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The System of Public Education in Elisabethpol Governorate in the Period 1868–1917. Part 2

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Abstract

This work explores the system of public education in Elisabethpol Governorate in the period 1868–1917. The present part of the work examines the timeframe from 1885 to 1900.

A key source used in putting this work together is a set of reports from the Trustee of the Caucasus Educational District for the period 1884–1914. These reports provide a valuable statistical insight into the development of the system of public education in Elisabethpol Governorate in the prerevolutionary period. They contain data such as the number of educational institutions in the region, their library holdings, and the size and ethnic composition of the student body at them.

The authors' conclusion is that by 1900 the process of building a network of educational institutions in Elisabethpol Governorate had been effectively completed. The governorate had educational institutions of all levels (secondary, lower, and primary), with both boys and girls having access to all this education. Despite relatively minor growth in the numbers of secondary and lower educational institutions in the region, there was a sharp increase in library stock in these sectors. The period 1885–1900 was a time marked by brisk development in the region's primary education sector, witnessing a threefold increase in the number of primary schools and a fivefold increase in the number of students attending primary school in the region. With that said, the period witnessed not only growth in the number of primary schools in the region but growth in per school enrollment in this sector as well. In terms of ethnic composition, the way was led by

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Armenians (66 % of the total student body), followed by Tatars (19%), and then ethnic Russians (7.1 %).

Keywords: Elisabethpol Governorate, Caucasus Educational District, period 1868–1917, history of pedagogy.

1. Introduction

Elisabethpol Governorate was formed on February 19, 1868, from several uyezds in the Tiflis and Baku governorates. Its capital was Elisabethpol. By 1884, despite the availability in the region of all three major education levels (secondary, lower, and primary) girls could access only the primary level. The region's student body had a motley ethnic composition: Armenians (57 %), Tatars (23 %), Europeans (13.8 %), and ethnic Russians (less than 5 %) (Magsumov et al., 2021: 1046). This part of the work is focused on the timeframe 1885–1900.

2. Materials and methods

A key source used in putting this work together is a set of reports from the Trustee of the Caucasus Educational District for the period 1884–1914. These reports provide a valuable statistical insight into the development of the system of public education in Elisabethpol Governorate in the prerevolutionary period. They contain data such as the number of educational institutions in the region, their library holdings, and the size and ethnic composition of the student body at them.

The use of analysis, summarization, the chronological method, and the statistical method helped gain a comprehensive insight into the development of public education in Elisabethpol Governorate in the period 1885–1900. More specifically, it helped summarize and systematize the available material on the region's educational institutions and student body. An insight was also gained into the region's academic library holdings.

3. Discussion

In the present part, it is worth focusing on the historiography related to the development of the system of public education in the Caucasus in the period 1885–1900. A valuable insight into the organization of the educational process in the Caucasus in the late 19th century can be gained from existing research on public education in the following regions: Kars Oblast (Magsumov et al., 2020), Tiflis Governorate (Mamadaliyev et al., 2020; Mamadaliyev et al., 2020a), Kuban Oblast (Molchanova et al., 2019), and Stavropol Governorate (Natolochnaya et al., 2020). Some research has also been conducted on private education in the Russian Empire-era Caucasus, with the period 1885–1900 explored as well (Taran et al., 2021).

Among the areas in other parts of the Russian Empire whose public education system of said period has been researched in depth most notably are the Kharkov Educational District (Degtyarev, Polyakova, 2020) and Vologda Governorate (Cherkasov et al., 2019; Cherkasov et al., 2019a).

4. Results

As across the Russian Empire as a whole, the network of educational institutions in the Caucasus was divided into the systems of secondary, lower, and primary education.

Secondary education

The first male progymnasium in Elisabethpol Governorate was established in 1870 as a result of the reorganization of Elisabethpol Uyezd School. On March 31, 1881, it was reorganized into Elisabethpol Male Gymnasium (Otchet, 1885: tables), which became the region's first secondary educational institution. On September 20, 1881, the city of Shusha became home to a real school. Essentially, these two male schools represented the region's entire secondary education sector by 1885. This state of affairs (the absence of female educational institutions) persisted in the region up until the late 19th century. On April 2, 1899, Elisabethpol became home to the region's first female secondary educational institution – Elisabethpol Female Progymnasium (Otchet, 1900: 166).

Table 1 displays the numbers of secondary educational institutions and students at them in Elisabethpol Governorate at the time.

Table 1. Numbers of Secondary Educational Institutions and Students at Them in Elisabethpol Governorate in the Period 1885–1900 (Otchet, 1886: applications; Otchet, 1887: 4, applications, 106; Otchet, 1890: № 1, 28, 51, 77; Otchet, 1891: № 1, 28, 51, 77; Otchet, 1892: № 1, 25, 51, 77; Otchet, 1894: № 1, 25, 51, 77, 106, 127; Otchet, 1895: № 1, 25, 51, 77, 106, 127; Otchet, 1896: 1, 28, 51, 77; Otchet, 1897: 6, 54, 109, 135; Otchet, 1899: 6, 60, 109, 135; Otchet, 1900: 6, 54, 109, 138, 166, 208; Otchet, 1901: 6, 54, 109, 135, 166, 208)

Year	Gymnasiums		Progymnasiums		Real schools	Total	Number of students		
	Male	Female	Male	Female			Boys	Girls	Total
1886	1	-	-	-	1	2	492	-	492
1889	1	-	-	-	1	2	486	-	486
1890	1	-	-	-	1	2	464	-	464
1891	1	-	-	-	1	2	466	-	466
1892	1	-	-	-	1	2	472	-	472
1893	1	-	-	-	1	2	480	-	480
1894	1	-	-	-	1	2	500	-	500
1895	1	-	-	-	1	2	521	-	521
1896	1	-	-	-	1	2	453	-	453
1898	1	-	-	-	1	2	653	-	653
1899	1	-	-	1	1	3	699	182	881
1900	1	-	-	1	1	3	694	232	926

As evidenced in [Table 1](#), the region's male secondary education sector did not have a large student body virtually throughout the period under review, with interest in secondary education starting to increase only in 1898, when the number of students there began to grow. A key achievement in the area of secondary education in the region at the time was the opening of its first female progymnasium, i.e. its first female secondary educational institution. Despite slow growth in the number of secondary educational institutions in the governorate, by 1900 secondary education was accessible there to both genders.

In terms of academic library holdings, in 1885 the two secondary educational institutions in Elisabethpol Governorate had a combined library stock of 8,537 items ([Otchet, 1886: applications](#)).

By 1900, Elisabethpol Male Gymnasium had a library stock of 19,761 items, Shusha Real School – 6,651 items, and Elisabethpol Female Progymnasium – 628 items ([Otchet, 1901: 111, 171](#)). Thus, the three secondary schools had a combined library stock of 27,030 items, an increase of 3.1 times.

Lower education

The first lower educational institution in Elisabethpol Governorate, Shusha Urban School, was opened on June 1, 1875. Subsequently, the region became home to lower schools in Nukha and Elisabethpol. Up until 1894, the region's system of lower education remained unchanged. On July 1, Shusha became home to a Mariinsky female school ([Otchet, 1895: № 287](#)). This school was the region's first lower educational institution for girls.

[Table 2](#) displays the numbers of lower educational institutions and students at them in the region at the time.

Table 2. Numbers of Lower Educational Institutions and Students at Them in Elisabethpol Governorate in the Period 1885–1900 (Otchet, 1886: applications; Otchet, 1887: 198, 218, 232, 254; Otchet, 1890: № 185, 200, 241, 256; Otchet, 1891: № 184, 202, 240, 258; Otchet, 1892: № 184, 199, 240, 258; Otchet, 1893: № 184, 199, 240, 258; Otchet, 1894: № 184, 199, 240, 258; Otchet, 1895: № 184, 199, 240, 258, 284, 300; Otchet, 1896: 184, 197, 258, 287, 300; Otchet, 1897: 295, 321, 381, 394, 426, 456; Otchet, 1899: 295, 323, 381, 394, 406, 436; Otchet, 1900: 296, 350, 431, 444, 456, 486; Otchet, 1901: 296, 350, 431, 456, 486)

Year	Urban schools	Tradesman's specialized schools	Mariinsky female schools	Tradesman's schools	Total	Number of students		
						Boys	Girls	Total
1885	3	1	-	-	4	804	-	804
1886	3	1	-	-	4	726	-	726
1889	3	1	-	-	4	661	-	661
1890	3	1	-	-	4	727	-	727
1891	3	1	-	-	4	754	-	754
1892	3	1	-	-	4	668	-	668
1893	3	1	-	-	4	640	-	640
1894	3	1	1	-	5	682	120	802
1895	3	1	1	-	5	673	120	793
1896	3	1	1	-	5	688	156	844
1898	3	1	1	-	5	810	260	1,070
1899	3	1	1	-	5	975	286	1,261
1900	3	1	1	-	5	1,242	260	1,502

While the number of urban schools in the region remained unchanged throughout the period under review, in 1899 Elisabethpol Urban School began to be overfilled. Specifically, whereas in 1899 it was attended by 450 students, in 1900 the figure was now 638. It is obvious there was a surge in interest in lower education in the capital.

Similar to the situation in the secondary education sector, the number of lower educational institutions in the region rose insignificantly – from 4 to 5. However, of importance were the establishment of the region's first educational institution for girls and sharp growth in demand for lower education in the governorate. In the period under review, the number of students at lower educational institutions in the region increased nearly twofold – from 804 to 1,502.

In terms of academic library holdings, in 1885 the region's lower primary schools had a combined library stock of 4,741 items, with 4,539 of these being in its urban schools and 202 being in Elisabethpol Tradesman's School (Otchet, 1886: applications).

In 1900, the three urban schools had a combined library stock of 10,449 items, Shusha Mariinsky Female School had a library stock of 1,618 items, and Elisabethpol Tradesman's Specialized School had a library stock of 2,653 items (Otchet, 1901: 301, 432, 459). This brings it to a total of 14,720 items, an increase of 3.1 times.

Primary education

In 1885, the region had 33 primary educational institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Public Education (Otchet, 1886: applications). As at 1895, their largest number was 39. The situation began to change drastically only in 1896.

Table 3 displays the numbers of educational institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Public Education and students at them in the region at the time.

Table 3. Numbers of Primary Schools under the Purview of the Ministry of Public Education and Students at Them in Elisabethpol Governorate in the Period 1885–1900 (Otchet, 1886: applications; Otchet, 1887: 272, 296; Otchet, 1890: № 296, 311; Otchet, 1891: № 315, 330; Otchet, 1892: № 317, 333; Otchet, 1894: № 318, 333; Otchet, 1895: № 318, 333; Otchet, 1896: 318, 333; Otchet, 1897: 506, 536; Otchet, 1899: 486, 516; Otchet, 1900: 536, 566; Otchet, 1901: 536, 566)

Year	Number of schools	Number of students		
		Boys	Girls	Total
1885	33	915	247	1,162
1886	35	1,197	303	1,500
1888	35	1,419	324	1,748
1889	32	1,534	207	1,741
1890	36	1,793	257	2,050
1891	36	1,833	221	2,054
1892	38	1,854	257	2,111
1893	38	1,870	271	2,141
1894	39	1,827	291	2,118
1895	39	1,941	322	2,263
1896	41	2,406	336	2,742
1897	47	2,819	324	3,148
1898	61	3,373	436	3,809
1899	82	4,761	892	5,653
1900	91	5,152	1,152	6,303

As evidenced in Table 3, the number of primary educational institutions in the region increased nearly 3 times (from 33 to 91 schools). The number of students at them rose 5.4 times, with the number of boys at them growing 5.6 times and the number of girls increasing 4.6 times. Concurrently, there was growth in per school enrollment as well. Whereas in 1885 the figure was 35.2 students per school, in 1900 it was now 69.2. In other words, per school enrollment in the region's primary education sector had increased nearly twofold, a testimony to the growing demand in the region for primary education too.

Private educational institutions

The private education sector in the Caucasus Educational District, which Elisabethpol Governorate was part of, was characterized by instability and a tendency to respond to changes in demand, with the figure fluctuating significantly – in a range between 9 and 15. In the period under review, the region's private education system was represented by lower and primary schools. Table 4 displays the numbers of private educational institutions and students at them in the region at the time.

Table 4. Numbers of Private Educational Institutions and Students at Them in Elisabethpol Governorate in the Period 1885–1900 (Otchet, 1886: applications; Otchet, 1887: 305, 307; Otchet, 1890: № 288; Otchet, 1891: № 307, 311; Otchet, 1892: № 310, 314; Otchet, 1894: № 310, 314; Otchet, 1895: № 310, 314; Otchet, 1896: 310, 314; Otchet, 1897: 488, 496; Otchet, 1899: 468, 476; Otchet, 1900: 518, 526; Otchet, 1901: 518, 526)

Year	Number of schools				Number of students		
	Secondary	Lower	Primary	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1885	-	-	14 ¹	14	521	62	583
1886	-	-	12	12	488	30	518
1889	-	2 ²	11	13	426	151	577
1890	-	2	12	14	502	130	632

¹ Of the 14 private schools, 12 were male, 1 was female, and 1 was mixed.

² Both of the lower educational institutions were female.

1891	-	2	10	12	528	151	679
1892	-	2	8	10	482	157	639
1893	-	2	8	10	463	168	631
1894	-	2 ¹	8	10	495	81	576
1895	-	1	8	9 ²	456	95	551
1896	-	1 ³	14	15	688	200	888
1898	-	1	13	14	741	377	1,118
1899	-	-	10	10	523	237	760
1900	-	-	9	9	373	221	594

Private lower educational institutions played a very important social role in the region – they provided education to girls. In the period from 1889 to 1898, when there still were private lower schools in the region, there was just one private lower male school there (in 1894; it closed down that same year due to tough competition). Whereas there were no private lower schools in the region prior to the above period simply because they did not exist yet, subsequent to it none were simply left there. The latter was due to the opening of two female state schools there – the female progymnasium in Elisabethpol and the Mariinsky female school in Shusha. With demand for female education in these cities met, the private lower schools had to close down. As regards the region’s private primary schools, by the late 19th century their number declined too – due to the opening of a large number of state primary schools there.

The size of the student body in the region’s private education sector remained virtually unchanged at the time – 594 students in 1900 versus 583 students in 1885. In terms of gender composition, whereas in 1885 girls accounted just for 10.6 % of the total student body, in 1900 the figure was now 37.4 %.

Table 5 displays the data on the ethnic composition of the region’s student body as at 1900.

Table 5. Ethnic Composition of the Student Body in Elisabethpol Governorate as at 1900 (Otchet, 1901)

School	Ethnic Russians	Georgians	Armenians	Tatars	Mountaineers	Jews	Other
Secondary education							
Male gymnasium	73	36	156	47	-	15	18
Real school	18	5	316	63	-	-	4
Female progymnasium	45	14	143	1	-	2	8
Total	136	55	615	111	-	17	30
Lower education							
Elisabethpol Urban School	25	6	527	78	1	-	3
Shusha Urban School	3	-	173	44	-	-	-
Nukha Urban School	5	2	159	51	-	-	-
Mariinsky female school	14	1	285	5	-	-	-
Tradesman’s specialized school	5	9	55	51	-	-	3
Total	52	18	1,199	229	1	-	6

¹ Starting in 1894, the governorate had 1 male and 1 female lower educational institutions.

² Starting in 1895, the governorate had 1 female lower and 8 male primary educational institutions.

³ Starting in 1896, the governorate had 1 female lower educational institution.

Private education							
Private school	7	2	560	25	-	-	-
Primary education							
Primary school	472	16	3,789	1,407	58	5	556
Total	667	91	6,163	1,772	59	22	592
Combined total	9,366						

As evidenced in Table 5, compared with 1885, the share of Armenians in the region's educational institutions increased in 1900 from 57 % to 66 %. Tatars, just as before, were ranked second in this period, but there was a decline in their number – from 23 % to 19 %. In 1900, ethnic Russians moved to third place – 7.1 % (their number was less than 5% before). Ranked fourth were members of other ethnicities, including Europeans – 6.3 %.

5. Conclusion

By 1900, the process of building a network of educational institutions in Elisabethpol Governorate had been effectively completed. The governorate had educational institutions of all levels (secondary, lower, and primary), with both boys and girls having access to all this education. Despite relatively minor growth in the numbers of secondary and lower educational institutions in the region, there was a sharp increase in library stock in these sectors. The period 1885–1900 was a time marked by brisk development in the region's primary education sector, witnessing a threefold increase in the number of primary schools and a fivefold increase in the number of students attending primary school in the region. With that said, the period witnessed not only growth in the number of primary schools in the region but growth in per school enrollment in this sector as well. In terms of ethnic composition, the way was led by Armenians (66 % of the total student body), followed by Tatars (19 %), and then ethnic Russians (7.1 %).

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