

PRIDE OF SMALL NATIONS

THE CAUCASUS AND
POST-SOVIET DISORDER

Suzanne Goldenberg



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'The first account of the post-Soviet Caucasus. Linking the region's complicated history with eyewitness coverage from her numerous trips there, Suzanne Goldenberg explains how the collapse of Russian control has not led to democracy or stability. Her analysis of the way outside powers are seeking to spread their influence in a notoriously fissiparous region is highly recommended.'

– JONATHAN STEELE, THE GUARDIAN

The Caucasus is the mountainous gateway between Europe and Asia, Islam and Christianity, Turk and Slav. It harbours what must be the most culturally and linguistically diverse population in the world. In no other region has the break-up of the Soviet Union given way so rapidly or completely to ethnic hatreds, internecine warfare and political instability. Nowhere else are there rival regional powers – Russia, Turkey and Iran – so concerned with, and even threatened by, what may happen. Suzanne Goldenberg's book provides an invaluable and up-to-date introduction to this strategic region.

The author introduces the reader to each of the new republics – Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan – as well as to the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh and the micro-states of the North Caucasus which lie uneasily still within the Russian Federation. Against the background of current geopolitical rivalries and ancient historical enmities, she makes sense of current events. And she explores the critical issues – including the fragility of democratic institutions; the competition between the old communist apparatchiks and the new nationalist demagogues; the Ossetian, Abkhazian and Chechen secessions; ecological damage and economic disintegration; and the importance of Islamic consciousness.

Situated on the frontiers of Europe, this region poses a unique economic and security challenge, to which this book is an indispensable guide.

SUZANNE GOLDENBERG was educated at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. In 1986 she became the *Baltimore Sun's* South Asia correspondent, based in New Delhi. She moved to London in 1988 and joined the *Guardian*.

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