

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	
The Georgian-Abkhaz Peace Process and its relevance in international affairs	1
Research Question and Premises.....	12
Contributions to practical approaches to mediation	14
Contributions to Theory building	16
Modus Operandi	16
Methodological Considerations.....	21
Theoretical Background: Geopolitical thought and its transformation	
The origins of Geopolitical Thought	25
Geopolitics as a rising phenomenon: 1914-1944.....	27
Geopolitics after World War II: New Beginnings.....	33
Cold War Geopolitics	41
The New Global Order – post 1990 Geopolitics	47
The modern transformation of Geopolitics	62
Critical Geopolitics:	
The development of Counter-Geopolitics.....	67
Early Peace Initiatives and the Road to War	
Introduction.....	75
1. The relations of Georgians and Abkhaz A brief historical background	77
2. Gamsakhurdia: Early attempts for keeping the peace	87
3. The Interim Government: Missed Opportunities for Peace	92
4. Of Russians and Dagomys	98
5. Information flows amidst crisis.....	102
6. A State failing on the Road to War.....	105
Closing Remarks	111

I.

The First Phase of the Georgian-Abkhaz Peace Process: 1992-1996.....	
Georgian Diplomacy: A Russian-centric approach to the new market for mediation	114
The Introduction of Mediators: A choice based on interests	116
State Centrism in Mediation Processes.....	125

II.

The Second Phase of the Georgian-Abkhaz Peace Process: 1996-1998.....	
Russian Domination and an Asymmetric Mediation.....	142
Mediation by way of Asymmetries and Coercion	143
Russian Mediation and a new geopolitical Focus on its "Near Abroad"	147
Head to Head: High level Attempts to strengthen Georgian-Abkhaz initiatives.....	150

III.

The Third Phase of the Georgian-Abkhaz Peace Process: 1999-2003	
Introduction.....	155
Settling the Status Issue	156
Political Developments.....	163
Second Track Initiatives.....	172

IV.

The Fourth Phase of the Georgian-Abkhaz Peace Process: 2003-2004	
Introduction.....	180
New beginnings – New uncertainties.....	181
Mikhail Saakashvili: Re-positioning Georgia.....	183
The War of Words	191
The Domestic Arena	198
Elections in Abkhazia – A turning point?	203
Beyond Elections in Abkhazia: Renewed hope for Non-Resumption of Hostilities	207

V.

The Fifth Phase of the Georgian-Abkhaz Peace Process: 2005-2007	
Introduction.....	210
New Momentum	212
The First Steps on the Path to War.....	224

VI.

The Final Phase of the Georgian-Abkhaz Peace Process	
Introduction.....	232
Nearing the end of a long and winding road.....	233
The fall of the White Horse: Domestic turmoil in Georgia.....	242
A New Option: War	247

VII.

No Knight in Shining Armour: The EU and the Georgian-Abkhaz Peace Process	
Introduction.....	255
The EU as foreign policy actor.....	257
Early EU initiatives with respect to Georgia.....	263
Political Dialogue cum Interests.....	264
The EU Special Representative to the South Caucasus	266
European Neighbourhood Policy	268
Normative Power with global ambitions: A Contradiction in Terms?.....	271
The EU in Georgia: From Newcomer to Global Actor.....	279
Constraints for the EU	285
Limits to an autonomous EU foreign policy in Georgia.....	288

Conclusion

1. A flawed process.....	
The absence of a harmonized peace process	292
Competing for Mediation	293
Second Track Diplomacy – A process within the process.....	296
2. Parties to the conflict unprepared for compromise	298
3. A fading ability to compromise	300

Bibliography

III