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**WOMAN OF DAGESTAN IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS  
(1917–1930)**

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***Abstract***

The article is devoted to the implementation of the women's educational policy of the Soviet state in the multinational Dagestan in the first decades of the Soviet government, when ensuring the right of women to education was viewed as an extremely important condition for their involvement in social production. The article, based on the reliable sources, shows how in Dagestan, where Islam remained one of the influential factors in the spiritual life, the government's activity to involve girls in schools and eliminate illiteracy of women in mountains was replaced by the active involvement in secondary and higher vocational education. Taking into account the results of source studies and historiographical developments in recent years, it has been concluded that pedagogical educational institutions in the 1920s, and especially in the 1930s, became popular among Dagestanians. Particular attention is paid to the training of teachers from among Dagestani. The authorities strive to change the ratio of male and female teachers in favor of the latter because of fears that the small number of female teachers in the school will prevent Muslim girls from learning and strengthening the image of a female teacher, symbolizing the transition from the old order to the new, Soviet, culture with its affordable education. It is shown how the development of the system of women's education in a multinational region contributed to the growth of the self-awareness of Dagestan women, created conditions for their involvement in the socio-political and cultural life of the republic and the country.

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**Keywords:** State educational policy, female education, Soviet authority, multinational region, Dagestan, woman mountaineer.



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## **1. Introduction**

Today, the role of women in the economic, political and cultural life of developed countries is increasing. In Russia, the active involvement of women in social production led to the fact that by the 1980s they were equal to men in terms of employment, and by the end of the 1980s they surpassed them in terms of education (Kosetchenkova, 2009). It is the field of education that has become the area of life in which women feel the least violation of their rights (Baskakova, 2005). In the implementation of the Russian state policy in the field of education of the female population of the country, several stages are seen related to the understanding of the essence of the women's issue and ideology in relation to the woman that prevailed in society and the political elite (Khasbulatov, 2003). The first stage came in the second half of the XIX – early XX centuries, the time of reforms in the field of primary, secondary education and the formation of higher female education. The next stage coincided with the Soviet period (1917–1991), in the first decades of which the essentially revolutionary task of “liberating women from the heritage of the tsarist regime” and creating a system in which they would have equal rights with men was set. Since the second half of the 1950s, despite the adjustment of gender relations towards a more conservative model, the state policy in the field of women's education has led to its progressive development, and the level of education has become the main indicator of the actual equality of women with men.

## **2. Problem Statement**

The participation of women in Dagestan in social and cultural processes in the region has long been developed in historiography. With the formation of a new direction in historical science – gender history, there was a need to write studies that are closely related to sociology, historical anthropology, historical psychology, history of everyday life, based on the analysis of the hierarchy of society based on gender norms and stereotypes.

With this in mind, with the involvement of new factual material, this article has been completed. The study was carried out in the geographical boundaries of modern Dagestan.

## **3. Research Questions**

Since gender processes in education in the years of Soviet construction in different regions of the country differed in originality and went at different speeds, we considered it relevant and important to analyze the change in the position of Dagestan women in the educational process in the first decades of Soviet power using the example of a multinational region, where one of the most influential factors of spiritual life remained Islam. This aspect has been highlighted as a subject of study.

## **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to show how the conditions for the formation of legal and actual equality of men and women through the development of the system of women's education, which provided them with equal rights for professional self-realization, active participation in public production, in the socio-political and cultural life of the country and the region were created during the study period. It was during

these years that there were changes that opened up the women's population of the multinational region, in which there was a significant influence of Islamic norms and local traditions, access to all forms of education, and in Dagestan society there was a request for the intellectual potential of women, in particular in the field of education and health.

## 5. Research Methods

In conducting the study, we used reliable sources typical of traditional historical science (regulatory and clerical documents of central and local government bodies, the Communist Party, periodical materials, statistical sources, egodocs, etc.). Taking into account the fact that in historical analysis we resorted to gender characteristics, an anthropological approach was used. The combination of “public” and “private”, “macro-historical” and “micro-historical” made it possible, through the consideration of individual fates, to come to an understanding of the essence of significant historical events. We have not given up on historical reconstruction and empirical analysis. The methodological approach "norm/anomaly", proposed by Lebina (2018) in the study of the history of everyday life, and the opinion of a prominent Russian genderologist Pushkareva (2005), who drew attention to the synthesizing function of the gender approach in history seem legitimate.

## 6. Findings

In the early years of Soviet construction, the right of women to education was seen as an important condition for their involvement in social production and social life. The leading role in solving these issues belonged to the ruling Communist party, its organizations in the center and on the ground, the bodies of state power. The elimination of illiteracy among women was a priority. At the beginning of the XX century literate women in Dagestan were less than 2 % (Kaimarazov, 1960). Today, researchers know only a few names of Dagestani women who have received a Muslim education, have studied Arabic, the basics of logic, rhetoric, and jurisprudence. Among them is the daughter of the scientist and theologian Arslanali Huseynov, who wrote that "men do not give them (women - aut.) Any education, betraying themselves to oblivion and leaving them aside" (Shikhaliyev, 2017, p. 48).

Among researchers there is an opinion that in Dagestan the main prerequisites for leveling the social status of a woman with a man were creating gymnasium education (Adukhova, 2009). But to higher professional education, the path for Dagestan women was practically closed. An example of Jennet Dalgat, the first female Goryanka woman who received higher musical education abroad, is a unique phenomenon (Mutieva, 2016). In the decree of the Soviet government "On the elimination of illiteracy among the population of the RSFSR" (January 1919) and the program of the RCP (b) (March 1919), the tasks of implementing free and compulsory general and polytechnic education for all children of both sexes were formulated. Along with the education authorities, special departments of party committees – women's departments – were engaged in solving the problem of educating Dagestani. Largely with their work in the 1920s. Researchers associate the realization of women's right to education (Fokina, 2017).

The new government took into account the peculiarities of social and family life of Dagestan women in the early 1920s. In Dagestan special women's points for the eradication of illiteracy appeared. By the end

of 1923, about 500 women mountaineer were trained in 17 likpunkts. Work on the elimination of illiteracy among the female population of Dagestan intensified after the creation in 1924 of the republican society "Down with Illiteracy". The X regional party conference (April 1929) against the background of the intensification of the "struggle against the remnants of the old way of life" and the decisive response of the judicial-investigative agencies to the "analysis of household affairs in order to protect women's rights" required to strengthen the work on eradicating illiteracy among the females, to expand the network of women's likpunkts and more actively involve the women mountaineer in general likpunkts.

This work was difficult. Historical traditions, the strong influence of the Muslim clergy, the conservative attitude of a significant part of the male population, who saw the woman's purpose in housekeeping and raising children, often led to her breakdown. If prohibitions and agitation against measures of the Soviet government and education in Soviet schools did not help, then offensive rumors about women attending service centers and schools were used. Reached and to physical violence. Despite this, in the period of kultanshurma 1929-1932. 488 women activists worked as kultarmeets (Hasanova, 1963).

By the end of 1932, over 110 thousand people had graduated from the likpunkts, half of whom were women. Today, most researchers believe that the majority of the population, including women, as a result of a combination of ideological and administrative measures, was introduced to literacy by the end of the 1930s. At the same time, certain differences remained in the literacy level of the urban and rural population, and the level of literacy in Arabic significantly decreased (Kaimarazov & Kaimarazova, 2016; Kaimarazov, 1960).

The second important and very difficult task of the new government in the field of cultural construction was the involvement of girls in schools. Suffice it to say that at the first Dagestan congress of teachers (August 1918) the Muslim section spoke out against the joint training of Muslim children. In the first half of the 1920s, the number of girls in schools, especially in the highlands, was insignificant.

In 1922, at the Second All-Daghestanian Congress of Soviets, it was proposed to organize a network of boarding schools for Muslim girls and open schools for Muslim women. Such schools were opened in some mountain districts, and boarding schools in Buynaksk and Derbent. The first set in Buynaksk boarding school was 36 girls - 20 orphans and 16 half-orphans. By 1925, the number of pupils in boarding schools approached a hundred.

In the 1928-29 academic year, there were slightly more than 20% girls in rural schools of Dagestan of the first level and in schools of the I and II levels – more than 30 %. The turning point in the development of women's school education in Dagestan was associated with the introduction of universal compulsory primary education. From 1931 to 1935, the number of girls in primary school increased by 11 %. But even after that, there were few girls in high school, especially in rural areas. Parents of girls, adhering to the norms of Sharia law, negatively reacted to the continuation of the daughters of education and tried to get them married early. Even among the teachers, there were claims that "nine-year-old girls can be married." It happened that representatives of the local party-Soviet activists held traditional views on the status of women. For example, a native of a rather large traditional village Gubden, a deputy of the DASSR Supreme Soviet, married her daughter, taking her from the third grade of a local school. By the beginning of the

1940s, the number of girls in the schools of the republic made up 43.8% of all students, and that of girls mountaineer – 38.8%.

Considerable attention has been paid to the training of women in higher and secondary education. The decree of the Soviet government "On the rules of admission to higher education institutions of the RSFSR" (1918) expanded women's opportunities for vocational education. Sending girls to study in higher educational institutions, workers' faculties, technical schools, at different courses outside the country was engaged in a special recruiting Committee.

In 1926, a women's medical College was opened in Dagestan, and four years later – the second women's special educational institution – carpet college. At the same time, the problem of training teachers from among women mountaineer is actualized, since it is a woman who is the first representative of spiritual values, the first teacher, the first mentor, the first bearer of the national pedagogical culture for any member of society (Magamedova & Magamedova, 2016). In April 1928, 25% of students studied in pedagogical colleges, and 7% of Dagestan girls attended pedagogical courses. Purposeful activities on the opening of women's schools and the creation of girls' groups, the organization of "classes of labor processes" teachers who teach handicrafts and other types of female labor, the corresponding work in orphanages and boarding schools, the opening of new boarding schools and preparatory courses should have increased the influx of girls, especially mountain regions, in all educational institutions.

In May 1928, when discussing the report of the Dagestan Regional Committee of the CPSU (b) at the Central Committee of the CPSU (b), it was decided to intensify work on training teachers from women mountaineer, increasing the number of places for Dagestan in workers' schools and organizing a women's technical school. However, it was not immediately possible to open such a technical school due to the lack of the necessary material and financial conditions and the lack of women mountaineer.

An important role in the development of women's vocational education was played by the decisions of the Central Committee of the CPSU (b), the Central Executive Committee, the Council of People's Commissars and the People's Commissariat of Education of the RSFSR 1928 and 1929 on booking places in vocational schools for representatives of the "nationalities of the non-Russian language", as well as for girls. The sending organizations of the national regions of the country were to prepare women's candidates in a timely manner, and the selection committees should provide them with the appropriate benefits. In the early 1930s, children of workers, farm laborers and poor people were actively involved in technical schools and universities. Great attention was paid to the creation of appropriate conditions for women. According to the gender history specialist Delaloi (2018), the government offered emancipation, primarily for women from the underprivileged strata (workers, peasant women).

The first secondary pedagogical educational institutions, the Buynaksk and Derbent technical schools, graduated several dozen teachers a year, and the teachers mountaineer – units. In the years 1930-1931 in the republic, 8 pedagogical combines began to work, where more than 400 girls studied. In the 1936-37 school years, special women's departments were created at the pedagogical schools (with the exception of Laksky). In the pedagogical institute which opened in 1931, 89 students were trained, including 22 women (Abilov, 1973). The possibilities of training highly qualified personnel from the female population of Dagestan have expanded in connection with the opening in 1932 of medical and agricultural institutes.

An interesting question is the gender composition of the teaching staff. If in 1932, women accounted for 62% of the country, 45% in schools of the Transcaucasian Union Republics (Ewing, 2011), and 42% in schools of the North Caucasus, in 1935 according to the data of the People's Commissariat of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 22% of women worked. Thus, there is a mutual influence of national characteristics and gender composition of the teaching staff, confirming the conclusion of the American historian Thomas Ewing, that in the 1920s and 1930s. in the country, the growth in the total number of non-Russian teachers was associated with an increase in the proportion of men among Soviet teachers as a whole. The significant proportion of male teachers in the pedagogical team of the republic can be explained by the persisting traditions and growth since the mid-1930s. attractiveness of this type of activity for men in connection with the improvement of the social status of the teaching profession and its material component.

And one more aspect. In the life of schools, an important role was played by communist teachers. They were responsible for the quality of the educational process, the formulation of ideological work. Membership in the ranks of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) was not obligatory for school teachers, and there were few of them in the teaching staff. But by the end of the 1930s. there is a noticeable increase in the number of Komsomol teachers due to the replenishment of school groups by graduates of secondary pedagogical educational institutions. Without data for the city of Buynaksk in 1936, among the communist teachers and Komsomol members, women accounted for about 7.5%, and most of them were women mountaineer.

The changes, however, barely noticeable, occurred in the leadership of the national education authorities of the republic. So, in the nominal list of nomenklatura workers in the department of schools and science of the Dagestan Regional Committee of the CPSU (b) on March 1938, from 73 people there were only three women.

The Soviet authorities, who saw in the teaching of the conductor of their ideology, tried to protect him from the arbitrariness and indifference of local authorities, reacted to information coming from the localities about violations of the material and legal status of educators, unfair treatment of women educators. "Signals from places" were checked, and in the event of confirmation that the headmaster of the school was wronged, could be removed from work, deprived of the title of a teacher, and even subjected to more severe punishment by contacting investigative and judicial agencies.

## **7. Conclusion**

Thus, in the first decades of the Soviet government in the field of education, conditions were created for the formation of legal and actual gender equality. In Dagestan, tremendous work was carried out to eliminate the illiteracy of women mountaineer, to involve girls in a new Soviet school, and Dagestan girls, along with men, got access to all types of vocational schools. It is difficult to accept the opinion of the authors of a collective monograph on gender stereotypes in a changing society, on the reasons for Dagestan's desire to educate daughters in Soviet times (Baskakova et al., 2009), because the development of a system of female education expanded opportunities for women to participate in social production, contributed to the growth of self-awareness and created the conditions for their involvement in various spheres of society. If in the period we study as a whole in the country, the status of a "female profession"

is gradually consolidated for teacher work, in Dagestan, the majority of schools are reserved for male teachers, especially due to the expanding school network in rural areas.

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