

**SCTMG 2020****International Scientific Conference «Social and Cultural Transformations in the  
Context of Modern Globalism»****POLITICAL ADAPTATION OF THE CPSU IN THE  
PERESTROIKA CONTEXT (THE KABARDINO-BALKARIAN  
ORGANIZATION)**

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***Abstract***

The article analyzes issues related to the political adaptation of the Kabardino-Balkarian organization of the CPSU in the new socio-political realities. It shows how and why the party, which proclaimed a course towards the renewal of all aspects of society, suffered a political fiasco, and its activities were first suspended and subsequently banned. Despite this, the political line of the CPSU continues to live today, manifesting itself clearly in the styles, methods, and technologies of the work of modern Russian authorities. The study's relevance is due to the need to analyze the crisis processes within the Kabardino-Balkarian organization of the CPSU against the background of the political system transformation and the formation of a multi-party system. The work revealed why decentralization processes began to take place inside the party. The party is a single organism. In order to maintain party unity, the Kabardino-Balkarian organization of the CPSU took measures to reform the political structure. The CPSU party acted as the organizer of new personnel policy, improved the styles and methods of party work. However, these steps could not save the party from open competition between members of the CPSU and ideological and political demarcation. Changes in the structure, size, and authority of party organizations created the basis for party functionaries to distance themselves from the party. Party functionaries went to work in government bodies, maintaining their high political and social status. The party once again attempted to adapt to the new situation on terms favorable to itself.

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**Keywords:** Kabardino-Balkarian organization of the CPSU, crisis, political adaptation, perestroika.



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## **1. Introduction**

One of the critical areas of study of the activities of the CPSU party is to study its role and place during the period of cardinal socio-political and economic transformations. The main question is how and why the party suffered a political fiasco even though it proclaimed a course towards the renewal of society. Party activity was first suspended and subsequently banned. However, the political line of the CPSU continues to live today, clearly manifesting itself in the styles, methods, and technologies of the Russian authorities. Changes in the political system led to the formation of a multi-party system, changes in its institutional forms, and the political behavior of its leaders and rank-and-file members. An important direction of scientific research is the analysis of the political adaptation strategy of the Kabardino-Balkarian organization of the CPSU to the transformation of the political system.

## **2. Problem Statement**

Until the mid-80s XX century, the CPSU did not experience problems in either the ideological or the institutional sphere. The CPSU Party was an organization that determined the main directions of development of the Soviet state, formed the principles of political, economic, and social development. However, since 1985, the Russian state development course is economic liberalization and political democratization. At this time, the situation in the CPSU was complicated. This course came into conflict with the ideological and institutional model of the party, which in 1991 led to the liquidation of its political monopoly position in society.

## **3. Research Questions**

The subject of the study is the crisis adaptation of the Kabardino-Balkarian organization of the CPSU in the new socio-political realities.

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

Analysis of crisis processes within the Kabardino-Balkarian organization of the CPSU in the context of perestroika processes, activated by the Secretary-General of the CPSU Central Committee M.S. Gorbachev.

## **5. Research Methods**

The primary sources of research were archival materials collected at the Center for Documentation of the Recent History of the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic, published documents of personal origin, and the media.

Nevertheless, the history of the Kabardino-Balkarian party organization in the period from 1985 to 1991 still has not received proper scientific reflection in the regional humanitarian science. No special publications on this topic have been identified. At the same time, there are works by Russian researchers that analyze the political adaptation of the CPSU to the challenges of perestroika and study the qualitative

and quantitative changes in the life of the ruling party. This work: Barsenkov (2001), Kotlyarov (2013), Velichko (2004), Selev (2015), Bekhterev (2011), Volgin (2000) and other researchers.

A particular group of sources is the work of those who was a direct witness to the CPSU collapse in the center and Kabardino-Balkaria. These are the works of Onikov (1996), Osadchy (1997), Rudinsky (1999), Kokov (2001), Dokshokov (2015), Zumakulov (2017), and other figures.

Various aspects of the ethnopolitical situation in Kabardino-Balkaria in the period from 1985 to 1991 were considered in the works of regional researchers: Tetuev (2018), Akkieva (2001), Shorova et al. (2017), Gugova (2005) and other researchers.

## 6. Findings

On March 11, 1985, an extraordinary plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee was held, at which M.S. Gorbachev. He immediately embarked on a transformation of society. At the April Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU 1985, he voiced the idea of accelerating the socio-economic development of the country. The new course involved the modernization of the economy, which includes structural and organizational changes in social, economic, and ideological mechanisms. Solutions to significant economic and social problems were proposed. Besides, a party ranks renewal was undertaken, and their responsibility and discipline were increased in the new conditions.

The regional party nomenclature quickly "got involved" in political reforms. At the VII Plenum of the Kabardino-Balkarian Regional Committee of the CPSU on March 30, 1985, the question of personnel changes was raised, which included the formation of the qualitative composition of party cadres. The emphasis was on the humanities, in particular, the party-political profile. It was they who could accumulate in themselves the problems of government, ideology, and morality. There was a difference between humanities and party workers who have technical and economic education and are engaged in economic and economic activities. And by April 1985, among the workers included in the nomenclature of the regional party committee, 94.3 % had a higher education, including 14 % – party-political (UCDNI AC CBD) The task of "rejuvenating" the party ranks was also set. The result was that every fourth nomenclature worker was under 40 years old.

After the 27th CPSU Congress, which was held from February 25 to March 6, 1986, the tasks were set to accelerate the country's socio-economic development. At the same time, a course was taken to restructure the style and methods of internal party work.

Improving the style and methods of party work was to reduce document flow and decision making. Advances in this direction were immediately apparent. Almost three times reduced the number of meetings of the party-economic asset. The number of meetings of the bureau and the secretariat decreased by 1/3, i.e., they were held 22 and 11, respectively. Six hundred seventy-two resolutions were adopted, including 488 on the approval and dismissal of personnel (for example, in 1985 – 703 and 462). The number of official documents was significantly reduced in 1986, which is 20 % less than in 1985. The number of documents sent to the party committees of the republic and received from them in the regional committee of the CPSU decreased by almost two times.

Since 1987, the political course has been directed towards democratization. The Kabardino-Balkarian regional party committee was worried that people, completely unprepared, casual,

opportunistic, penetrated its ranks. Moreover, this was the fault of the primary party organizations. They did not exercise effective control over decisions taken regarding the personnel reserve. Often, issues related to the selection and movement of personnel were resolved, bypassing the primary party organizations (UCDNI AC CBD). The practice of questionnaire selection was still actively used. There were no open additional communication channels with labor collectives, and public organizations, the level of criticism was minimal (UCDNI AC CBD).

Moreover, to improve the personnel selection system, the regional party committee instructed the party committees to work out many measures. These measures related to the procedure and procedure for approving the nomenclature of personnel in positions based on wide publicity, taking into account the views of labor collectives, parties, and public organizations. It was decided to introduce the election of senior employees in labor collectives based on competitive selection. As an experiment, it was proposed to practice the filling of individual vacant positions in the nomenclature of district and city party committees by open vote. However, some local party organizations were in no hurry to implement this mechanism. So, in May, Prokhladnensky and Zolsky district party committees, in 1987, 63 responsible party workers were replaced. However, only 20 of them were nominated by competitive selection (UCDNI AC CBD).

There is no reason to talk about any renewal of the composition of the regional committee, city committees, or district party committees. Most of the update was due to the rank and file. Of the 57 workers and ordinary collective farmers who are part of the regional party committee, 37, or 2/3, have been replaced. At the same time, the total turnover of the regional committee was 20% lower (UDCNI AS KBR). This state of affairs can be explained by the fact that elected bodies automatically elected people holding leadership positions in the party bodies.

The political adaptation of the Kabardino-Balkarian organization of the CPSU was slow and ineffective. The inertia of thinking, commitment to specific patterns, knurled patterns made itself felt. At the same time, ordinary Communists took with great enthusiasm the political measures that were adopted by the party leadership of the KBASSR.

The year 1988 is characterized by dramatic changes in the political life of the Soviet state. At the XIX All-Union Party Conference, it was decided to vest the Soviets with the entirety of legislative, managerial, and control power. The CPSU was given the role of the ideological avant-garde with a significant reduction in the administrative-command methods of work. Gradually, society began to realize that the party was losing its former power, and its role in the political system was falling.

Political reform against the backdrop of the worsening socio-economic situation required the Kabardino-Balkarian organization of the CPSU to take specific steps to change the practice of party work. Firstly, the need to differentiate functions between the party apparatus and state-economic bodies in order to overcome parallelism and duplication in their work. Secondly, a radical reorganization of the structure of the party, the reduction of its number, and privileges. These steps had two refraction vectors. The first vector is the strengthening of important sectors of state, economic, and social activity, as well as of lower party links. The second vector is the strengthening of the importance of the Soviets of people's deputies and bodies of social control, taking into account their new role in the political system.

In 1989, the party leadership of the republic was placed under challenging conditions. The fact is that the Central Committee of the party demanded that the party nomenclature take steps to solve the even more developed socio-economic situation in the country. Moreover, in these conditions, the party elite tried to maintain its position. Special commissions have been formed that report to the plenum of the regional party committee. The activity of these commissions was mainly aimed at implementing national economic plans and improving the socio-economic situation in the republic (UCDNI AC CBD). Besides, local councils had inadequate staffing and logistical support. At the same time, they made it possible for the party nomenclature to retain the previous administrative methods of work. In this regard, it became apparent that the success of political reforms depended on increasing and strengthening the role of state bodies.

In 1989, elections were held for people's deputies of the USSR and local councils; in 1990, elections for deputies of the RSFSR and amendment of article 6 of the Constitution of the USSR were held. All these events showed that the authority of the councils began to grow sharply, and the role of party committees fell. The uniqueness of the selected companies was that, on the one hand, an alternative mechanism was used; on the other hand, most of the people elected were members of the CPSU. This fact testified to the fact that the republican (as well as the union) party nomenclature tried to adapt to the new political reality. At the same time, the party nomenclature did everything in its power to get into the bodies of state power so as not to lose its position. The struggle to maintain a high status was the channel of political adaptation of the party nomenclature (Kotlyarov, 2013).

The decline in the vanguard role of the CPSU in society in 1990 was a consequence of the general democratization of the political system and internal party conflicts. During this period, the Kabardino-Balkarian organization of the CPSU experienced a severe institutional crisis. This crisis led to a dysfunction of the party management system. The nomenclature of the regional committee of the CPSU, city committees and district committees of the party of the KRSR, was reduced. The October and Lenin city party committees were liquidated. The Nalchik city party organization was reorganized. The Republican Committee of the CPSU tried to rectify the situation by announcing that it was necessary to provide more independence to the primary party organizations. The suggestion was made that the primary party organizations would secure the right to develop and submit for consideration by the district party and city party committees their versions of resolutions and decisions on fundamental issues (UCDNI AC CBD). Besides, the practice of making decisions by the regional party committee was almost eliminated, containing direct instructions to the Soviets and their structural divisions.

In June 1990, under pressure from below, the idea of creating the Communist Party of the RSFSR arose. She positioned herself as an alternative political force of the CPSU, although it was part of its structure. The Kabardino-Balkarian Republican Committee of the CPSU expressed doubt about plans to create a communist party of the RSFSR. On the one hand, the Communist Party of the RSFSR could become a kind of pivot, allowing one to "strengthen the organizational and ideological unity of the CPSU." On the other hand, the Communist Party of the RSFSR could become a mechanism for opposing itself to "other parts of the CPSU." Moreover, such a step could lead to the formation of "dual power in the party, to the dictatorship of the RCP" (UCDNI AC CBD).

Under the current conditions, the Republican Committee, city committees, district committees, and the primary Party organizations of the KBSR could hardly take measures to strengthen party ranks, control party discipline, and restrain the outflow of communists.

1991 is characterized by a rapid deterioration in the political and legal situation of the CPSU. For a radical restructuring of party work, the Regulation on Standing Commissions under the Republican Committee of the Communist Party was adopted. The critical tasks of these commissions were to increase the role of primary party organizations, to strengthen the unity of the party ranks, to find common interests and to develop cooperation with national public organizations (UCDNI AC CBD). However, these mechanisms were ineffective.

On June 12, the Congress of People's Deputies decided to call for the election of the President of the RSFSR. At the next Plenum of the Kabardino-Balkarian Republican Committee of the Communist Party of the RSFSR, the candidacy of N.I. Ryzhkova. Nevertheless, the election results showed that in the republic N.I. Ryzhkov scored a little more than 15 %, and B.N. Yeltsin – 63.9 %.

Furthermore, only in the May and Prokhladnensky areas, B.N. Yeltsin did not get the majority of votes (UCDNI AC CBD). It was evident that the public attitude towards the CPSU was unfavorable for the victory in the election of a candidate supported by the Communists. These moods were, among other things, the result of the vigorous activity of the national public organizations "Adyghe Khabze," "Tere" and the Democratic Party of the KBSR, which in this election campaign acted as a single bloc.

Moreover, in these conditions, counteract the policy of B.N. Yeltsin effectively, the Communist Party could no longer. On June 20, 1991, the Decree of the President of the RSFSR "On the Cessation of Organizational Structures, Political Parties, and Mass Public Movements in State Bodies, Institutions and Organizations of the Russian Federation" was adopted. The Kabardino-Balkarian Republican Committee of the Communist Party of the RSFSR openly expressed its attitude to the Decree. This step was regarded as a direct violation of democratic human rights and freedoms. Besides, it was adopted without taking into account the opinions of the republics that are members of the RSFSR, which was a violation of sovereignty (UCDNI AC CBD).

However, the atmosphere that prevailed in the party organizations of the republic, despite the massive pressure from the opposition and huge losses, was generally favorable. Most Communists did not panic and were determined to consolidate forces capable of preserving the CPSU. This atmosphere explains the fact that in August 1991, for the majority of leading party workers and ordinary members of the CPSU, the creation of the State Emergency Committee was a complete surprise (Zumakulov, 2017). Furthermore, the Decree of B.N. that followed on August 23 Yeltsin on the suspension of the CPSU in the country, the Communists of the republic took calmly.

## **7. Conclusion**

Thus, the situation that developed in the party organizations of the republic was a logical result of the general course of democratization that the country took back in 1985. However, in the situation of political and economic chaos that developed later, destructive processes also affected the CPSU itself. She ceased to be a single organism. Decentralization processes began to take place inside it, manifested in

open competition between members of the CPSU, ideological and political demarcation, and the loss of political monopoly.

Changes in the structure, size, and authority of party organizations created the basis for party functionaries to distance themselves from the party and go to work in government bodies. Most party leaders received mandates in the election of deputies. Be that as it may, the republican party nomenclature and in the conditions of a transforming society was at the helm and retained its high political and social status. Once again, she attempted to adapt to the new situation on terms favorable to herself. Her political culture continues to dominate society and extends to the methods of political governance in modern Russia.

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