

Contents

Preface by Anatol Lieven	13
I. The Chechens: An ethnic portrait	17
The Caucasus	17
Origins of the Chechens	18
Village defence – home defence	19
Tamerlane’s invasions and their impact on the formation of society	20
Feudal clashes – the collapse of feudal society and the beginning of mountain democracy	20
Tukkhums and teyps	21
The culture of violence in the Caucasus. Vying for prestige	24
Adat law and the blood feud	26
Chechen fatalism – yakh’	30
Hospitality	34
Mountain etiquette	35
Attitudes towards women	37
Chechen humour	39
Differences between mountain people, and townspeople and lowland dwellers ..	40
II. The Great Caucasian War	43
In the beginning	43
The eighteenth century – the increasing expansion of the Russian Empire	44
Ushurma Mansur’s rebellion	47
Yermolov’s policies	49
Shamil of Gimry: The third imam	52
Islam, naqshbandiyya and the principles of Shamil’s imamate	53
Military tactics	56
Shamil’s capture and the end of the Great Caucasian War	57
The war and its consequences	58
Shamil and the Chechens	61
Between resistance and loyalty	62
War losses	67

Sheikh Kunta-Haji and qadiriyya	68
III. Chechnya as part of the Soviet state	71
The hope for independence	71
Deportation under Stalin	74
Russification	76
The demographic boom, urbanisation, and the rise of “Chechen mafia”	79
IV. The Chechen revolution	81
Vaynakh revival	81
The Dudayev phenomenon	83
Chechen independence (1991–1994)	84
Negotiating from a position of power	86
Dudayev’s (sub)ethnocracy	89
1992–1994: The menace of civil war	92
1993: Changes in Russia	93
V. The first Chechen war	95
The prelude to the invasion	95
November 26, 1994: Attack on Grozny	98
The beginning of the Chechen war	100
The enemies at the beginning of the campaign	102
The target: The Presidential Palace in Grozny	104
The New Year’s Eve fiasco	105
The war and its reflection in Russian society	106
The occupation of Grozny. Mountain warfare	109
Attack on Samashki	110
Attack on Budennovsk	111
Negotiations and bombardment	113
Attack on Kizlyar	114
Dudayev’s death and intensified negotiations	115
President Yandarbiyev	116
The Khasavyurt Peace Accords	119
Summary	120
Specifics of the decision-making process	122
Personalisation of the conflict	124

Victims of the first Chechen war	125
VI. Interwar Chechnya and the invasion of Dagestan	127
Chechen independence (1996–1999)	127
Politicisation of Islam	132
Wahhabism, Salafism, Jihadism	135
Socio-economic developments in Dagestan	143
Spread of Salafism in Dagestan	144
Invasion of Dagestan	147
The situation in Russia on the eve of the second Chechen war	150
The Putin phenomenon and terrorist attacks in Russian cities	152
VII. The beginnings of the second Chechen war	159
Changes in public opinion	159
Preparing for the invasion	162
Phase 1 of the operation: Forming a security zone	164
Phase 2 of the operation: Blockading Grozny	165
Phase 3 of the operation: The attack on Grozny and battles in the towns	167
Figures for the warring parties	167
The battle of Grozny	168
Results of the active phase of warfare	170
Military casualties	170
Civilian casualties	171
VIII. The human rights situation in Chechnya	173
Zachistkas	173
Filtration points and torture	176
Checkpoints	178
Disappearances	179
Rape	180
Capricious courts	181
Attitude of Russian officials	184
Blocking of international inspections	186
Summary	188

IX. Normalisation	189
Competing options.....	189
Ahmad Kadyrov.....	191
The technology of Chechen elections	195
The constitutional referendum	195
The presidential election	198
Kadyrov and the fate of “Chechenisation”	200
The Chechen militia	202
The pitfalls of “Chechenisation”.....	211
The “free presidential election of Alu Alkhanov”.....	216
Ramzan’s era	218
Conclusion	226
X. The resistance	227
Maskhadov’s attempts at negotiation.....	227
Changes to the mood in society and peace projects	228
Hope from Lichtenstein.....	231
Summary of terrorist and other attacks during the current conflict in Chechnya (since 2000)	233
Tragedy in the Dubrovka Theatre.....	236
Situation inside the theatre	238
Circumstances of the attack	240
Circumstances of the investigation.....	242
Tragedy in Beslan	246
Circumstances of the court investigation.....	253
Federal responses.....	256
The situation inside the resistance movement after the year 2000	261
Radicalisation.....	265
Ethnification.....	268
Individualisation	272
Internationalisation	276
Regionalisation	287
Recent attacks on Grozny, Nazran and Nalchik	289
The socio-economic and political situation in the North Caucasian republics	290

The emergence of jamaats in the north-western Caucasus and their radicalisation	292
Ingushetia	297
North Ossetia	297
Dagestan and the Stavropol Region	298
Summary	299
XI. The Chechen war and Russian society	303
The media aspect	303
Reorganisation of the state	307
Xenophobia and intolerance	311
Conclusion	314
Endnotes	317
Glossary	357
Bibliography on the Russian-Chechen conflict and related issues	361