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The Soviet people at the North Caucasus: the ethnic, territorial and educational policy of the Soviet Union

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Abstract

This article considers the Soviet Union's ethnic policy at the North Caucasus aimed to create the Soviet national identity in the region. The right of nations to self-determination was an integral part of Soviet ideology, as well as the equality of all ethnic groups in the Soviet Union; however, the real policy of the Soviet Government was aimed to establish the separate administrative divisions such as republics, autonomous oblasts and autonomous okrugs for each ethnic group. The educational policy of the USSR did also deal with the ethnic issues, the needs of national minorities were taken into consideration. This article shows how the Soviet educational policy at the North Caucasus has relatively quickly replaced the previously prevailing religious education with the Soviet model-based secular education. The article shows that the educational policy related to ethnic minorities was aimed to create the Soviet national identity, having succeeded in this.

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Keywords

Ethnic issues, ethnic policy, nationhood, the right of nations to self-determination, educational policy, writing, secular education, Soviet national identity.

Introduction

After the October Revolution, the Soviet government declared the achievement of the equality of all the peoples of Russia as one of the most important principles of the national policy. The equality of peoples is a necessary condition for the formation of an international peace and cooperation in a multinational state [Sampiev, 2009, 176, 178], which Lenin understood well. For its implementation, it was necessary not only to eliminate discrimination on national, religious, cultural, linguistic grounds, but also to grant to national minorities a number of rights: autonomy, representation in government, etc. During the Civil War, opposing forces in practice tested various options for social and state development of the country. And the the Bolsheviki had an advantage in this war, because they took into account the two most important issues for Russia, agrarian and national. It is not accidental that one of the first legal acts of Soviet power was the "Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia" (November 2, 1917), which enshrined the right of nations (peoples) to self-determination.

The right of nations to self-determination was first stated by the Austro-Hungarian socialists in the late nineteenth century who saw this right in the creation of a national-cultural autonomy¹. This caused some criticism of the Russian Bolsheviki, headed by V.I. Lenin². In the Russian Empire, as in Austria-Hungary, there were many peoples, and the solution of the national question for the Bolsheviki had the fundamental importance. The Russian Bolsheviki stood up against the basic idea of the Austro-Hungarian Social Democrats from class positions. The main objection was that the calls for the creation of national cultural autonomies weaken the unity and strength of the working class. Instead, they proposed a different way, the creation in the multiethnic states of territorial autonomy in the form of regional territorial unions of working people, which should belong to the local government in the general system of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The right to self-determination was enshrined in the Decree on Peace of 1917 (October 26): "If any nation is held within the boundaries of a given state by violence; if, contrary to the desire expressed by it, whether this desire is expressed in press, people's congresses, party decisions or indignations and uprisings against national oppression – if it is not given the right to vote freely, with complete withdrawal of the troops of the annexing or even stronger nation, to decide without the slightest compulsion the question of the forms of state and existence of this nation, then its joining to some state is an annexation, that is, capture and violence" [Decree ..., 1957, 14-15]. And

1 See: R. Springer, *The National Problem (Struggle of Nationalities in Austria)*. St. Petersburg, 1909; Bauer O. *The National Question and Social Democracy*. St. Petersburg, 1909.

2 See: Semenov Yu. From the history of theoretical development of Lenin's national question. URL: http://scepsis.net/library/id_2670.html; see also: Lenin VI Full. collect. op. in 55 tons. T. 22. P. 229, 230; 23. S. 59, 149, 150, 208-211, 317, 375, 376, 444-448; 24. 57-59, 82, 113-150, and others; Stalin I.V. Op. T. 2. M., 1949. S. 290-367.

it was practically used when recognizing the independence of Ukraine, Belarus, Transcaucasia, Bukhara and Khorezm People's Soviet Republics [Khabrieva, 2010, 37]. True, the "entry" of the independent republics of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia into the USSR which was established by the forces of the 11th Army was also justified by the right to self-determination [Ibid.]. By the way, this right was also used when recognizing the independence of Finland.

Thus, the Soviet government found the principle of solving the national question. Within the framework of a single socialist state, the peoples of Russia obtained the right to create statehood in the form of a national district, autonomous region, autonomous and union republic. The USSR has found the principle of creating forms of statehood, depended on two criteria: the principle of territorial integrity of the ethnic group and its population. The Bolsheviks, when planning and organizing the territorial administrative system of the country and creating national regions, autonomous regions, autonomous and union republics, proceeded from the recognition for the dominant groups of ethnic territories. And this territorial understanding of ethnicity could be realized only on the basis of the ethnical approach of the individual identity of the population of the country. Such a focus on ethnic issues and indoctrination of the population, in turn, proceeded from existing realities, but it often reformatted them, relying on special technologies, procedures and institutions [Sokolovskii, www].

The national policy of the Soviet state and territorial-administrative transformations in the North Caucasus

The North Caucasus is a region where national and land (territorial) relations are closely intertwined. Here lived many peoples, their numbers also varied. An attempt to resolve complex land and national issues in the North Caucasus was made by the Bolsheviks after the Civil War. In 1920, at the congress of the peoples of Dagestan and Terek, two autonomous national republics were declared, Dagestan and the Mountain Republic, which were established as multiethnic and had an administrative division into districts according to the ethnicity of the population. The initiative to create these autonomies proceeded from the center (from the Central Committee of the RCP (B) and the Caucasian Bureau), and not from local leaders. The Dagestan Republic consisted of 14 districts (Avar, Andi, Achikulak, Gunib, Dargin, Derbent, Kazikumukh, Buinak, Kaytago-Tabasaran, Kizlyar, Kyurin, Makhachkala, Samur and Khasavyurt) organized on the ethnic basis (on compact territorial settlement of ethnic groups in Dagestan). The district (or ethnic) principle of the formation of the Dagestan Autonomy (and later the republic) was carried out in conditions when the national identities were unstable (the Andarians and Bezhtintsy, etc. were attributed to the Avars or Dargins). The same principle persisted in Dagestan in subsequent years and it was due to the fact that a large ethnic group had greater access to power.

On January 20, 1921, the Decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee was signed on the creation of the Mountain Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic consisting of six national

districts: Kabarda, Karachaev, Balkaria, Ossetia, Chechen and Ingush. The capital of the Mountain Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was Vladikavkaz. The highest state bodies of autonomy were the Congress of Soviets, the Central Executive Committee, the Council of People's Commissars and People's Commissariats [Uligov, 1979, 286-287].

The researchers highly appreciate the fact of the creation of the Mountain Republic and make quite similar assessments of the reasons for its formation: "The Mountain Republic ensured the further development of the peoples", in contrast to the later autonomous regions, "the Mountain Republic was a higher political form of autonomy" [Ansokov, 1974, 78-79], it was "a successful, albeit temporary way, to concentrate the efforts of previously disparate peoples of the North Caucasus into a single multinational state entity" [Bugai, Mekulov, 1994, 94]. In the opinion of the researcher A.Kh. Daudov, the formation of the Mountain Republic was the imperative of the times and it was an integral part of the all-Russian tendencies, when the question of the national-state system of small nations acquired special acuity during the liberation and transition to Soviet construction: "To solve the tasks of socialist construction, which was important for various peoples with the victory of Soviet power, it was necessary to work closely with these peoples, to unite their economic potential and cultural forces. None of the mountain peoples individually was able to solve the tasks of eliminating economic and cultural backwardness, eradicating all counter-revolutionary elements and gangs, and building a socialist society on their own" [Daudov, 1997, 27]. The researchers recognize the importance of the formation of the Mountain ASSR, but differ in the reasons for its disintegration (in contrast to the Mountain Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, Dagestan proved to be a more viable product). According to the researcher N.F. Bugai, Stalin was negatively inclined towards the Mountain Republic: "Obviously, Stalin's position on the Mountain Republic in this case played a noticeably negative role and was not aimed at strengthening it. It was at the heart of the immediately started turbulent processes of the collapse of the Mountain Republic, although the party and Soviet workers employed in the republic made considerable efforts to consolidate the people around the Mountain Republic" [Bugai, 1995, 67].

The researcher A.Kh. Daudov connects the causes of the collapse of the Mountain ASSR with the tasks of socialist transformation in the region. The formation of the North Caucasus Territory, which completed the course for the creation of a unified administrative region, made the existence and preservation of the Mountain Soviet Socialist Republic unnecessary [Daudov, 1997, 206-207]. In recent studies, one of the main causes of the collapse of the MASSR the researchers call territorial relationships and the land issue [Borov, Dumanov, Kazharov, 1999; Kozharov, 2001; Tsutsiev, 2007]. The researcher A. Tsutsiev explained the reasons for the collapse of the Mountainous ASSR most accurately: "The same approach that defined the appearance of the Mountain ASSR in 1921 as a form of national self-determination of mountain people becomes the ideological basis of the dismantling of the republic. The Kabardin party elite led by Kalmykov, pushed by the threat of redistribution of land in favor of neighboring districts, seeks to enter a higher and separate trajectory

of self-determination, which is actually Kabardian. Having received an influential support in Moscow, the district leaves the Mountain ASSR with the status of the Kabardian Autonomous Region. The political ideologem is used here as an instrument for protecting the economic interests of the national group: although not fully, the implementation of competing ideologies (assuming equal distribution of land) is prevented. The outbreak of Kabarda entails the gradual disintegration of the Mountain ASSR. In 1922, Karachaevsky, Balkaria, Chechen districts and Grozny leave it consistently. Finally, on July 7, 1924, the republic is abolished with a division into the North Ossetian Autonomous District, the Ingush Autonomous District, the Sunzhensky District and Vladikavkaz [Tsutsiev, 2007].

The disintegration of the Mountain Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and the formation of new autonomies was a complex, long and controversial process because the authorities of the Mountain Republic wished to preserve it and the elite of the districts wanted to get out and to establish their autonomies. During the dismantling of the Mountain Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, not six autonomies were formed (considering that there were 6 districts), but, in the end, four ones: Kabardino-Balkaria, Checheno-Ingush, Karachay-Cherkessia and North Ossetia.

The Soviets have already gotten the experience of unification several peoples in one autonomy. As early as 1918, the Commissariat for Nationalities tried to proclaim the Tatar-Bashkir Republic, which Bashkirs and Tatars were supposed to enter (it should be noted that in 1918 in Kazan an autonomous and potentially anti-Bolshevik Itil-Ural was proclaimed (i.e., The Bolshevik project on the proclamation of the Tatar-Bashkir Republic was rapidly curtailed, and in 1919 the Bashkir Autonomous Region was formed and then the Tatar Republic in 1920. The leader Validov emigrated abroad and wrote in his articles that the creation of two republics divided one people with a single language, a common (Islamic) religion, with a single culture, a people that is united by blood, history and customs [Khisamov, Sagitov, Galimova, 2010]. Many Western researchers (including Tatars) believe that the cause of the creation of individual Bashkir and Tatar autonomous republics was the Bolsheviks' fear of Tatar nationalism and Turkic unity: "The Itil-Ural, or Tatar-Bashkir state was divided even before its existence, because its existence would become a real threat, and the Soviet government, already tired of the nationalism of its Muslim minorities, could not allow this. The Tatar-Bashkir Republic with its capital in Kazan would continue to strengthen the role of this city as the cultural and political center of the Muslims of Russia. To prevent Turkic unity and the emergence of a dynamic republic in the Middle Volga, the Soviet government preferred to promote the formation of small republics; thus it also created isolation and even kindled envy and enmity, thus facilitating the control over the peoples of the region" [Halim, 1991, 160-161].

Adygea public associations back from the 1990's and up to the present time emphasize the idea that the Soviet government divided the single Adygea ethnos into three national entities. But were there among the national intelligentsia and the elite of the early 20th century any deas for

creating a single autonomy for the Circassians and whether there were forces and opportunities for such unification? The well-known researcher of ethnopolitical and national problems of the Adygs A. Borov in his work "The Circassian issue as a historical and political phenomenon" answers this question: "The national democratic movement that took shape in the North Caucasus after the February revolution and embodied in the Union of United Mountaineers of the North Caucasus and Dagestan, built its political program on the idea of democratic federalism for Russia and for the North Caucasus. Any articulation of separate "ethnonational" political programs in its framework would be devastating for the fundamental principles of the movement. Circassian activists and participants in the movement neither during the period of the Union's activity (1917) nor later in the Republic of the Union of Mountaineers of the North Caucasus and Dagestan (1918-1920) did not subsequently bring the "Circassian question" in any form to their agenda" [Borov, 2013, 17-19]. It was not traced in the ethnopolitical processes in the Kuban and Tersk regions from the spring of 1917 to March 1918. During the Civil War, the "Circassian question" was also not raised.

A. Borov notes that "in 1921-1922 and 1926-1928 years the local Soviet elite played a rather active role in the creation of the Kabardin (then Kabardino-Balkarian), Adyghe and Circassian autonomous regions, but there is no evidence that they raised the issue of the unification of Circassians within the framework of a single political and administrative education. There was also no "informal" national movement in the Circassian environment. The judgments that the Soviet government purposefully and artificially divided the "single ethnos" between the three national-state entities do not have convincing evidence and are based on extrapolation into the past of modern ethno-ideological ideas. Territorially and administratively, the Circassians were divided even during the Caucasian War, and such a problem (that is, the "Circassian question") simply was not posed before the Soviet authorities" [Ibid.].

On January 16, 1922, the Kabardino-Balkarian Autonomous Region was formed. The resolution provided for the establishment of territorial boundaries of Kabarda and Balkaria by a special commission; in addition, the principle of parity in power structures was established [Guboglo, Dumanov, Akkieva, 2001, 93]. With the creation of the autonomous Kabardino-Balkaria, the existence of Kabardins and Balkars as separate peoples was officially recognized, and other identities became irrelevant [Tkhamokova, 2014].

On January 12, 1922, a decision was taken to establish the Karachay-Cherkess Autonomous Region (KChAO), which began its implementation only two months later due to the deterioration of the situation with the Karachay-Kabardian border conflict. In this conflict on the side of Karachay were the well-known Abazin, Nogai and Besleneev leaders, which led to the acceleration of its resolution. On March 4, 1922 Karachay-Cherkessky regional Revolutionary Committee was established. It included representatives of three peoples, the Karachayan K.-A.A. Kurdzhiev (Chairman of the Revolutionary Committee), Russian Ya.F. Balakhonov and Circassian D.N. Gutyakulov (deputy chairmen) [Akkieva, 2014, 69].

Development of local languages and the education system in native languages as a tool for Sovietizing the regions of the North Caucasus

The national policy of the Soviets was closely linked with the ideological. The ethnic factor and the national idea were used as an instrument for strengthening and stabilizing Soviet society [Borov, 2013, 122]. According to Professor Martin of Harvard University, the Soviet Union was the world's first empire of "positive activity" [Martin, 2011]. The Soviet government encouraged national self-consciousness (the formation of national statehood of ethnic groups is an important but not unique practice), the development of languages and the raising of the level of education, as well as the rooting of the outskirts of the former Russian Empire.

In the North Caucasus, the Bolsheviks paid much attention to the development of education, rightly considering it an important tool for the formation of a new, Soviet identity. Education in the North Caucasus region was complicated by a number of local specific features. Along with the general reasons for the weak development of popular education in the country: the shortage of scientific and pedagogical personnel, the lack of the necessary material base, it encountered additional obstacles in its development in the national regions of the North Caucasus. Among them were the actual lack of written language in many peoples, the extraordinary diversity of the ethnographic composition of the population, the diversity of everyday features, the influence of Muslim (Arabic-speaking) culture, social passivity, and the preservation of interethnic conflicts at the domestic level. It should be noted that there was certain distrust to the Russian culture and the Russian language from the part of the autochthons of the territory; the Russian spoken language in fact was not widely spread in the province.

An important document that became the basis for the formation of the education system was the decree of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of October 16, 1918 "On a single labor school of the RSFSR" and the resolution of the People's Commissariat of the RSFSR of October 31, 1918 "On the schools of national minorities". This allowed introducing a unified system of free coeducation with two levels of education: 5 years of schooling in the first stage, 4 years in the secondary school. All primary and secondary schools, vocational schools, lower and secondary technical, agricultural, economic schools and schools were transformed into a single school. The right of all citizens to education was proclaimed irrespective of race, nationality and social status; as well as the equality in the education of women and men, training on the basis of a link to productive labor. The draft of a single labor school eliminated elitist and deadlock educational institutions, and ensured continuity between the main links of the public education system.

The policy of the Soviet authorities in the educational sphere was designed to solve the ideological and political tasks of the new government. The explanation of the goals of the new government in the multi-ethnic North Caucasus region was easier to convey in a language understandable to representatives of different peoples, that is, in their native language [Akkieva, 2014, 266].

By the decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR "On Freedom of Conscience, Church and Religious Societies" (1918) the church separated from the state and the school from the church; it was proclaimed, of course, a secular school. The problem of writing was raised among the peoples of the North Caucasus in this regard, since many of them were taught mainly in religious schools and in Arabic. The tasks of the Soviet school, which was supposed to be taught in the native language, were not responded to by the Arab in the Caucasus. For the authorities, forcing in the 1920s the development of Soviet culture, the radical cultural reformation of public life, and the break with traditional culture was also important [Krasovitskaya, 2010, 274], closely related to Islam and Arabic script. Most of the peoples of the North Caucasus did not have their own written language at the time of the establishment of the Soviets, and the writing of the Avars, Kumyks, Lezgins, Laks, Dargins was on an Arab basis. Their writing was a mechanical adaptation of the Arabic alphabet to the phonetic features of the languages of each people. This letter was imperfect and abounded with an abundance of superscripts and subscripts, creating additional difficulties in mastering the reading and writing.

Another problem was that the vast majority of literate people in the North Caucasus were also mainly representatives of the Islamic clergy. In this regard, the policy of the new government in its relation was characterized by great caution. The new government tried to use the national intelligentsia (including the clergy) in its tasks to reorganize society, and therefore, implementing the installation approved at the VIII and X congresses of the party. Its resolution noted that the current moment sets before the local organizations a serious question about the best use of the representatives of the local intelligentsia in public work. The local Soviet and party bodies were recommended to surround the national intelligentsia with "an atmosphere of comradely trust and to eliminate the tone of neglect and ill-will that has often met with regard to the local intelligentsia forever"³. Many representatives of the local intellectuals began to cooperate with the new government, and some of them became active agents of the policy of power.

Among the representatives of mountain intellectuals there were those who in the 1920s tried to solve the problem of writing in their native languages, while each solved this problem according to their vision. Some created the alphabet on an Arabic graphic basis, others on the Latin alphabet, and the third turned to Cyrillic. In 1920, the Kabardin alphabet appeared on an Arabic graphic basis. For the Balkar language, Arabic graphics in connection with the structural features of the Turkic languages was not the best way out, and therefore three alphabets were created, two of them in Cyrillic. The alphabet on the basis of the Latin was created by the prominent North Caucasian Soviet worker Magomed Eneev, who included in his bibliography the text of the "Internationale", first printed in the Balkar language. In the national schools of Adygea, instruction was conducted on the basis of the "Circassian alphabet" compiled by S. Siyukhov and I. Khidzetl (republished in 1921 and 1924) on an Arabic graphic basis, compiled before the revolution and published in March 1918.

3 ЦДНИРО. Ф. 7. Оп. 1. Д. 5. Л. 25.

The creation of writing in the languages of the peoples of the North Caucasus was impossible without state support. The question of which graphic system to recognize as the most appropriate for creating a written language remained relevant during the 1920s. On the eve of the world revolution, which for Soviet ideologists was seen as an early phenomenon, it was assumed that the Arab graphic design of the letters of the peoples of the country professing Islam would be completely replaced by the Latin alphabet. The replacement of the Arabic graphic framework had to weaken the influence of religious ideology, to reorient the Muslim peoples to new spiritual values.

On September 25, 1922, the Organizational Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP (B.), on the basis of Stalin's report "On the Latin font in Muslim writing", recognized it desirable to support the decisions of the Azerbaijani CEC to introduce the Latin script in the Muslim script. As early as mid-1922, the People's Commissariat for Nationalities of the RSFSR developed a project for the formation of the Commission for the Reform of the Arabic alphabet. The competence of the Commission was extended to non-Turkic languages, adapting to their needs an Arabic letter. On January 25, 1923, the board of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs on the report of the Deputy People's Commissar G.I. Broido approved its composition. The commission included, among others, U. Aliev (North Caucasus) and G. Jabaev (Transcaucasia). The commission worked in February-March 1923. Its work included collecting information on the practice of using the Arabic alphabet in the regions and recognizing the public-political significance of the Latin alphabet as a whole. Various opinions were expressed regarding the use of Latin alphabet, the terms of romanization and much more. There was an opinion that it was necessary to develop not only works on the compilation of the Latin script, but also "a trial campaign in favor of its normal introduction". There were also open discussions about the undesirability of conducting romanization by decree. But the point of view expressed by the representative of the North Caucasus Umar Aliev became dominant, that "the light of the Latin alphabet from the East serves the best way to get the so-called wild peoples to the universal culture"⁴.

In May 1923, at the initiative of S.M. Kirov, the conference of representatives of the Muslim peoples of the North Caucasus on the alphabet for the mountain languages was convened in Pyatigorsk. The meeting recognized the right of choice for each people of one or another graphic and it was stressed that the impact from above on this issue is unacceptable. At the same time, the conference recognized that due to economic, political and socio-cultural factors, it is preferable to adopt a common basis for graphics by all mountain peoples of the North Caucasus. Of the three graphic bases: Arabic, Cyrillic (Russian) and Latin, the conference favored the Latin graphics. At the same time, given the high religiosity of the population and the popularity of the Arabic graphic basis, the admissibility of teaching on the Arabic graphic basis was parallel to the Latin one.

4 GARF. F. P-1318. Op. 1. D. 1548. L. 10. Quoted by: Krasovitskaya T.Yu. Latinization of graphics of the languages of the Northern Caucasus in the context of modernization // Problems of Russian History. Issue. X. M.-Magnitogorsk, 2010. P. 291.

In 1925, the South-Eastern Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP (B.) held in Rostov the second conference on the education of the North Caucasus mountaineers, at which it was decided to intensify propaganda for the introduction of the Latin alphabet in the mountain societies. In 1921, Aliev prepared an alphabet on the Latin graphic basis for the Karachai language. In 1924, the Kabardian and Balkar alphabets were put into operation on a Latin basis. The authors of the Kabardian alphabet were TA. Sherotlov, B. Khuranov, A.I. Pshunetov [Zhirkov, 1925, 233].

In April 1924, the authorities of Dagestan decided to organize a Dagestani committee of a new alphabet to prepare for the transition to the Latin alphabet. In 1925, the V All-Diaspora Congress of Soviets, at the initiative of N. Samurskii, adopted a decree on the trilingual principle of the national school in the republic: native and Turkic languages and the Russian language as subjects of teaching. During the 1920s, the controversy about the language of interethnic communication did not subside. The main struggle was between the representatives of the Turkic language group (Kumyk) and Iberian-Caucasian (Avars, Laks, Dargins, etc.).

In Dagestan, Chechnya and Adygea, because of the resistance of the Muslim clergy, the alphabet based on the Latin alphabet appeared much later. The Chechen alphabet in Latin was created in 1925 by Kh. Oshaev; the instruction in schools using it began in 1926-1927. In February 1928, at a plenum of the Dagestan Regional Committee of the CPSU (b), the report "On Language and the Alphabet for the Schools of Dagestan" was discussed. As a result of this discussion, the Plenum made a resolution to transfer schools from Arabic script to a new alphabet created on a Latin basis. The new alphabet was developed for Avar, Dargin, Lezgin, Kumyk, Lak, Azeri and Tat languages. Along with the translation of the written language of the Dagestan peoples into the Latin graphic base in the republic, the work then begun to create a written language for individual non-literate peoples, Lezgin and Tabasaran. In the conditions of multinational and multilingual Dagestan, the issue of defining the language of interethnic communication was even more acute than the translation of writing from the Arabic graphic basis into Latin. With the establishment of Soviet power, the Party and Soviet bodies of Dagestan launched a great deal of work to resolve the issue of the language of instruction for the younger generation, the official state. At the Fourth All-Diaspora Congress of Soviets in 1925, a resolution was adopted according to which the national school was built on a trilingual principle: native, Turkic and Russian languages as subjects of teaching. The Türkic (Kumyk) language in Dagestan had a lobby of some part of the republic's leadership, and the flat part of the population of Dagestan was inhabited by Turks, who were more economically developed than the mountaineers. The Turkic language was therefore regarded as the language of inter-ethnic (inter-tribal) relations.

In the 1920s the opening of new secular schools took place everywhere in the North Caucasus region. The opening of schools and the translation of written language into Latin script helped to increase literacy among the peoples of the North Caucasus. So, for example, if in 1920 literacy among the Kabardians was only 2.1%, and among Balkarians 0.9%, then at the end of 1925 it increased to 11.2% for Kabardians and to 7.5% for Balkarians.

In the 1920s the intensive training of teachers happened. Teachers who could work in new schools were not enough in number; especially difficult situation developed in the countryside where most of the peoples of the North Caucasus lived. The new government paid much attention to the management of the school business, the training of teachers, the development of the methodological base. But because of problems with funding, teachers' salaries remained low; there was an acute shortage of teachers. In 1924, a special public education fund was formed. To solve this most acute problem, courses on accelerated teacher training were opened in various regions of the North Caucasus. During these courses, for 1.5-2 months, the future teachers in their native language was taught teaching methods and the alphabet on the Latin or Arabic charts. The network of short-term courses on the preparation and retraining of teachers in the North Caucasus has received a wide scope; the duration of training in courses has increased from 2 to 5 months. In 1923 in Nalchik, and in 1926 in Batalpashinsk, some pedagogical technical schools were opened (they also appeared in Buinaksk, Derbent, Vladikavkaz, Grozny and Maikop). The opening of the technical colleges allowed removing the acute shortage of teachers in the region. Preparation of qualified personnel from among representatives of local peoples was held in Moscow, Rostov-on-Don, Tbilisi, Leningrad and other cities. In the 1924-1925 academic year, 200 Kabardians and Balkars were trained in various cities of the country, and in 1925-1926, this number reached 685 people [Chechenov, 1971, 27].

As a result of the work on creating a script based on the Latin alphabet, increasing the number of schools, improving teachers' qualifications, there has been a marked increase in the educational level of the peoples of the North Caucasus. In 1928-1929, literate in their native language became: the 50% of Adygs; the 45% of Circassians, the 50%, 50% of Kabardians and Balkars, the 34.2% of Ingushes and the 35.8% of Ossetians [Magidov, 1971, 67].

One of the most difficult problems in the development of the general education school in the North Caucasus was the involvement of girls. To introduce women to the secular education, women's clubs, literacy centers, and various courses were opened. Despite all the measures taken, in the schools of Karachay AO girls in schools were 3 times less than boys. By the end of the 1920's the situation has changed, for example, in Kabardino-Balkaria, girls accounted for 50.2% of primary school students [Magomedova, 2001, 67].

In the elimination of illiteracy, a certain role was played by some characteristic features of the 1920s-1930s, campaigns, such as "cultural assaults", points for eliminating illiteracy, etc.

In the first years of Soviet period in the North Caucasus and especially in Dagestan, religious traditions and the influence of the Muslim clergy on public consciousness were preserved; the network of Muslim religious schools remained significant. The decree banning the teaching of the Muslim dogma led to the fact that the process of closing Muslim schools accelerated. In the 1930s many of them operated illegally. The persecution of the clergy has intensified on accusations, often far-fetched, in resisting the policy of Soviet power, subversion. In Kabardino-Balkaria, the ban on education in Muslim schools raised a wave of protest in Baksan, led by Askhad Shogentsukov, a

prominent Muslim theologian. Open actions of believers against state measures did not lead to the result; almost all Muslim schools were closed by 1930 in Kabardino-Balkaria and in other republics. The mosques were also closed; repression began against the mullahs and efendi.

In the 1930s in the North Caucasus, as in the whole country, the transfer to universal primary education happened, which was declared at the 16th Congress of the CPSU a "combat task" for the party in the near future. In the 1930s the issue of the language of instruction was settled. In the national school children at the initial stage were taught in their native language, and Russian came as a discipline from the second to the fourth grade. From the fifth grade, the teaching was translated into Russian, and the native language was taught as a discipline. In 1938-1937, comparatively easy and fast translation of the written language of the peoples of the North Caucasus into a Russian graphic basis was made. The transition to a single Cyrillic base had both economic and ideological and psychological reasons. In March 1938, a resolution was adopted by the the Central Committee of the CPSU (B) on the study of the Russian language in non-Russian schools of the country, which established unified requirements for the volume of knowledge and skills in the Russian language. In practice, in the national autonomies of the North Caucasus, the study of the Russian language began with the second year of study, with the passage of a preliminary course, the purpose of which was the accumulation of a necessary stock of words. Training continued to take place in the national languages [Denisova, Ulanov, 2003, 97]. Such a system operated until the late 1950s.

Conclusion

The key aspect of ethno-territorial and educational policy in the first decades of Soviet period was the policy of ethnoterritorial rooting of Soviet authorities as well as the development of local languages and the education system in native languages as the most accessible for that time instrument for Sovietizing national regions. In general, the policy of the Soviets in the North Caucasus in the 1920s-1930s was subordinated to the practical and ideological goals. At the same time, it was aimed at creating a cultural infrastructure in the North Caucasus, which would be "national in form and socialist in content", including the sphere of education.

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Этнотерриториальная и образовательная политика в конструировании советской идентичности на Северном Кавказе

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Аннотация

В статье предпринята попытка показать отношение советской власти к решению национального вопроса на Северном Кавказе и формирования общегражданской идентичности. Декларируя равноправие народов и право наций на самоопределение, большевики на деле развили законодательную основу для создания государственности в форме этнотерриториальных образований: союзной республики, автономной области и национального округа. На решение национального вопроса была направлена также политика в сфере образования, учитывающая и интересы национальных меньшинств. Кроме того, в статье анализируется образовательная политика на Северном Кавказе, которая в достаточно короткий период времени способствовала укреплению позиций светского советского образования в данном регионе России и вытеснению религиозного образования из его социокультурного пространства. Отмечается, что этнотерриториаль-

ная и образовательная политика была направлена на формирование советской идентичности, что имело положительные последствия.

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Ключевые слова

Национальный вопрос, национальная политика, государственность, право наций на самоопределение, образовательная политика, письменность, светское образование, советская идентичность.

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