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FROM THE HISTORY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN SOVIET
CHECHNYA (1920S)

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Abstract

After the revolutionary events of 1917, a socialist society *emerged* in our country. Revolutionary transformations both in the center and in the localities were hampered by the lack of a sufficient number of trained specialists from the representatives of the people. Even during the Civil War in 1919, the Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR was adopted, which set the task of eliminating the illiteracy of the population. State and party bodies of Soviet Chechnya began to eliminate illiteracy among the population. The work was carried out in two directions – the elimination of illiteracy among children, as well as among the adult population aged 14 to 30. Hundreds of schools and courses for the eradication of illiteracy began to function in the region; among the latter are short-term pedagogical courses for the training of teachers from among Chechens, which opened in Grozny on February 22, 1921, June 20, 1923, June 1, 1924, in Goryachevodsk, as well as two-year courses – in the fall of 1924. In December 1925, the Pedagogical College named after Sergo Ordzhonikidze was opened, which contributed to the improvement of the training of pedagogical national personnel. In the first years of Soviet power in Chechnya, the main path for the formation of pedagogical personnel was a variety of course activities; then a new type of education appeared since the mid-1920s. It was the first secondary pedagogical educational institution, a pedagogical school, which characterized a new stage in the development of pedagogical education in Chechnya.

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1. Introduction

After the revolutionary events in October 1917, the construction of a socialist society began in Russia. Transformations were carried out in all areas of life. The creation of a new socialist culture is becoming one of the main tasks. However, the implementation of the planned cardinal changes was complicated by the lack of the necessary number of trained specialists and mainly from representatives of social groups who supported the initiated socialist transformations, which were not available not only in the backward educational development of Chechnya but also in Russia itself.

Among the first legislative acts aimed at solving the problem of enlightenment and education of the broad masses was the Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR of December 26, 1919 "On the elimination of illiteracy among the population of the RSFSR". Party and Soviet bodies of the North Caucasus have also done a great deal of work in resolving the problem of enlightenment and education in the region.

2. Problem Statement

In Soviet and modern Russian historiography, works have been published in which the first measures of the Soviet government in solving the problem of enlightenment and education of the broad popular masses, the formation and development of various stages of the Soviet educational system, including in the national regions –Bolodurin (2008), Abdrakhmanova (2017), Komandzhaev et al. (2019).

Certain issues of the problem under study are reflected in monographs (Dzhambulatova, 1974; Umarov, 1982) and several scientific articles (Aristova, 1968; Kindarova, 2005; Matagova, 2008; Vagina, 1974; Yusupov, 1969).

3. Research Questions

The subject of this research is the domestic educational system in the first decades of Soviet times.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the changes that took place in the educational system of Chechnya and Ingushetia in the first decades of Soviet times. The article covers the first measures aimed at solving the problem of enlightenment and education of the broad masses, the opening and operation of a secondary educational institution in Chechnya – a pedagogical technical school.

5. Research Methods

The methodology is based on the principles of objectivity, scientific character and historicism, which presuppose the study of facts and phenomena in all their diversity, in the concrete historical conditions of their emergence and development, and which make it possible to highlight both the positive and negative aspects of the analyzed historical events.

6. Findings

Based on the decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR dated December 26, 1919, the resolution of the Council of People's Commissars of the Mountain ASSR dated July 18, 1921, Chechnya began to eliminate illiteracy among the population. The work of state and party bodies that unfolded in this area was carried out mainly in two directions: the involvement of children in the schools being created, and the elimination of illiteracy among the adult population in the shortest possible time. All citizens of the Mountain ASSR between the ages of 14 and 30 inclusive were obliged during 1921–1922 to master literacy in the native or Russian language in the manner of state coercion. The beginning of training was announced on September 1, 1921. Hundreds of schools and illiteracy eradication courses began to function in the region.

The Chechen Department of Public Education, given the impossibility of eliminating illiteracy in Chechnya in Russian or Arabic (the first – due to lack of knowledge of the language, and the second – due to the complexity requiring a long study period), raised the issue of creating a written language in the Chechen language, worked out a schedule Chechen writing, consisting of an alphabet of 30 characters that have a visual similarity to Arabic writing, and the first ABC book was compiled. The most prominent representatives of the Chechen clergy took an active part in the process of creating and improving the Chechen alphabet in the Arabic script. The main author of the Arabic-Chechen alphabet was an outstanding scientist alim sheikh Sugaip-mulla Gaisumov. In 1922–1923 the illiteracy in Chechnya began to be eliminated.

The measures of the Soviet state to eradicate illiteracy faced serious problems from the very first stages: a lack of material resources, trained teaching staff, teaching aids, recovery processes after the civil war, opposition from the clergy, and others. The main difficulty for the region, and especially for Chechnya, is the lack of scientific and pedagogical personnel.

Work on the systematic training of teachers in the North Caucasus begins in Chechnya after the end of the civil war. It was necessary to seek and develop forms of education that were closer to the population in terms of every day and other characteristics. This kind of forced temporary measure, due to the enormous need for teachers, is the out-of-school education system – short-term course activities. As a result of the energetic work of public education bodies, under the leadership and with the help of Party and Soviet bodies, a whole network of short-term course activities has been created in Chechnya since the beginning of the 1920s. The training of teachers and the retraining of the old teachers were carried out in pedagogical courses. The duration of the courses varied.

On February 22, 1921, short-term pedagogical courses were opened to train teachers from among the Chechens. The courses of folk teachers of Chechnya, which opened in Grozny on June 20, 1923, were longer. In August, the first 50 folk teachers of Chechnya graduated from short-term courses. Each of them was awarded the title of people's teacher of the third category and issued certificates for the right to work as a primary school teacher (Dzhambulatova, 1974).

In the summer of 1924, a 2-month course was opened in Chechnya to train teachers (who graduated in 1923) to work with second-year students in schools of grade 1. Along with them, another 25 people studied at the same courses to obtain the right to work in the first grades of the same schools (Yusupov, 1969).

In 1924, the regional executive committee of Chechnya petitioned the People's Commissariat for Education of the RSFSR to open a two-year teacher's course. In the fall of 1924, the Chechen Department of Public Education opened pedagogical courses for 100 people with a 2-year course of study. The courses were opened as the basis for the future pedagogical college. The courses were attended by Chechen youth who graduated from the secondary school of the 2nd stage.

In raising the literacy of the population and training the national intelligentsia, an invaluable role was played by the courses opened by the decision of the Political Education in Goryachevodsk on June 1; 1924. The first graduation of 52 students of courses on preparing Chechen youth for admission to workers' faculties took place on August 10, 1924.

Such courses in the early years of the Cultural Revolution in the North Caucasus, in Chechnya, played an extremely important role. However, the course activities held in the Chechen region did not meet all the needs of the teaching staff.

In 1923, the government raised the question of the need to open pedagogical technical schools in the Mountain ASSR, which were created in subsequent years throughout the region (Dzhambulatova, 1974).

Deputy People's Commissar of Education of the Mountain ASSR B.A. Alborov in his article "On the organization of pedagogical education among the mountaineers of the Caucasus" in of 1923 writes: "In our opinion, each autonomous mountain formation should exert all its forces and throw maximum funds on the organization of a national pedagogical technical school, after that, if necessary, even to the detriment of the rest of the schools, because the future of the people depends on who and how will educate his younger generation". The forms of organizing such technical schools were also discussed here. According to the Deputy People's Commissar of Education of the Mountain ASSR B.A. Alborov, "there can be no question of a multinational pedagogical college, on the one hand, because it is required to throw out soon a huge number of educators for each nationality, which one pedagogical college will not be able to do, on the other, because only with a single-tribe the pedagogical technical school can put educational work at the proper height and open an experimental and demonstrative national school for practical training of students of the pedagogical technical school".

The leadership of the Mountain ASSR and the public are also in favor of the specific structure of pedagogical technical schools for mountain nationalities, the unacceptability of the type of pedagogical technical school adopted in the center. This was motivated by the fact that "if the type of central pedagogical technical school is adopted for mountain peoples, then some of them, which do not yet have schools of the second stage, will not be able to fill these pedagogical technical schools with students with appropriate training until the latter appear. Therefore, in the form of a temporary measure, three preparatory groups were allowed at the pedagogical technical school, equal in course to the first three grades of school of the 2d grade".

Importance was attached to the question of opening a pedagogical technical school in the Chechen Autonomous Region. The problem of pedagogical personnel in Chechnya was also given serious attention at the first regional congress of Soviets in August 1924. The Congress instructed the regional department of public education to take decisive measures to organize a pedagogical technical school, to improve the qualifications and general level of knowledge of teachers through short-term courses.

In 1925, the First Regional Congress of Soviets of the North Caucasian Territory decided the following, considering the economic and cultural backwardness of Chechnya: to instruct the regional executive committee in the interests of the earliest elimination of cultural backwardness to provide maximum support to the Chechen Regional Central Executive Committee and to recognize the priority issue of opening a polytechnic school with pedagogical and agricultural faculty. At the congress, the chairman of the Chechen regional CEC T. Eldarkhanov delivered a report, in which he noted the significant political activity of the working people of Chechnya since its separation into an autonomous region, the transition of the masses of the Chechen people to peaceful labor, cultural and economic development. Besides, he raised the question of opening a polytechnic with a pedagogical and agricultural faculty.

As early as May 1925, the Grozny Rabochiy newspaper wrote that “practically the organization of a pedagogical technical school for the training of school workers in Chechnya had been started. The technical school will be created in Grozny for 100 people. Persons with 3-grade education will be admitted to the technical school. The technical school will have an agricultural bias”. It was not possible to start classes by the beginning of September. On December 20, 1925, a group of members of the Chechen Regional Executive Committee and representatives of various organizations went to the plenum of the executive committee on the third anniversary of the autonomy of Chechnya on the same day the Pedagogical College named after Sergo Ordzhonikidze was solemnly opened.

7. Conclusion

The opening of the pedagogical technical school made it possible for a short period to improve the training of pedagogical national personnel. If in the 1914–1915 academic year the number of teachers in the general education schools of Chechnya was 378, then by the 1927–1928 academic year there were 1,274 of them (Chechen-Ingush ASSR for 40 years, 1960). Since its opening and in the subsequent 1930s the pedagogical technical school remained the main type of pedagogical education in the Chechen Autonomous Region until the pedagogical university was created in the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (the Chechen and Ingush regions were united in 1934 into the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Region, and in 1936 the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was formed) in 1938.

During the first years of Soviet power in Chechnya, the main path for the formation of pedagogical personnel was a variety of course activities, then since the mid-1920s. a new type of education appeared – the first secondary pedagogical educational institution – a pedagogical technical school, which characterized a new stage in the development of pedagogical education in Chechnya.

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