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## EDUCATION REFORM IN AZERBAIJAN DURING THE TSARIST PERIOD: A PARADIGM OF PRIORITIES

### REFORMA DE LA EDUCACIÓN EN AZERBAYÁN DURANTE EL PERÍODO ZARISTA: UN PARADIGMA DE PRIORIDADES

Bayramov Hasan Bayram Oglu<sup>1</sup>

E-mail: [bayramov.hasan@mail.ru](mailto:bayramov.hasan@mail.ru)

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2415-0284>

<sup>1</sup> Baku State University. Azerbaijan.

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#### ABSTRACT

The objective of this article is to analyze the educational reforms in the territory of the Caucasus during the Tsarist rule. The research has a qualitative nature and the analysis of historical documents was used as the main research method. It was found that in general there were disparities in the development of the territories as well as in the acceptance by local residents regarding the Russian forms. In general, the Armenian ethnic group accepted the Russification quite quickly, however in the Muslim towns this process was more complicated. Unquestionably, the educational reforms promoted the development of the territory, which is demonstrated by the number of secular schools and gymnasiums created, which was enhanced in this new educational context. However, as education is more than learning forms and methods for solving problems, the Russification process eventually intensified the contradictions between a pro-Russian elite and a movement defending national identity.

#### Keywords:

Education in the Caucasus, educational reform, national identity.

#### RESUMEN

El objetivo de este artículo es analizar las reformas educacionales en el territorio del Cáucaso durante el dominio zarista. La investigación tiene una naturaleza cualitativa y como principal método de investigación se utilizó el análisis de documentos históricos. Se encontró que de manera general existieron disparidades en el desarrollo de los territorios así como en la aceptación por parte de los residentes locales respecto a las formas rusas. De manera general la etnia armenia aceptó la rusificación de manera bastante rápida sin embargo en los pueblos musulmanes este proceso fue más complicado. Indiscutiblemente, las reformas educacionales potenciaron el desarrollo del territorio lo que se demuestra con la cantidad de escuelas seculares y gimnasios creados, lo que fue potenciado en este nuevo contexto educativo. Sin embargo, como la educación es más que el aprendizaje de formas y métodos para la resolución de problemas el proceso de rusificación eventualmente intensificó las contradicciones entre una élite pro-rusa y un movimiento defensor de la identidad nacional.

#### Palabras clave:

Educación en el Cáucaso, reforma educativa, identidad nacional.

## INTRODUCTION

Education, refers to the *“process by which children, young people, and adults are initiated into forms of understanding, modes of action, and ways of relating to one another and the world that foster (respectively) individual and collective self-expression, individual and collective self-development, and individual and collective self-determination and that are, in these senses, oriented towards the good for each person and the good for humankind”* (Kemmis, et al., 2014, p. 26). As highlighted by Kaukko, et al. (2020), education has always been a major concern for communities around the globe, not least because of its role in the formation and transformation of societies and the human beings who comprise them.

Taking this into account, during occupation, Tsarist Russia's policy in the field of education in Northern Azerbaijan, as an integral part of the policy pursued by tsarism in the Caucasus (especially in the South Caucasus) was more severe than in other Christian regions of the Caucasus and the empire. In this sense, the secondary schools created for Muslims were at the heart of the educational policy against the Turks of Northern Azerbaijan under the name of new Russification. The main goal was to separate Northern Azerbaijan from the Eastern Islamic mentality; to implement new educational reforms based on the transformation of Arabic and Persian-language education into Russian-language education.

Azerbaijani educators, who were trying to determine the program of work to achieve fundamental changes in education, expressing their views on the main development trends and features of the new Russian-language schools in Northern Azerbaijan and the state policy pursued by Tsarist Russia in the geopolitical area, began to alert about this issue. The policy of Russification (Russification, Christianization and Colonization) did not justify itself. On the contrary, it led to the formation of a generation of great intellectuals who developed the education and culture of Azerbaijan, it served as a catalysis for progress, and led the growing liberation movement in Northern Azerbaijan in the early twentieth century, despite the control and punitive measures and bans of the administrative-police apparatus. It is impossible to comprehend the public and pedagogical thought, literature, culture and art of Northern Azerbaijan in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries without this context.

Mardanov (2008), wrote for this purpose: *“At the beginning of the XX century, when the issues related to education and teaching staff were in a critical situation, there was a need to solve them in the context of national unity.*

*Historical events have played an accelerating role in this issue”* (p. 8)

Thus, in the modern national scientific and pedagogical literature, the problem of the genesis of education in the national outlying areas of Tsarist Russia had two directions- first, Russia's «progressive» importance for «uneducated» non-Russian peoples, and second, theoretically and practically structuralization of the organizational process in national educational institutions in outlying areas which covered topical issues such as the harmonization of enlightenment ideas with national-traditional practice.

The objective of this article is to analyze the educational reforms that occurred during this period in the territory of Azerbaijan and their subsequent implications for the development of the nation's cultural life. The research has a qualitative nature and various methods were used to carry it out, among which the analysis of documents and inductive-deductive reasoning stand out.

## DEVELOPMENT

After the occupation of Azerbaijani territories by Tsarism, the traditional Muslim culture came into contact with Russian and European culture. The leading circles of the Azerbaijani society began to get acquainted with Russian and European ways of life, to learn the Russian language, and to read the Russian press.

Along with the preservation of traditional forms and content in Azerbaijani culture and especially in education, the foundation of new trends and directions was laid. In the North Caucasus, as in other regions of Russia, the mission of «enlightenment» was carried out by missionaries of the Orthodox Church. However, the priests and missionaries were followed by the army, and a little further on by the Ministry of Education to further strengthen the Romanov rule in the occupied territories.

The clergy strongly opposed the creation of an alphabet in the Russian mother tongue. Many religious figures obstructed the development of cultural ties between the Caucasian peoples and the Russian and non-Muslim peoples, and opposed the existence of close relations between them. All representatives of the previous Caucasian administration attached great practical importance to the Azerbaijani Turkish language, which played throughout the Caucasus the role of the French language in Europe. With this in mind, the head of the Georgian Civil Affairs Department, General Hoven, raised the issue of "replacing the less profitable Latin and German languages with Tatar (Azerbaijani) in Tbilissi (Asia) and the East," and his request was accepted by A.P. Yermolov.

In the context of the evolution of the South Caucasus education system, the penetration of the occupation into all spheres of public life on all parameters accelerated the networking of new types of education. Adjutant General N.M. Sipyagin, the military governor of Tbilisi (Georgia), wrote a presentation to Admiral A. S. Shishkov, the Minister of Public Education of the Russian Empire in late 1827 and early 1828, stating that it was necessary to turn the Tbilisi School of Nobility into an gymnasium and to create 16 two-class emergency schools in different parts of the South Caucasus. Schools were to be established in Tbilisi, Dusheti, Gori, Signag, Telavi, Yelizavetpol, Kazakh distance, Jalaloglu, Kutaisi, Mingrelia, Shusha, Nuha, Shamakhi, Guba, Baku and Siteli-Skaro.

According to Count I. F. Paskevich, the Governor-General of Russia for the South Caucasus, the best remedy could be the introduction of Russian-style rules and regulations in the South Caucasus provinces and the abolition of the military court in civil cases. The chief judge said: "First of all, we must try to bring the people into line with the general spirit of the Russians". In his view, "Russian rule" would be "the primary basis of public education" and "would have a decisive influence on the character of local peoples. ***He argued that military administration should be replaced by civilian administration, because "military administration education is slow and undermines the progress of education"***. (Esadze, 1907, p. 67)

On August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1829, the Russian government approved the "Regulations of the schools of the South Caucasus." This document defined the future development of the post-occupation education reform in the South Caucasus, including Northern Azerbaijan, laying the foundation for the formation of the Russian state education system. The occupying regime took into account that the South Caucasus was a "relatively young province" of the Russian Empire, which required special care in the field of education. Therefore, the empire preferred to give some character to its enlightenment campaign. However, in other cases, in matters not provided in the Statute, the South Caucasus schools were recommended to be guided by the charter adopted on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1828, for gymnasiums, emergency and parish schools (Russia. Ministry of Education, 1864a).

According to the Regulations on South Caucasus Schools, one gymnasium (in Tbilisi) and 20 emergency schools were to be established in the province. Of these, 10 schools were to be opened in Yelizavetpol (Ganja), Shusha, Nuha, Shamakhi, Nakhchivan, Ordubad, Guba, Baku, Julfa and Gazakh, as well as 2 schools in Yerevan and Jalaloglu, and finally one school in Derbent. Thus, 14 of these 20 schools were to be established in different

regions of Northern Azerbaijan. Of course, this number of schools was not enough for the country, but it was a serious initiative for the period. We think that this was due to the lack of local national staff, rather than the colonial goal of tsarism, and due to the tendency to Russify everything. In this regard it is important to highlight that graduates of two-grade South Caucasus emergency schools had the right to continue their education at the Tbilisi Gymnasium.

According to the Statute of August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1829, the South Caucasus was in a relatively good position in terms of budget provision for emergency schools. The annual budget of the Tbilisi Gymnasium, including the boarding house, was 587,000 rubles in local currency. The total budget of 20 emergency schools was 7,600 rubles a year (Evetsky, 1835). It was as a result of the perseverance of Count I. P. Paskevich, the chief judge of this province, that the salaries of teachers in the South Caucasus were increased. The purpose of this policy of Count IP Paskevich was primarily the desire of the Tsarist government to strengthen itself in the newly occupied region, where the wars had not been over, but also to attract personnel and to gain a positive image among the local population.

The head of the Romanov dynasty in that moment, Emperor Nicholas I, during his visit to the South Caucasus, including Tbilisi (Georgia) in the autumn of 1837, reiterated that schools and departments of the Ministry of Public Education, schools under the regiments and battalions of military units should be engaged in educating young people (Modzalevsky, 1880). After Baron Rosen's project was approved by the government, he instructed the heads of military units to establish schools, however, in late November 1837, Baron Rosen was relieved of his post as Commander-in-Chief of the South Caucasus and Commander of the Caucasus Corps.

Emergency schools in Russia's newly occupied South Caucasus were extremely poorly prepared. However, the population's desire for education and demand for educated people increased day by day. Therefore, the adoption of the new Regulations on the schools of the South Caucasus on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1835 gave impetus to a new stage in educational reform. However, in contrast to the Regulations of August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1829, only 11 of the 20 schools to be opened had been established by the date of the adoption of the new regulations. These were: in 1830, 4 schools (Gori, Kutaisi, Telavi, Shusha), in 1831, 4 schools were opened in Ahalsikh, Nuha, Signag, Yerevan; the other three schools were established in Baku (1832), Yelizavetpol (1833) and Dusheti (1834). The Statute of May 12, 1835 decided to improve the existing emergency schools in Northern Azerbaijan, to open emergency schools in Shamakhi, Nakhchivan, Guba and Gazakh

according to the old regulations, and to establish such a school in Lankaran instead of the Ordubad emergency school. The task of the emergency schools was to spread primary education and prepare students to continue their education in the Tbilisi gymnasium. The statute of 1835 was considered by the official ruling circles as an event aimed at high patronage of such an interesting and important region as the South Caucasus. The established Russian schools, in their opinion, were *"the last and farthest prey of Russian weapons in the east"*. (Russia. Ministry of Education, 1864b)

It should be noted that the Regulations of May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1835 clearly stated the rules of organization of training. It states that in the first two grades (grades I and II) teaching was to be conducted in the mother tongue, and in the upper grade (grade 3) it was to be translated into Russian. One of the emergency schools envisaged in Northern Azerbaijan on the basis of the Charter of 1835 was opened on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 1837 in Nakhchivan, and the other on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1838 in Shamakhi. The opening of Gazakh, Guba and Lankaran emergency schools provided for in the charter did not take place again due to some objective and subjective reasons.

A new Charter of 1848, drafted and approved by the local and central Russian authorities, which could not develop a stable education policy in this country, reaffirmed their intention to open emergency schools in the northern Azerbaijani cities of Guba and Lankaran. Many new provisions were added to this new regulation on schools in the South Caucasus. Suffice it to say that if the first Statute consisted of only 47 articles, the second had 81 articles. The rights of public school teachers in the South Caucasus were equal to those of relevant school teachers in Russia's interior provinces, however, in order to strengthen its position, Tsarism gave some privileges to teachers working in North Azerbaijan and the Caucasus. Sharia and Azerbaijani Turkish language teachers were appointed to this position mainly after passing a clerical examination at the Tbilisi Gymnasium Council. According to the law, the rights of Azerbaijani language and Sharia teachers in emergency schools were not equal to the rights of science teachers. Teachers of the Azerbaijani language and Sharia were considered second-class servants.

Over time, the number of Azerbaijanis studying in Russian schools increased. The highest percentage of them was observed in 1852 in Noah (37% - 24 people) and Shamakhi (36% - 80 people). In 1857, there were only 148 Azerbaijani students in all emergency schools of Northern Azerbaijan (Elm, 2000). Education reforms, especially in the South and North Caucasus, took place in difficult political conditions. And it is very natural that the heads of the

main departments in this region, dealing with important socio-political, administrative and management problems, did not care enough about the opening of educational institutions provided for in the Statute and the normal functioning of existing educational institutions. Other of the reasons for the poor development of school networks in this region (the South Caucasus) was the lack of a specially appointed person in charge of teaching although it is true that the management of the South Caucasus schools was entrusted to the director of the Tbilisi Gymnasium according to the regulations of 1829 and 1835 and all of them were subordinated to the Chief of the South Caucasus General Directorate.

At the end of 1844, an event took place in the life of the whole Caucasus, which played a major role in the economic and cultural development of the multinational region. By a decree dated November 27<sup>th</sup>, 1844, Count M. S. Voronsov was appointed Viceroy of the Caucasus and Commander-in-Chief of the Special Caucasus Corps. The unstable situation in the Caucasus (uprisings, unrests, riots) demanded the replacement of the policy of rude Russification with a flexible colonial policy. A count who skillfully implements such a policy in the Caucasus was M. S. Voronsov (Dneprova & Tebiev, 1985).

During the tenure of Count Voronsov (1844-1854), one of the most elite aristocratic in the Russian Empire, a number of serious measures were taken to strengthen the Tsarist government in this country. At his initiative, the Caucasus Education Circle was established, which led to a significant expansion of the school network in the country. Theaters, a library and the Qafqaz newspaper were opened in Tbilissi (Tbilisi). In this period the Caucasian successor was responsible for selecting young people who were sent by the Romanovs to study at Russian institutes and universities at the expense of the government. If earlier the opinion of those brought up in the boarding school of the Tbilisi gymnasium was taken into account, now in this point, the centralization of the education system and the direct transfer of control to the absolute authorities came to the fore. At the same time, special attention was paid to how Caucasian youth know Russian. Modzalevsky (1880), wrote that universities accepted Caucasians into their audiences only with compassion. The main reason for this was that young people did not know Russian well.

Although the administration tried to bring the level of the Tbilisi gymnasium to the level of the Imperial schools, the success was very weak. Research suggests that if graduates of Tbilisi Gymnasium had been learning Russian poorly for seven years, the situation in emergency schools would have been worse. The fact that the training was organized for three years - the use of the mother tongue in



the first two grades, and the fact that the education was in Russian in the next third grade - indicates that it was very difficult for children to learn Russian completely in three grades. A clear reason for this was that at that time the Russian-speaking environment in the country was very weak (Pashaev, 1991).

For this reason, the deputy M. S. Voronsov instructed the famous Russian Orientalist M. S. Khanikov (1822-1879) and the inspector of the South Caucasus schools I.V. Roskovshenko to prepare a project of "Muslim" schools in the South Caucasus. Janishin liked N.S. Khanikov's curriculum and considered it expedient to open schools as a pilot. On April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1847, Nicholas I approved a project to open the "Tbilisi Muslim Ali School". M.S. Voronsov saw the effectiveness of his well-thought-out policy and raised the issue of opening a school for Sunnis as soon as possible. On May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1848, Nicholas I approved the project of the "Tbilisi Muslim Omar School" and it was opened in 1849. According to the Regulations, such special schools were to operate in the South Caucasus for only two years.

The naming of schools as "Muslim schools" had a certain effect on Azerbaijanis' willingness to send their children to these schools. It was a new look at the new education reform. One after another, "Muslim" schools were organized in different cities of Azerbaijan. Despite the fact that the language of instruction was Russian, the ethnic composition of the students was Azerbaijani, that is why these schools were called Russian-Azerbaijani schools. The Azerbaijani language was taught as a subject. Such a school was first established in the South Caucasus in 1847 in Tbilisi (Georgia) and in 1849 in Northern Azerbaijan. Schools in pre-revolutionary Russia, taught in Russian and with children of the same ethnic group (except Russians), were called "Russian-local" or "Russian-foreign" schools. It is known that the "national identity" of educational institutions was determined not by the number of subjects, but by the language of instruction (Pashaev, 1991).

As a result of the sympathy of the local Muslim population for these schools, such "Muslim" schools appeared in a short time in a number of cities in Northern Azerbaijan. The first Muslim school in northern Azerbaijan was opened on April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1849 in Yelizavetpol. Noting this aspect, the Qafqaz newspaper wrote in 1849: *"Young Muslims here in a short period of time achieved commendable success in teaching Russian, Persian and Tatar (Azerbaijani Turkish)"*. (Ahmadov, 2006)

According to sources, on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1849, a Muslim (Shiite) school was opened in Shusha. The school's funding consisted mainly of donations from the local community. The curriculum included Sharia, Azerbaijani, Arabic, Persian

and Russian languages, arithmetic, geography, history, Russian jurisprudence and calligraphy (Ahmadov, 2006). It is clear from the sources that on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1849, two Muslim schools were opened in Shamakhi, one for Shiite and the other for Sunni children. Prince M. S. Voronsov and his wife attended the opening of both schools. The number of students of all nationalities in the Emergency School opened in Baku on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1849 was only 49 people but soon the newly opened Baku Muslim School attracted more students in a short period of time. One such Muslim school was opened in 1850 in Noah, the other in Lankaran and Salyan. The people of these places also made great efforts to establish a Muslim school and collected donations.

Summarizing the previous information, it can be concluded that the government's education policy in the South Caucasus, including North Azerbaijan, was unstable in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The government, which aimed to open the same school for the children of all peoples living in the country, to teach them in the same language, and thus to make Russian the language of mutual communication, was in fact a confrontation between two civilizations and two worldviews. One of them was the local worldview formed under the influence of Eastern civilization, and the other was the Russian-Eurasian worldview formed under the influence of Western civilization. The first worldview included two directions: 1) the Muslim worldview manifested in the example of Azerbaijanis; 2) The Christian worldview of the Georgians and their example.

The study of various sources proves irrefutably that Georgians and Armenians began to accept it without hesitation because the Russians, who brought elements of Western civilization to the South Caucasus, were Christians. Azerbaijanis and other Muslim peoples of the Caucasus were indifferent to this. This had a negative impact on the historical formation of a new type of national enlightenment. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the developing capitalist economy saw a growing demand for skilled workers - technicians in various industries, efficient agriculture, and the ability to drive the latest vehicles - which required to increase the number of secondary schools in Northern Azerbaijan and ultimately led to an increase in the level of education.

In order to centralize the management of the schools of the Caucasus, the deputy M. S. Voronsov decided to create an independent educational circle in the Caucasus. On December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1848, the government approved the statute and staff on "Creating an independent educational circle in the Caucasus" (Russia. Ministry of Education, 1864b). According to the Regulations, it was planned to open 35 educational institutions in the south Caucasus,

however, as of the date of approval of the Statute, only 17 educational institutions (1 gymnasium and 16 emergency schools) were operating in the South Caucasus. The course of socio-economic and moral upliftment of the nobility of the first Russian successor of the Caucasus, Prince Voronsov, lords and others - was reflected in the activities of the Caucasian educational circle. A "noble boarding house" was opened in four Caucasian gymnasia with two purposes: 1) to replace the home education of privileged children in the Caucasus; 2) to provide free education to the children of the poor of these strata and the children of Russian officials.

Sources prove that as a result of the four-year activity of the Caucasian educational district, the school network did not expand as expected. If in 1845 there were only 16 emergency schools in the South Caucasus and 2097 students were enrolled in them, in 1853 there were 20 emergency and primary schools (14 emergency and 6 primary schools). Thus, 6 emergency and primary schools were organized in 4 years. As expected, the probationary period of the school regulations in the Caucasian educational district, approved on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 1848, expired in 1852. On the basis of these principles, the project of reconstruction of the Caucasian educational part was approved on October 29<sup>th</sup>, 1853 as a 4-year trial. However, the decree of the government senate stated that *"the structure of educational institutions in the Caucasus should be organized in accordance with the existing system of public education in the Caucasus and other parts of the country by building in accordance with those in the interior provinces"* (Russia. Ministry of Education, 1864b). The tasks and program of the future Caucasian education department were defined by these words.

In contrast to the Statute of 1848, the new rules for emergency and district schools set two main goals: 1) to provide all children with access to information useful for continuing their education in gymnasiums, together with funds for moral education; 2) to help children from to become primary and special school teachers. For example, if in 1843 the number of Azerbaijani children studying in public schools was only 76, 10 years later, in 1853, the number of Azerbaijanis studying in Shamakhi district school alone reached 81. The number of Azerbaijani students continued to grow not only in Northern Azerbaijan, but in all public schools in the Caucasus (Ahmadov, 2006).

In the South Caucasus, as in a number of other regions, based on the experience gained in the 1850s, special attention was paid to the theoretical development of the problem of organizing public education, typology, form, rational management of educational institutions, identification of general goals of education and ways to achieve

this goal. All these goals, as noted by the Russian Minister of Education A.S. Norov, could be achieved not only through administrative measures, but, most importantly, "by improving the thinking of tribes and strata, in a spiritual way", with a general plan of education and management system.

The statute on the Caucasian educational district, adopted on October 29, 1853 as a test for a period of 4 years, expired in October 1857. The decentralization of education and its transfer to the local administration was "explained" by the successor of the Caucasus, Prince A. I. Baryatinski, by the vastness and multiethnic nature of the region. He considered the subordination of educational institutions to the administration in such an image as an important step in resolving disputes over the non-acceptance of educational institutions in different places. After the end of the colonial war against the peoples of the Caucasus with the victory of tsarism, Prince Baryatinsky had to leave the Caucasus. Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolayevich, son of former Tsar Nicholas I, was appointed successor to the Caucasus and he remained in this position for 20 years. The new successor was in favor of building education in this country on a solid, correct basis. With the abolition of the Statute, which existed until 1860, it was decided to resume the activities of the educational circle. Taking into account these considerations, the "Regulations on Primary Public Schools" were approved by the Ministry of Public Education on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1864.

As we have noted, after the abolition of the Caucasus educational district in 1860, the leadership of the educational part of the provinces was entrusted to the local chiefs - the regional chiefs and governors. On September 5<sup>th</sup>, 1866, the revised draft Statute of the Caucasus Education Department was sent to the Caucasus Committee under the State Council for legal approval, and on December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1867, the Statute of the Caucasus Education District was approved and re-established. In accordance with the Regulations of May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1867, the educational institutions of the Ministry of Public Education in the Caucasus were divided into 5 directorates, subject to a single inspection within the boundaries of subordination (Elm, 1990).

The Regulations provided that all emergency schools had three classes in addition to the preparatory class. Regardless of the more accurate distribution of the course, such training had to make up for the lack of funds for the grammar schools in the country. As the education budget increased the following year, the former two-grade Nakhchivan school was transformed into a three-grade school, and the Zagatala primary school into an emergency school.

It began in 1865 with the transformation of the Alexandrovsky Teachers' School in Tbilissi (Tbilisi) into a missionary training school. The director of the school, P. Zakharov, said in his address to his students that they were tasked with solving a difficult issue in Russia, such as solving the education of foreigners in practice. Called the Alexandrovsk Teachers' Institute, it began training teachers not only for rural but also for urban schools (Pashaev, 1991). During the three years following the approval of the 1865 Regulations on the Scope, changes were made in the administrative structure of the Caucasus. A new Yelizavetpol province was established in the South Caucasus and in this regard, in the interests of the Russian population, Yelizavetpol emergency school was turned into a gymnasium.

On July 30<sup>th</sup>, 1871, the government approved a new charter for gymnasiums. The Charter of 1871 changed the educational, administrative and economic structure of secondary schools. According to the new charter, principals themselves, together with teachers, must be directly involved in the education of students. The statute established a new position as a class teacher. This was the transition to the next education reform. Thus, 1873 was the year of unification of the educational work of the region in accordance with the rules in force in the internal provinces of the Empire. It is no coincidence that new principals or inspectors had been appointed to improve the quality of education in schools, new programs and guidelines had been developed, and school libraries had been strengthened. All these measures helped to improve the teaching and learning process in schools (Ahmadov, 2006).

Against the background of these events, Baku 4th grade high school became a real gymnasium. New classes and departments were opened at Shusha emergency school, which had the largest number of students among all Caucasian emergency schools. Speaking about the revival in school life, Modzalevsky (1880), wrote: *"During this period, the general revival in the country's education was so great that a delegation of deputies from Shusha, Alexandropol, Zagatala, Poti, Akhalkalak, Racha and other places came to the Caucasian deputy and sent applications demanding the opening of schools: even the peasant communities joined in this work and collected large donations for this highly useful work"* (p. 27)

Observations clearly show that in the second half of the nineteenth century, the domination of tsarism in the Caucasus was further strengthened, and in connection with this, the previous localism and exclusivity in the system of public education was gradually eliminated. Special school charters in the South Caucasus came into force in the 1870s with the approval of a number of school charters

for the Empire, including gymnasiums on July 30<sup>th</sup>, 1871, and real schools and city schools of May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1872. Thus, along with the whole Caucasus, the secular schools in Northern Azerbaijan were further adapted to the schools of the Russian Empire, and began to be governed directly by the charters within the Empire.

As a result, it became clear that with the "Rules" adopted on November 22<sup>th</sup>, 1873, the "people's" education of the Caucasus was once included in the school network within the empire.

The Rules of November 22<sup>th</sup>, 1873, provided for the establishment of a teacher's seminary in the South Caucasus to train teachers for local public schools, and finally three state rural schools in each province at the expense of the state (Modzalevsky, 1880). In our opinion, if in the early 1880s the situation was "satisfactory" in most Russian-language primary schools in the North Caucasus, the "local" schools in the South Caucasus were "in a very bad state". According to the authorities, this was due either to a "lack of understanding of their responsibilities or to the indifference of the education administration to primary education". Academician A. I. Piskunov and academician E. D. Dneprov, well-known researchers of the history of schools and pedagogical thought in nineteenth-century Russia, rightly point out that *"the struggle for the establishment of national schools and their teaching in the mother tongue is a form of national liberation movement"* (Piskunov, 1976, p. 13)

One of the main directions of the Romanov Empire's enlightenment policy in the Caucasus was to "interrupt the development of the peoples of the region in isolation" and to unite all secondary and special schools in the Caucasus, as before, instead of eight ministries. K. Yanovsky, who worked as the head of the educational circle for more than 20 years, wrote: *"Until such a union is achieved, the South Caucasus cannot be considered as Russian in the true sense of the word"* (Pashaev, 1991, p. 73). Yanovsky also established: *"If effective measures are not taken, the population will remain ignorant and the schools in the country will not be educated properly, and sometimes the population will be separated from the Russians, which will lead to the complete separation of the South Caucasus"*. (Pashaev, 1991, p. 81)

Along with all this, public schools where education is taught in Russian, played a very important role. These schools were first established in the Russian villages of the Lankaran district, Andreyevka I (1857), Astrakhanka I (1857), Nikolayevka (1860), Prishib (1860), Hilmilli (1860) and Maraza (1866) of the district of Shamakhi. years) open in the villages. These were primary schools



and were established at the expense of rural communities. According to the sources, from the 70s of the 19th century, together with the Russian villages in the north of Azerbaijan, public schools with Russian language of instruction began to appear in the villages of Azerbaijan, being a very progressive process.

Primary rural public schools were established in Goychay in 1878, in Altiagaj in 1879, and in Salyan in 1880. According to 1879, there were 640 students in 12 rural schools in northern Azerbaijan, of whom only 138 were Azerbaijanis. Azerbaijanis apparently made up about a fifth of the number of students. On the opening day in Salyan of the students who were admitted to the school for the first time, 47 were Azerbaijanis. Then when people saw the results of Russian education, they enthusiastically sent their children to those schools. For example, the admission of 3 of the first graduates of the Salyan school to the Realni School in Baku and of 2 to the Teacher's Seminary in Gori increased the prestige of the school.

It should be noted that the educational institutions that arose under the name of the city's primary school appeared in the 19th century only in the northern cities of Azerbaijan, Baku, Yelizavetpol, Guba, Ordubad and Lankaran, and most of them were from one single class. Enrollment rates have been applied in open primary schools with the help of the treasury since the 1870s, and this rate has been gradually increased (Ahmadov, 2006).

The private girls' school opened in Shamakhi in 1850 by Haji Ismayil's wife, Gullubeyim, one of the local patrons, was very popular. The late Professor Ariza Jafarzadeh, one of our famous writers and researchers, provided extensive information about her (Jafarzadeh, 1969). It was decided to open the first such school in Azerbaijan in Shamakhi as a provincial center, and the Shamakhi branch of the St. Nina Women's Charity Society was established. Such was the outcome of the school that in a short period of time it raised up to 9,000 manats from local women activists and philanthropists. One such school, operating in Yerevan at that time, was the "Holy Rimsipi" school, where several progressive women took an active part in the work of the school.

The Shamakhi girls' school, which operated for 11 years, later moved to Baku after an interruption between 1859-1861 due to the transfer of the provincial center to Baku after the famous Shamakhi earthquake on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1859. For the first time, 23 students were admitted to the "Holy Nina" girls' school in Baku, 17 of whom were self-taught. Thus, the social processes experienced by the Russian Empire influenced the education of women and, despite

various obstacles and problems, they entered a serious stage of development.

In this case, the Iravan province was ahead. Among the documents kept in the MDA of the Republic of Georgia are 7 lists and 2 obligations of the residents of the districts of Yerevan, Sharur-Daralayaz, Nakhchivan and Echmiadzin to raise funds for the benefit of the Muslim Girls' School of Tbilisi. These documents, signed by hundreds of people, give reasons to affirm that the Muslim population had a special interest in the Russian language and secular education (Ahmadov, 2006).

By the way, the Shiite and Sunni religious administrations of the Caucasus were also distinguished by their progressive position on this issue. An article in the Qafqaz newspaper promised that both clergymen would provide material and moral support for the opening of the girls' school.

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the education of women was one of the main areas of struggle for national enlightenment. The backers fought hard in this area, along with the intellectuals who saw that the government had no intention of providing financial support at the time. Especially noteworthy is the services of the famous philanthropist-millionaire Haji Zeynalabdin Tagiyev in this field. On April 24<sup>th</sup>, 1896, he appealed to the Caucasus Education District to officially open a Russian-Azerbaijani girls' school in Baku. Although the department responded to Haji's request only in 1897 and allowed it to be opened in 1898 not as a gymnasium, but as an elementary school. The school opened only on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1901, with the solemn participation of the city community. Later in Tbilissi, Yerevan, Nakhchivan and others.

Therefore, the education of women not only entered a new stage in the future, and the formation of a very active group of national enlightened pleiades gained official momentum. Academician Huseyn Ahmadov writes about the involvement of girls in rural schools in various accidents: *"Towards the end of the century, girls studied with boys in rural schools. The girls also participated in Vartashen and Garabulag schools in Nukha district and in schools in Gargabazar village in Jabrayil district. In 1898, 16 of the 60 students at the Garabulag village school were girls. A parallel department for girls was opened at Guba's two-grade primary school. The girls also participated in the Sabunchu and Balakhani schools. In 1896, an independent single-class girls' school was established at Sabunchu."* (Ahmadov, 2006, p. 372)

Later in Tbilissi, Yerevan, Nakhchivan and others, with the opening of schools for Muslim girls in some places, women's education became more interconnected. Thus, the education of women not only entered a new stage, but



also gained momentum with the formation of a very active group of national educators. This gave impetus to the formation of a pro-Russian ethnic elite with the formation of a Russian-speaking intelligentsia. But despite all efforts, the enlightened Russian-speaking elite later became the victim of the struggle for national identity.

Thus, a new type of “educational reform” was advancing in the following ways: first, through efforts to teach secular science; second, by initiating the establishment of new schools; and thirdly, by promoting and training a Russian and European educational environment in Azerbaijan, with the opportunity to increase the level of preparation of mother tongue programs and relevant teaching materials.

## CONCLUSIONS

Educational reforms in Azerbaijan during the Tsarist rule were characterized by the Russification of education promoting both the forms of teaching and the language. The different reforms had a different impact on the various regions of the Caucasus, even differently on ethnic groups. In general, the Armenians accepted Russification more quickly given the religious similarities, but in the case of Muslim peoples the process was more complicated. Similarly, there is evidence of a disparity between the northern and southern regions of Azerbaijan.

Unquestionably, the educational reforms were a significant boost to the education of local inhabitants, including girls, which was quite progressive for the time. This increase in education subsequently created a fragmentation in society between the pro-Russians and their detractors although, regardless of this, the factors of national identity were duly preserved.

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