

Fighting for Self-Determination, Participation and Control

State-building and the Role of Historical Memories in Chechnya (1986 – 2023)

13.03.2023

Events and Processes (1986–2023)

Time	Event	Explanations. Related processes and contexts
13.05.1986	Regulation on amateur association and clubs	<u>Perestroika</u> (1986-1991, federal context): liberalisation and democratisation; emergence of (pan) national movements throughout the Soviet Union; Soviet dissident movement; <u>Empowerment of civil society</u> (1986-1999, federal context): civil society at all levels actively engaged in political processes.
16.11.1988	Estonian declaration of sovereignty	<u>Perestroika</u> (...); <u>Decolonisation and democratisation</u> (1986-1991, regional context): pluralisation and decentralization of political and economic structures; democratisation of memories in the republics of the Soviet Union, e.g. on deportation; new understanding of the own history; “ <u>Parade of sovereignties</u> ” (1988-1991, federal context): various Soviet republics successively declare political and economic sovereignty and in a next step full independence from the Soviet state.
14.03.1990	Adoption of constitutional amendment (N 1360-I)	The adoption of the Constitutional amendment N 1360-I de facto meant the abolition of the Communist Party’s monopoly of power and the introduction of a multiparty system. Related processes: <u>Perestroika</u> (...); <u>Decolonisation and democratisation</u> (...).
12.06.1990	Russian declaration of sovereignty	<u>Perestroika</u> (...); <u>Decolonisation and democratisation</u> (...); “ <u>Parade of sovereignties</u> ” (...).

25.11.1990	Chechen declaration of sovereignty	<u>Perestroika</u> (...); <u>Decolonisation and democratisation</u> (...); <u>“Parade of sovereignties”</u> (...); <u>Empowerment of civil society</u> (...).
26.04.1991	Adoption of Law on Rehabilitation of Repressed Peoples (N 1107-I)	<u>Perestroika</u> (...); <u>Decolonisation and democratisation</u> (...); <u>Empowerment of civil society in the peripheries</u> (...).
19.08.1991	Military coup	Coup prepared by the “Governmental Committee on the State of Emergency” (GKChP). Related processes: <u>Political rivalries in Moscow</u> (1986-1993, federal context): Competition for power among political elites, Yeltsin vs. Gorbachev; <u>Disintegration of the Soviet state</u> (1991-1993, federal context): state collapse, state-building (creation of new nation-states); <u>Perestroika</u> (...); <u>“Parade of sovereignties”</u> (...).
Aug. to Nov. 1991	Chechen Revolution; Dzhokhar Dudayev elected president (27.10.1991)	The “Chechen Revolution” initiates the first phase of Chechnya’s de-facto independent statehood under Dzhokhar Dudayev’s presidency (1991-1996). Related processes: <u>Chechen nationalist movement</u> (1986-2004, local context): claim for sovereignty, self-determination, and independence; <u>Chechen de-facto independence</u> (1991-1999, local context): emergence and consolidation of Chechen de-facto independent statehood under Dzhokhar Dudayev and Aslan Maskhadov as presidents; <u>Intra-society conflict in Chechnya</u> (1991-1994, local context): tensions between local pro-communist/pro-Russian and nationalist elites; Moscow could have solved by pushing for dialogue, but decided not to do so – instead the Russian government tries to develop leverage by supporting the anti-Dudayev opposition; <u>Russian population leaving Chechnya</u> (1991-1994, regional context): during the first years of Chechen independence, 200’000 ethnic Russians leave the Chechen Republic; <u>Confrontation between Grozny and Moscow</u> (1990-2003, federal context): Chechen contestation of Russian central power; lack of inclusion, impossibility to reach political claims by non-violent means; <u>Decolonisation and democratisation</u> (...).
30.11.1991	Referendum in Ingushetia	The Referendum in Ingushetia marks the split of the former Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic into two separate political entities. Related processes:

		<p><u>Ingush nationalist movement</u> (1986-1992, regional context); disintegration of the Chechen-Ingush republic; Ingushetia opted for status of an autonomous republic within the Russian Federation;</p> <p><u>Ossetian-Ingush war</u> (Nov. 1992, regional context): clashes between Ingush and Ossetian armed groups; the Ingush claim the right to return to Prigorodny Rayon of North Ossetia-Alania, from where they had been deported in 1944;</p> <p><u>Chechen nationalist movement</u> (...);</p> <p><u>Perestroika</u> (...);</p> <p><u>Decolonisation</u> (...).</p>
8.12.1991	Belovezhsk agreement	<p>Soviet state ceases to exist; Russian Federation created as an independent state. Related processes:</p> <p><u>Disintegration of Soviet Union</u> (...);</p> <p><u>Political rivalries in Moscow</u> (...);</p> <p><u>Perestroika</u> (...);</p> <p><u>“Parade of sovereignties”</u> (...).</p>
31.03.1992	Anti-Dudayev Opposition attempts to seize Grozny TV station	<p><u>Intra-society conflict in Chechnya</u> (...).</p>
28.5.1992	First round: RF-Chechen “Dagomys” negotiations (on status etc.)	<p><u>Window for Russian-Chechen negotiations</u> (1991-1993, federal context): the window closes in 1993, when Moscow changed strategies towards Chechnya and started using local opposition instead of direct armed force;</p> <p><u>Confrontation between Grozny and Moscow</u> (...).</p>
19.02.1993	Adoption of new Constitution in Chechnya	<p>Dudayev building independent statehood in Chechnya; radicalisation of nationalist claims; introduction of presidential system; consolidation of Dudayev’s power; dissolution of Chechen parliament; beginning of armed opposition to Dudayev. Related processes:</p> <p><u>Chechen de-facto independence</u> (...);</p> <p><u>Intra-society conflict in Chechnya</u> (...);</p>
25.12.1993	New constitution of the Russian Federation	<p><u>Constitutional crisis and militarisation of Russian security policy</u> (1993-1996, federal context): conflict between political elites in Moscow; as of Nov 1993, Yeltsin enters agreement with security sector for support, which alters his domestic and foreign policy (militarisation of crisis management); Yeltsin’s government in a weak position; consolidation of power of the security sector;</p>

		Political rivalries in Moscow (...).
16.01.1994	Renaming of Chechnya to “Chechen Republic of Ichkeriya”	By presidential decree, the Chechen Republic is renamed “Chechen Republic of Ichkeriya”; the renaming symbolises a new level of independent statehood and of separation from Moscow. Related processes: <u>Chechen nationalist movement (...)</u> ; <u>Chechen de-facto independence (...)</u> .
26.11.1994	Unsuccessful storm of Grozny by anti-Dudayev opposition	<u>Intra-society conflict in Chechnya (...)</u> ; <u>Confrontation between Grozny and Moscow (...)</u> .
11.12.1994	Presidential decree on “Restoration of constitutional order” (the First Chechnya War begins)	Beginning of <u>First Chechnya War (1994-1996)</u> : grievances of civilian population; in-war radicalisation, military mobilisation of Chechen youths; political mobilisation of Russian and international civil society. Among others, the Russian government justified the invasion by a potential spill-over of conflict from Ingushetia, and by Dudayev’s confrontation with Chechen oppositional forces. Related processes: <u>Confrontation between Grozny and Moscow (...)</u> ; <u>Constitutional crisis (...)</u> ; <u>Ossetian-Ingush conflict (...)</u> ; <u>Intra-society conflict in Chechnya (...)</u> .
31.12.1994	Storm of Grozny by Russian armed forces	<u>First Chechnya War (...)</u> .
7.4.1995	Samashki massacre	The Samashki massacre is often referred to as an example for genocide committed by the Russian Armed Forces in Chechnya. Related processes: <u>First Chechnya War (...)</u> .
14-18.6.1995	Budennovsk hostage crisis	The Budennovsk hostage crisis is post-factum presented by Russian sources as the first in a long chain of ‘terrorist attacks’ committed by Chechens in Russia; justification of Russian counterinsurgent and counterterrorist measures in the North Caucasus. Related processes: <u>Radicalisation and Islamisation of the insurgency (1995-2007, local context)</u> : individual Chechen and North Caucasian field commanders opt for Islamism, in order to get support from international jihadi networks; <u>OSCE Peace negotiations (1995-1996, federal context)</u> ; <u>Yeltsin pre-election campaign (1994-1996, federal context)</u> ; <u>First Chechnya War (...)</u> .

20.04.1996	Peace conference organised by anti-Dudayev opposition	<u>First Chechnya War (...)</u> ; <u>Intra-society conflict in Chechnya (...)</u> ; <u>Radicalisation and Islamisation of the insurgency (...)</u> .
22.04.1996	Dudaev killed	<u>Dudayev cult in Chechnya (1991-2000, local context)</u> ; <u>First Chechnya War (...)</u> ; <u>Intra-society conflicts in Chechnya (...)</u> .
1996	Grozny renamed Dzhokhar	<u>Dudayev cult in Chechnya (...)</u> ; <u>Chechen de-facto independence (...)</u> .
1996-97	Series of armed attacks on Russian public transport	Moscow Metro bombing (11.06.1996), Nalchik bus bombing (28.06.1996), Moscow bus bombings (11 and 1207.1996), etc. The perpetrators were not identified, but the Russian investigators considered a “Chechen trace” as one of the options. Related processes: <u>Russian ‘counterterrorism’ (1999-2023, federal context): Narrative on legitimisation of violence changes from ‘territorial integrity’ to ‘counterterrorism’; RF increases counterinsurgent activities in Chechnya and throughout the North Caucasus; ‘no negotiation’ approach and ‘securitisation’ as key elements of the Russian strategy of counterterrorism, excluding civil society from decision-making;</u> <u>Confrontation between Grozny and Moscow (...)</u> ; <u>First Chechnya War (...)</u> ; <u>Radicalisation and Islamisation of the insurgency (...)</u> .
06.- 20.08.1996	Battle of Grozny; recapture by Chechen armed forces	<u>First Chechnya War (...)</u> ; <u>OSCE Peace negotiations (...)</u> .
30.08.1996	Khasavyurt ceasefire agreement signed	<u>OSCE Peace negotiations (...)</u> ; <u>Yeltsin’s pre-election campaign (1994-1996, federal context)</u> .
27.01.1997	Aslan Maskhadov elected president in Chechnya	<u>Chechen de-facto independence (...)</u> ; <u>Political and military rivalries in Chechnya (1996-2003, local context): Maskhadov vs. Basayev, Sufism vs. Salafism;</u> <u>Radicalisation and Islamisation of the insurgency (...)</u> .

July 1998	Conflict between Salafist groups and Chechen government in Gudermes	<u>Regionalisation and Internationalisation of the North Caucasus insurgency (1998-2015, regional context)</u> : Co-optation of some Chechen elites into the global Jihadi movement; provision of financial and socio-cultural resources; <u>Political and military rivalries in Chechnya (...)</u> ; <u>Radicalisation and Islamisation of the insurgency (...)</u> .
August 1998	Ruble Crisis	Economic crisis in Russia.
Sept. 1999	Basayev and Khatab raid in Dagestan (Second Chechnya War begins)	<u>Second Chechnya War (1999-2009)</u> . <u>Political and military rivalries in Chechnya (...)</u> ; <u>Regionalisation and Internationalisation of the North Caucasus insurgency (...)</u> ; <u>Radicalisation and Islamisation of the insurgency (...)</u> .
14-16.09.1999	Appartment bombings in Moscow, Volgodonsk and Buynaksk	The appartment bombings are referred to also as “Black September” in Russian media. Russian investigators considered a ‘Chechen trace’ as one of the options. Related processes: <u>Radicalisation and Islamisation of the insurgency (...)</u> ; <u>Russian ‘counterterrorism’ (...)</u> .
23.09.1999	Presidential Decree No. 1255c on counter-terrorist operations in North Caucasus region	The onset of the Counterterrorist Operation marks the beginning of the <u>Second Chechnya War</u> . Related processes: <u>Russian ‘counterterrorism’ (...)</u> ; <u>Neo-authoritarianism and marginalisation of civil society (2000-2023, federal context)</u> ; repression of critical thinking and marginalisation of civil society throughout Russia and in the North Caucasus; <u>Putin to power (1999-2023)</u> ; <u>International agreement on non-interference (since 1999, international context)</u> .
18-19.11.1999	OSCE Istanbul Summit	At the 1999 Istanbul summit of the OSCE, the international community agreed with Moscow that the conflict in Chechnya is considered an internal conflict of Russian Federation. In turn, Russia backed off on Abkhazia, Transnistria and former Yugoslavia. Related processes: <u>Russian ‘counterterrorism’ (...)</u> ; <u>International agreement on non-interference (...)</u> .

1.1.2000	Vladimir Putin enters office as President of the Russian Federation	<p><u>Socio-cultural alienation of the Caucasus (1999-2023, federal context)</u>: radicalisation of RF society; increasing xenophobia and attacks against Chechens and North Caucasians in other parts of Russia; lack of non-state dialogue and cooperation possibilities hampers RF-Chechen reconciliation and trust-building;</p> <p><u>Policy of ‘theft of memory’ (2000-2023, federal context)</u>: banning certain types of memory and highlighting others; instrumentalisation of memory;</p> <p><u>Second Chechnya War (...)</u>;</p> <p><u>Russian ‘counterterrorism’ (...)</u>;</p> <p><u>Neo-authoritarianism; marginalisation of civil society (...)</u>.</p>
20.4.2000	Colonel Manilov announces the end of the military part of the operation in Chechnya	<p>Changing narrative of Russian counter-insurgency: the official end of Russia’s “military operation” (i.e. war) in Chechnya marks the beginning of “counterterrorist special operations”; tactic switching to liquidation of individual terrorist formations and their leaders. Related processes:</p> <p><u>Chechenisation (2003-2023, local context)</u>: delegation of monopoly on military and political power to local political elites under Akhmat and Ramzan Kadyrov in Grozny; co-optation of Sufi networks by local authorities;</p> <p><u>Purges in Chechnya (2000-2006, local context)</u>: Targeted killings and brutal purges of Chechen elites and civilians, filtration camps, extrajudicial executions;</p> <p><u>Victory narrative (2000-2023, federal and local context)</u>: Russia and the ‘good’ Chechens have defeated the ‘bad’ North Caucasian and international terrorists;</p> <p><u>Russian ‘counterterrorism’ (...)</u>;</p>
12.06.2000	Akhmat Kadyrov appointed head of the pro-Russian “Temporary Administration” of the Chechen Republic	<p><u>Russian ‘counterterrorism’ (...)</u>;</p> <p><u>Chechenisation (...)</u>;</p> <p><u>Purges in Chechnya (...)</u>;</p> <p><u>Victory narrative (...)</u>.</p>
2001	9/11	<p><u>Global War on Terror (2001-2014, international context)</u>: securitisation of Islam in global politics; counter-terrorist narrative in Chechnya as part of the global “War on Terror”;</p> <p><u>Radicalisation and Islamisation of the insurgency (...)</u>.</p>
23-26.10.2002	Dubrovka hostage crisis	<p>Armed attack by Chechen combatants on Dubrovka theatre in Moscow; Russian special forces use poisoned gas to break the siege; numerous civilians are killed. Related processes:</p> <p><u>Russian ‘counterterrorism’ (...)</u>;</p> <p><u>Purges in Chechnya (...)</u>;</p>

		<p><u>Neo-authoritarianism; marginalisation of civil society (...);</u> <u>Global War on Terror (...).</u></p>
23.3.2003	Referendum in Chechnya (Constitution)	<p><u>Statebuilding and post-war reconstruction</u> (2003-2010, local context): consolidation of Kadyrov's political power; minimising grievances of society through economic reconstruction; attempt of sustainable statebuilding-;</p> <p><u>Window of opportunity for political solution</u> (2002-2003, local context): war fatigue on all sides as a potential basis for negotiating a viable post-war order; a democratic legitimisation of political power could have helped to transform the armed conflict into a political one;</p> <p><u>Chechenisation (...);</u> <u>Russian 'counterterrorism' (...);</u> <u>Neo-authoritarianism; marginalisation of civil society (...).</u></p>
05.10.2003	Akhmat Kadyrov elected President of Chechnya	<p><u>Rivalry for political power in Chechnya</u> (1999-2007, local context): Chechen insurgency expelled from Russian territory, pushed to exile and/or underground; increasing importance of the Chechen diaspora (e.g. Chechen-Ichkerian government-in-exile in London under A.Zakaev);</p> <p><u>Statebuilding and post-war reconstruction (...);</u> <u>Chechenisation (...);</u> <u>Russian 'counterterrorism' (...);</u></p>
09.05.2004	Assassination of Akhmat Kadyrov, President of the pro-Russian government in Chechnya	<p><u>Radicalisation and Islamisation of the insurgency (...);</u> <u>Regionalisation and Internationalisation of the North Caucasus insurgency (...);</u> <u>Chechenisation (...);</u> <u>Purges in Chechnya (...);</u> <u>Russian 'counterterrorism' (...).</u></p>
01-03.09.2004	Beslan hostage crisis	<p>Armed attack by Chechen combatants on school No.1 in Beslan (North Ossetia, Russian Federation); Russian armed forces use massive shelling to break resistance; numerous civilians are killed.</p> <p>The Beslan hostage crisis de facto marks the end of the Chechen nationalist insurgency and movement for independence, since terrorism de-legitimised the struggle for the Chechen cause. Related processes:</p> <p><u>Purges in Chechnya (...);</u> <u>Radicalisation and Islamisation of the insurgency (...);</u> <u>Regionalisation and Internationalisation of the North Caucasus insurgency (...);</u> <u>Russian 'counterterrorism' (...).</u></p>

08.03.2005	Assassination of Aslan Maskhadov, President of Chechnya-Ichkeria	<u>Purges in Chechnya (...)</u> ; <u>Russian 'counterterrorism' (...)</u> ; <u>Rivalry for political power in Chechnya (...)</u> .
07.10.2006	Assassination of the journalist Anna Politkovskaya in Moscow	<u>Neo-authoritarianism; marginalisation of civil society (...)</u> ; <u>Chechenisation (...)</u> .
07.10.2007	Proclamation of Caucasus Emirate	Dokku Umarov proclaims the abolition of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria and the formation of the "Caucasus Emirate". Related processes: <u>Regionalisation and Internationalisation of the North Caucasus insurgency (...)</u> ; <u>Rivalry for political power in Chechnya (...)</u> .
08.2008	Russian-Georgian War	During the Russian-Georgian war, the Chechen battalion "Vostok" participates on the side of the Russian armed forces. Related processes: <u>Chechenisation (...)</u> ; <u>Global financial crisis (2007-2008, international context)</u> .
16.04.2009	Kremlin declares end of Counter-terrorists Operation in the North Caucasus (KTO)	<u>Chechenisation (...)</u> ; <u>Russian 'counterterrorism' (...)</u> .
22.07.2009	Assassination of Natalya Estemirova, leading member of Grozny "Memorial"	<u>Neo-authoritarianism; marginalisation of civil society (...)</u> ; <u>Chechenisation (...)</u> .
08.05.2010	Opening of the Akhmat Kadyrov "Memorial Complex of Glory"	The heroisation of Akhmat Kadyrov is an attempt to overcome the ideological vacuum after the war and to construct an alternative identity as opposed to the Islamist and nationalist insurgency. Related processes: Akhmat cult (2005-2023, local context): Construction of Akhmat Kadyrov cult and 'Akhmatisation' of memory politics; Kadyrov senior as a symbol of state power and a source of legitimacy for Kadyrov junior; <u>Repression and tabooisation of alternative memories (2003-2023, local context)</u> : memories opposing the official narrative (e.g. traumatic memories of Chechnya Wars) are repressed; incomplete dealing with the past and transformation of conflict creates dangerous potential for re-escalation of violence (in the future); <u>Victory narrative (...)</u> .

February 2011	Official “Day of mourning” transferred from 23 February to 10 May	Mixing up the remembrance of the Deportation (23 February) with the day of Akhmat Kadyrov’s death (9 May); wave of arrests of Chechen ‘memory activists’ (R. Kutayev, O. Titiev, etc.). Related processes: <u>Repression and tabooisation of alternative memories (...)</u> ; <u>Akhmat cult (...)</u> ; <u>Victory narrative (...)</u> ; <u>Neo-authoritarianism; marginalisation of civil society (...)</u> .
20.07.2012	Introduction of federal Law on “Foreign Agents”	<u>New protest movement in Russia (2012-2021, federal context)</u> ; <u>Neo-authoritarianism; marginalisation of civil society (...)</u> .
2012-13	Protests on Bolotnaya Square, Moscow	<u>New protest movement in Russia (...)</u> ; <u>Neo-authoritarianism; marginalisation of civil society (...)</u> .
Feb.-March 2014	Russian annexation of Crimea, beginning of War in Ukraine	The “Ukraine crisis” leads to increasing geo-political tensions between Russia and the “West”; Chechens fight on both sides: Kadyrov units on the side of (pro-)Russian formations, the battalion ‘Dzokhar’ on the Ukrainian side; increasing crack-down on civil society in Russia; Kadyrov fully supports the annexation. Related processes: <u>Chechenisation (...)</u> ; <u>Neo-authoritarianism; marginalisation of civil society (...)</u> .
27.02.2015	Oppositional politician Boris Nemtsov killed in Moscow	<u>Neo-authoritarianism; marginalisation of civil society (...)</u> ; <u>Chechenisation (...)</u> .
23.06.2015	Proclamation of the “Caucasus vilayat” of the Islamic State	Proclamation of the Caucasus as a regional unit of the Islamic States means the end of the regional project of a “Caucasus Emirate”; exodus of combatants from the North Caucasus to Syria; co-optation of insurgency into international Jihad. Related processes: <u>Regionalisation and Internationalisation of the North Caucasus insurgency (...)</u> .
2017	Creation of Hashtag «#Akhmat – power!» («#Ахмат – сила!»)	<u>Akhmat-cult (...)</u> ; <u>Repression and tabooisation of alternative memories (...)</u> .
11.12.2019	25th anniversary of the beginning of the First Chechnya War	Active commemoration in civil society (public discussions of witnesses, veterans, NGOs, ...); official actors remain silent; contexts: <u>Repression and tabooisation of memory (...)</u> .

24.2.2022	Start of RF “Special Operation” in Ukraine	Russian military invasion of Ukraine; Chechens fight on both sides; Kadyrov’s battalions ‘Akhmat-West’, ‘Akhmat-East’ etc. on the Russian side vs. battalions ‘Dzhokhar’, ‘Sheikh Mansur’ etc. on the Ukrainian side; battle of memory symbols, Akhmat cult vs. Ichkeriya cult; re-naming of Ukrainian streets in honour of Ichkerian heroes. Related processes: <u>New contestation of power in Chechnya (2022-2023, local context):</u> increased political and military contestation of Kadyrov’s legitimacy by exiled leaders of the Chechen insurgency; important role of the diaspora; <u>Chechenisation (...)</u> ; <u>Akhmat cult (...)</u> .
08.02.2023	Ramzan Kadyrov nominated “father of the country” (Chech. “Mekhkan Da”)	<u>Ramzan cult (2022-2023, local context):</u> Ramzan Kadyrov’s self-legitimation of power; ‘Ramzanisation’ of memory politics; <u>Chechenisation (...)</u> .
28.02.2023	Adoption of law on re-naming of Chechen courts by State Duma in Moscow	Courts in Grozny renamed in honour of historical figures from Chechnya and Russia, related to R. and A. Kadyrov, the Caucasian War (19th century, and the ‘Great Patriotic War’ and victory over Nazi Germany. Related processes: <u>Chechenisation (...)</u> ; <u>Victory narrative (...)</u> ; <u>Akhmat cult (...)</u> ; <u>Ramzan cult (...)</u> .