations". URL: [http://www.valdaicclub.com/a/highlights/osnova-dlya-dialoga/?sphrase\\_id=85909](http://www.valdaicclub.com/a/highlights/osnova-dlya-dialoga/?sphrase_id=85909), free access. Checked on 27/04/19. USA.





**UNIVERSIDAD  
DEL ZULIA**

---

# **opción**

Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

Año 35, Especial No. 22 (2019)

Esta revista fue editada en formato digital por el personal de la Oficina de Publicaciones Científicas de la Facultad Experimental de Ciencias, Universidad del Zulia.  
Maracaibo - Venezuela

**[www.luz.edu.ve](http://www.luz.edu.ve)**

**[www.serbi.luz.edu.ve](http://www.serbi.luz.edu.ve)**

**[produccioncientifica.luz.edu.ve](http://produccioncientifica.luz.edu.ve)**