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Reframing the “History of the USSR”: The “Thaw” and Changes in the Portrayal of Shamil’s Rebellion in Nineteenth-century North Caucasus^{*}

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HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE USSR AS A MULTINATIONAL COUNTRY

The Soviet Union, which had a distinctive identity as a multinational country, considered anti-colonialism to be one of its basic ideologies. From this viewpoint, it attempted to raise the national consciousness of minority nations, especially in the 1920s. However, under pressure from international tensions, such as confrontation with Germany, World War II, and the Cold War, official interpretations of Soviet history continued to change. Sometimes, these changes led to serious discussions among historians and society, forcing party officials to justify these changes without deviating from their basic ideology.

This paper analyzes discussions about the description of the history of Shamil’s rebellion and nineteenth-century North Caucasus specifically during the period of political reform following Joseph Stalin’s death. First, the paper provides an overview of the change of the official interpretation during the Stalin era of Shamil’s rebellion. Second, we look at the process of historians’ reconsideration of the rebellion after Stalin’s death. We shall especially focus on the activities of the editorial department of the journal *Voprosy istorii* [Problems of history] and on the discussions among historians about that department’s activities. In the following sections, we analyze the change in the description of Shamil’s rebellion and the history of North Caucasus. In the conclusion, the paper examines the impact of the restoration of Chechen-Ingush autonomous territory on the interpretation of the history of North Caucasus and Shamil’s rebellion and the role of historians in this process.

Discussions about the description of pre-revolutionary Russia during the Khrushchev era have attracted the interest of many scholars. Wada examined the activities of Soviet historians from the 1950s to 1960s in detail by using information that he received from Soviet historians during his stay in the USSR in the late 1970s. His articles show the important aspects of Soviet historical science during that time; however, these articles need to be reconsidered within

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broad political and social contexts by examining archival materials, recollections, and diaries that became available after *perestroika*.¹

After 1991, using materials from the archive of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, Sidorova examined the activities of historians during the “thaw,” focusing on discussions about the history of the Communist Party and the October Revolution.² Markwick, on the other hand, analyzed the discussion on the history of the Soviet period such as collectivization, the Great Patriotic War, and the methodology of history.³ Savel’ev revealed a variety of views on the journal *Voprosy istorii* among the staff members of party organizations, as well as on the confrontation between party authorities and the editorial department of the journal.⁴

These studies contributed to revealing the activities of historians and the relationship between historians and the political authorities during the “thaw.” However, these studies focused on the history of the Communist Party and the October Revolution; they paid little attention to discussions concerning the history of pre-revolutionary Russia, its colonial policy, and the history of non-Russian people under Russian rule. Considering the political importance, during the Stalin era, of creating a unified national history of the USSR to connect the memories and identities of all nations within the Soviet Union, the historical description of non-Russian people in the Russian Empire also had significant implications for politicians, intellectuals, and society as a whole.

Moreover, after Stalin’s death, exploration of new ideas supporting political and social reforms became an urgent political task. As Tromly points out, the release of many prisoners from the Gulag signaled to citizens that the political authorities were attempting to reintegrate former enemies into Soviet society again.⁵ In addition, many non-Russians who were oppressed because of their nationalistic or pro-German activities during World War II were also rehabilitated and returned to the public sphere during this period. This required

1 Wada, Haruki, “Nagare no henka ni kousuru rekishika tachi: Soren shigakushi noto 1964–66 nen [Historians Resisting the Change of the Stream: A Note on Soviet Historiography from 1964–1966],” *Roshiashi kenkyuu* 32 (1980); Wada, Haruki, “Eduard Burdzhakov,” *Roshiashi kenkyuu* 43 (1986).

2 L. A. Sidorova, *Ottepel’ v istoricheskoi nauke: sovetskaia istoriografiia pervogo poslestalinskogo desiatiletiia* (Moskva: Pamiatniki istoricheskoi mysli, 1997).

3 Roger D. Markwick, *Rewriting History in Soviet Russia: The Politics of Revisionist Historiography, 1956–1974* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 5–37; Roger D. Markwick, “Thaws and Freezes in Soviet Historiography, 1953–64,” in Polly Jones, ed., *The Dilemmas of De-Stalinization: Negotiating Cultural and Social Change in the Khrushchev Era* (London: Routledge, 2006).

4 A. V. Savel’ev, “Nomenklaturaia bor’ba vokrug zhurnala ‘Voprosy istorii’ v 1954–1957 godakh,” *Otechestvennaia istoriia* 5, (2003).

5 Benjamin Tromly, “Soviet Patriotism and Its Discontents among Higher Education Students in Khrushchev-Era Russia and Ukraine,” *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 37:3 (2009), p. 303.

historians to integrate their stories into the national history, and thus caused drastic changes in the framing of the history of the USSR.

Among the people rehabilitated during the “thaw” were the Chechens and the Ingush. Considering that local people’s pro-German activities in the North Caucasus during the Soviet-German War threatened the regime, the Soviet authorities forced the Chechens and the Ingush to move from the North Caucasus to Central Asia and abolished their autonomous republic. However, after the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, the forced emigration was officially criticized and the previously abolished republic was restored. In these processes of political rehabilitation, historians faced the problem of how to include the history of the Chechens and the Ingush into the Soviet national history again.

The history of Shamil’s rebellion, which was the biggest resistance of Muslims to the rule of the Russian Empire in the North Caucasus and which continued from 1834 to 1859, had always been the center of discussion among Soviet historians and the political authorities because of its unique characteristics. The Bolsheviks criticized Russian colonial rule in general and praised the history of non-Russian people’s rebellion against it. However, after the October Revolution, various political powers repeatedly used Shamil’s rebellion as a politicized symbol. During the Civil War, both the local people and the Bolsheviks praised Shamil as a symbol of their independence. During the Soviet-German War, the German army occupied the North Caucasus and attempted to use the image of the rebellion to turn local people against Russia. This led to harsh political intervention by the Soviet authorities in the disputes on the rebellion in the late Stalin period.

A representative study that described the history of non-Russian people in the USSR, including those of the North Caucasus, was Tillett’s. He comprehensively examined journals, books, and newspapers published in the USSR and showed how the historical descriptions in these materials changed over time.⁶ Gammer examined changes during the period from Stalin’s death through *perestroika* in his portrayals of Shamil’s rebellion. He noted that Moscow historians did not discuss Shamil’s rebellion in the second half of the 1960s and early 1970s because they preferred subjects safer than Shamil’s rebellion, which had become a target of official intervention many times. Gammer claimed that the center of discussions on this issue shifted from Moscow historians to Caucasus historians (particularly those in Georgia, Dagestan, and Azerbaijan), and from the 1970s onward, historians in Chechnya participated in these discussions as well.⁷

This is an important assertion because it reveals the difference between the activities of Moscow historians and those of local historians who lived in the non-Russian republics of the USSR. However, historians’ discussions in

6 Lowell Tillett, *The Great Friendship: Soviet Historians on the Non-Russian Nationalities* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969).

7 Moshe Gammer, “Shamil in Soviet Historiography,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 28:4 (1992).

the central academic institutions of Moscow have not yet been sufficiently analyzed. To analyze these discussions not only about the history of North Caucasus but also about the reconsideration processes of the national history of the Soviet Union, we need to pay attention to historians in Moscow, because the main interest of historians in the Caucasus was the description not of Soviet national history but of regional history. By focusing on the activities of Moscow historians and the interaction between their activities and the political authorities, this paper attempts to show how discussions on the historical description of the North Caucasus after Stalin's death reflected the shifting interpretations of the entire national history of the USSR in the 1960s.⁸

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE HISTORY OF THE USSR AND NORTH CAUCASUS DURING THE STALIN ERA

In the late 1930s, when the first official textbooks of Soviet national history were published, Russian rule of the North Caucasus in the nineteenth century was depicted as unambiguously evil, and Shamil, the leader of the largest Muslim rebellion against Russia, was a highly popular hero in Soviet historical narratives. He was considered a symbol of national liberation movements for not only the North Caucasus but also the entire USSR.⁹

Nevertheless, the official attitude toward Shamil's rebellion was ambiguous because of the complicated situation in the region after the revolution. During the Civil War, the Bolsheviks, in alliance with the Muslim and the People's Commissariat of Nationalities led by Stalin, supported the Chechens and the Ingush and praised Shamil as a symbol of their independence when countering the anti-Bolshevik Cossacks.¹⁰ However, under the nominal leadership of Shamil's grandson, Said Bek, Muslims rebelled against the Bolsheviks in 1920–1921. This made Shamil's rebellion problematic for Soviet political leaders. Furthermore, the fact that a "confederation of the Gorski people of the Caucasus" was established in May 1918 under the protection of the Ottoman Empire—and was officially recognized by Germany—alerted the Bolshevik leaders to the pan-Turkism and foreign intervention in this region.

A similar situation was created during the Soviet-German War. Occupying the North Caucasus, the German army attempted to use the image of Shamil's rebellion to rally support from local people and to turn them against

8 In this paper, "Moscow historian" does not mean a Russian historian but a historian who worked in Moscow.

9 R. M. Magomedov, *Shamil v otechestvennoi istorii* (Makhachkala: Dag. Kn. Izd-vo, 1990), p. 65.

10 As to the North Caucasus during the Civil War, see A. Bennigsen, "Muslim Guerilla Warfare in Caucasus, 1918–1928," *Central Asian Survey* 2:1 (1983), pp. 49–50; Nicolas Werth, "The 'Chechen Problem': Handling an Awkward Legacy, 1918–1958," *Contemporary European History* 15:3 (2006), pp. 350–352.

Russia. In addition, the German authorities contacted Shamil's grandson, Said Bek.¹¹ The Soviet authorities perceived the locals' collaboration with Germany to be a threat to the regime potentially leading to the separation of the North Caucasus. Therefore, they expelled the Chechens, Ingush, Karachays, and Balkars to Central Asia.

Since then, Shamil's rebellion became a highly politicized topic. On February 10, 1948, a party resolution criticized the opera *The Great Friendship* written by V. I. Muradeli for the thirtieth anniversary of the October Revolution. The theme of the opera is the friendship among the North Caucasian ethnic groups during the Civil War, and it depicted the Chechens and the Ingush as faithful defenders of the Bolsheviks.¹² However, the party resolution banned performance of the opera because it gave the impression that the people of the North Caucasus were anti-Russian. Moreover, the resolution declared that the Chechens and the Ingush were "obstacles" to friendship among the ethnic groups in the region. This was an unprecedented case of the Soviet authorities offering an officially negative portrayal of specific nations within the USSR. This resolution was publicized not only in the party journal but also in the main newspaper, *Pravda*.¹³

Before this resolution was adopted, a staff member of the Department of Propaganda and Agitation of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party reported that the opera depicted the Russian Cossacks as reactionary opponents of Soviet power while depicting the Chechens and the Ingush as peaceful and progressive. According to this staffer, almost no Russian characters were portrayed positively in the opera, and it did not present Russians as the leading force of revolution.¹⁴ Muradeli's interpretations of the history of North Caucasus during the Civil War were not unique in the 1920s because the Cossacks were considered a mainstay of Russian colonial policy in the region. However, the experiences of World War II changed the official interpretation.¹⁵

11 Tateishi, Yoko, *Kokumin tougou to rekishigaku: Suta-linki soren ni okeru "kokuminshi" ronsou* [National Integration and Historical Science: The Dispute over "National History" in the USSR during the Stalin Era] (Tokyo: Gakujutsu syuppankai, 2011), ch. 5.

12 V. A. Shnirel'man, *Byt' alanami: Intellektualy i politika na severnom kavkaze v XX veke* (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2006), p. 340.

13 *Bol'shevik* 3 (1948), p. 10; *Pravda* (February 11, 1948).

14 Umetsu, N., "Ongaku no Zhdanov hihan ha ikani okottaka: Tsuronkai kiroku ni miru sono puroseshu [What Elicited the Criticism of Music by Zhdanov? Its Process in the Record of Discussion]," *Toukyou kokusai daigaku ronsyuu, keizaigakubun* 41(2009), p. 70; *Vlast' i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsiia: dokumenty TsK RKP(b)-VKP(b), VChK-OGPU-NKVD o kul'turnoi politike, 1917-1953 gg.* (Moskva: Mezhdunarodnyi fond "Demokratiia," 1999), pp. 627-628.

15 Shnirel'man, *Byt' alanami*, pp. 235-236. As to the rehabilitation of the Cossacks during the entire Soviet period, see Barbara Skinner, "Identity Formation in the Russian Cossack Revival," *Europe-Asia Studies* 46:6 (1994). Umetsu analyzed the official criticism of Muradeli from the perspective of music. See Umetsu, "Ongaku no Zhdanov hihan ha ikani okottaka." I appreciate Shirou Hannya's helpful comments regarding this point.

Although the resolution of Central Committee on *The Great Friendship* particularly concerned the region's history during the Civil War, it was also used to officially rationalize the incorporation of the North Caucasus into Russia in the nineteenth century. Thus, Shamil's rebellion came to be considered a reactionary uprising. In 1949, the statue of Russian imperial general A. P. Ermolov, who commanded Russian troops in the Caucasian War from 1816 to 1827, was rebuilt in Groznyi in accordance with an order from L. Beriia.¹⁶

In 1950, the Soviet authorities revealed their official view claiming that Shamil was an agent of the Ottoman Empire and Britain, who were antagonizing Russia at that time. According to this view, the rebellion was a movement led by the leader of Mouridism, a reactionary religious movement within Islam, and Shamil used the flag of *jihad* to pursue his own class interests. At first, the masses participated in this rebellion for national liberation. Eventually, however, they understood that Shamil's aims were different from theirs, so they deserted the movement.

M. D. Bagirov, the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan from 1933 to 1953, elaborated on this view in detail in a separate article.¹⁷ He was closely associated with Beriia and held the highest position among the party activists with a Muslim background. After World War II, as relations between the USSR and Turkey deteriorated, Soviet political leaders grew deeply concerned about the diffusion of pan-Turkism in the USSR. In the late 1940s, the Embassy of the USSR reported an increase in pan-Turkic activities in Turkey by refugees from Azerbaijan, and Bagirov criticized many of the republic's intellectuals for their pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism.¹⁸ This political situation formed the background to Bagirov's intervention in the interpretation of North Caucasian history.

After the Chechens and the Ingush were forcibly deported in 1944, it was as if their histories were erased from the history of the USSR. In 1954, during the publishing of the second edition of *Bol'shaia sovetskaiia entsiklopediia* [Great Soviet encyclopedia], the problem of whether these nations should be included in it or not became a point of argument. Finally, it was decided that the descrip-

16 The statue was once destroyed by the Bolsheviks in 1922. Shnirel'man, *Byt' alanami*, p. 237.

17 M. D. Bagirov, "K voprosu o kharaktere dvizheniia miuridizma i Shamiliia," *Bol'shevik* 13 (1950), pp. 21–37.

18 Bagirov and Beriia worked together in the Azerbaijani and other Caucasian party organizations from 1921. E. R. Ismailov, *Vlast' i narod: poslevoennyi stalinizm v Azerbaidzhane, 1945–1953* (Baku: Adil'ogly, 2003), p. 55, 61; Tillett, *The Great Friendship*, p. 140. In 1942, according to Stalin's request, he selected two party activists in Azerbaijan to be the first and second secretaries of the party *obkom* of Dagestan. At the Eighteenth Party Congress of the republic, Bagirov insisted that Turkic nomadic tribes were "robbers and murderers," and that Azerbaijanis did not share their origin with them. V. A. Shnirel'man, *Voiny pamiati: mify, identichnost' i politika v Zakavkaz'e* (Moskva: IKTs "Akademkniga," 2003), p. 147.

tions of the territory, place names, culture, and history of the Chechens and the Ingush would be excluded from the encyclopedia.¹⁹

After the forced emigration of the Chechens and the Ingush, more and more historians began describing the incorporation of the North Caucasus into Russia more positively. In particular, Georgian and Armenian intellectuals actively supported Bagirov's views and tried to spread positive images of the incorporation of the Caucasus into Russia.²⁰ S. Agadzhanov, a citizen in Tbilisi, sent a letter to historian A. M. Pankratova and the State Publishing House in June 1951, criticizing a USSR history textbook edited by Pankratova. He said that the textbook should explain more clearly the threat that the Ottoman Empire and Persia posed to Armenians from the eighteenth through the twentieth centuries. Quoting Bagirov's article, he emphasized Chechen and Ingush support for Shamil and their pro-German and Ottoman activities during the Civil War.²¹ Thus, some intellectuals and ordinary citizens shared the official view of the late Stalin era.

STALIN'S DEATH AND THE START OF RECONSIDERATION OF NORTH CAUCASIAN HISTORY

Stalin's death on March 5, 1953, had a serious effect on academic discourse. The change in political climate was promptly reflected in historical science, and reconsideration of the historical narrative had already begun in time for the Twentieth Party Congress in February 1956. At the end of March 1953, A. L. Sidrov, director of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, proposed to the secretaries of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CC CPSU), M. A. Suslov and P. N. Pospelov, the reorganization of the editorial department of *Voprosy istorii*, one of the main journals published by the Academy of Sciences. He recommended A. M. Pankratova as chief editor and E. N. Burdzhakov as assistant editor.²² This proposal was accepted through official resolutions of the CC CPSU and the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences three months later.²³

The relationship among nations in the Russian Empire and the USSR was one of the most important topics. Immediately after the reorganization of the editorial department, *Voprosy istorii* published an opening article emphasizing

19 Shnirel'man, *Byt' alanami*, pp. 229–230; Werth, "The 'Chechen Problem'," p. 358.

20 Tillett, *The Great Friendship*, p. 213; Gammer, "Shamil in Soviet Historiography," p. 733. One of these examples was Armenian writer Kh. Zh. Azhemian. As for his assertion and letters to Stalin and other political leaders, see Tateishi, *Kokumin tougou to rekishigaku*, ch. 5.

21 Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Akademii nauk (Arkhiv RAN), f. 697, op. 1, d. 434, ll. 37–55.

22 Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv noveishei istorii (RGANI), f. 5, op. 17, d. 426, l. 6.

23 CC CPSU and the Presidium of the Academy of Sciences adopted these resolutions on June 3 and 5, respectively. RGANI, f. 5, op. 17, d. 426. ll. 7, 28–30; Arkhiv RAN, f. 1604, op. 3, d. 54, ll. 1–2; f. 697, op. 1, d. 135, ll. 143–144.

“friendship among nations” to be a driving force of the USSR. The article stated that this concept meant the removal of national antagonism and the uniting of all nations in the USSR.²⁴ In particular, the reevaluation of Shamil’s rebellion attracted much attention from historians and society. The turning point of this transition was Bagirov’s arrest on March 29, 1954. He was excluded from the political leadership of Azerbaijan soon after Beria became a target of official criticism at the plenum of the CC CPSU in July 1953.²⁵

Bagirov’s arrest was immediately reflected in historians’ discussions. From the very day of his arrest, the Department of Social Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and the Academy of Sciences of Republics in Transcaucasia met jointly for five days in Baku. Historians, local teachers, graduate students, and party activists from Transcaucasia, Moscow, the Central Asian republics, and Dagestan participated in this meeting.²⁶

On the second day of the meeting, Pankratova, chief editor of *Voprosy istorii*, reported on the journal’s reform and criticized Bagirov’s view of Shamil’s rebellion. Compared to the length of her speech, her discussion of the rebellion was short. However, almost all questions from the audience concerned reconsideration of the rebellion. Pankratova answered that Bagirov’s article about the rebellion seemed to show his “political deviation,” while she denied the need to reevaluate the rebellion itself.²⁷

The reaction of Historians reaction to this affair indicated their continued interest in reevaluating Shamil’s rebellion even after the official declaration in 1950 that made open discussion about this topic impossible. The Presidium of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan started to consider reprinting *From the History of Social and Philosophical Thought in Nineteenth-Century Azerbaijan* written by local historian G. Guseinov, and which became Bagirov’s main target of criticism in 1950.²⁸ These cases show that intellectuals in the Caucasus, particularly in Azerbaijan, took the initiative of reinterpreting Shamil’s rebellion soon after Bagirov’s arrest.

In Moscow, reevaluation of Russia’s colonial rule was one of the main tasks of the new editorial department of *Voprosy istorii*. It published an article by A. B. Fadeev on Shamil’s rebellion in June 1955. Fadeev criticized the commonly accepted theory that the ordinary people in the North Caucasus

24 “O nekotorykh vazhneishikh zadachakh sovetskikh istorikov,” *Voprosy istorii* 6 (1953), p. 8.

25 D. Gasanly, *Khrushchevskaia «ottepel’» i natsional’nyi vopros v Azerbaidzhane (1954–1959)* (Moskva: Flinta, 2009), p. 15.

26 “Nauchnaia sessiia otdelenii obshchestvennykh nauk, Akademii nauk SSSR i akademii nauk zakavkazskikh respublik,” *Voprosy istorii* 6 (1954), p. 161.

27 Arkhiv RAN, f. 697, op. 1, d. 135, ll. 143–144; “Trudy ob”edinennoi nauchnoi sessii AN SSSR i Akademii nauk Zakavkazskikh respublik po obshchestvennym naukam (29 marta–2 apreliia 1954 g.),” *Stenograficheskii otchet* (Baku: Izdatel’stvo Akademii nauk Azerbaidzhanskoi SSR, 1957), pp. 42–58.

28 Gasanly, *Khrushchevskaia «ottepel’»*, p. 41.

did not support Shamil. According to Fadeev, even if Mouridism had been introduced by the Ottoman Empire, it spread throughout the region because of local support.²⁹

This view was also expressed at a readers' conference of *Voprosy istorii* in Moscow in January 1956. The editorial department of *Voprosy istorii* had announced this conference publically in *Pravda*, and more than 650 historians, teachers, librarians, and archivists attended the three-day meeting that lasted from January 25 to 28.³⁰ Assistant Editor Burdzhlov reported that some historians proposed that the editorial department discuss the reevaluation of Shamil, and emphasized the oppressive nature of Russian colonial rule, criticizing the earlier view that considered all national movements reactionary.³¹ Chief Editor Pankratova said that Mouridism was a reactionary phenomenon, but it was wrong to deny the participation of the masses in Shamil's rebellion and ignore their resistance to Russian colonial policy.³²

A. M. Pikman, a schoolteacher, openly said that historians and teachers could not oppose Bagirov's view until then, and it was not until the end of 1955 that the editorial department of *Voprosy istorii* began addressing this issue. Pikman insisted that Bagirov's view was a distortion of historical facts and claimed that Bagirov and some historians considered the rebellion reactionary, confusing the interests of the Russian government with those of the Russian workers. Thus, Shamil's rebellion, like other national movements, should be evaluated according to whether the movement promoted national liberation movements in Russia and Western Europe.³³

Such forthright discussion also attracted the attention of the party authorities. Around two weeks after the readers' conference, V. Kirillin and K. Kuznetsova, the director and vice director of the Department of Science and the Higher Educational Establishment of the CC CPSU, respectively, reported to the CC CPSU about the readers' conference, including discussions about Shamil's rebellion. According to their report, a staff member of the State Library, I. Engel'gardt, complained that historians had been banned from discussing topics concerning the peoples that were forcibly deported from the North Caucasus, and called for historians not to await the orders of the CC CPSU because the CC could adopt "wrong" decisions "like the deportation of Chechens." Another attendee, E. K. Lavrov, inspector of the Faculty of Economics of Moscow State University (MSU), criticized the idealization of Russian colonial policy and its representatives, including the imperial general

29 A. V. Fadeev, "O vnutrennei sotsial'noi baze miuridistskogo dvizheniia na Kavkaze v XIX v.," *Voprosy istorii* 6 (1955), pp. 67–68.

30 Some attendees were from Vilnius, Kharkov, and Krasnodar. RGANI, f. 5, op. 35, d. 23, l. 26.

31 "Konferentsiia chitatelei zhurnala «Voprosy istorii»,» *Voprosy istorii* 2(1956), p. 202.

32 "Konferentsiia chitatelei," p. 213.

33 "Konferentsiia chitatelei," pp. 204, 206.

Ermolov, and criticized the situation wherein foreign publications had begun writing that “in the USSR, instead of the Russian chauvinism, something like Soviet or Russian nationalism appeared.”³⁴

THE TWENTIETH CONGRESS OF THE CPSU AND EXPANSION OF THE DISCUSSION

The Twentieth Congress of the CPSU in February 1956 became one of the turning points in the interpretation of the history of North Caucasus. Khrushchev’s reference to the forced deportation of Chechens and Ingush as one of Stalin’s mistakes led to their liberation from forced settlement and restoration of their autonomous territory in January 1957.³⁵

Pankratova’s speech to the congress indicated the growing interest of political leaders in historical science. She insisted that many historians ignored the severe oppression of non-Russian nations, though their incorporation into pre-revolutionary Russia was “correctly” given a positive portrayal. In her view, Russian rule brought political, economical, and cultural stagnation to non-Russian nations, so Soviet historians fought against not only local nationalism but also “great power chauvinism,” that is, Russian nationalism.³⁶

Her speech triggered a strong reaction and many questions. Because of the growing general interest in the subject, the “Society of Knowledge,” a nationwide group of intellectuals, invited Pankratova to give lectures on the present political situation and historical science. Similar lectures were also conducted at Leningrad, and about 6,000 party activists, writers, teachers, archivists, and students attended them.³⁷

Audience questions at these lectures indicated that many attendees were considerably interested in reevaluating Shamil’s rebellion. One attendee asked whether historical facts that show the reactionary role of the rebellion were proven or not. Another attendee asked her how the activities of Russian imperial general Ermolov in the Caucasian War should be evaluated.³⁸ Another opposed Shamil’s reevaluation because incorporation into Russia was the only thing that had saved the Caucasian nations from the Ottoman Empire and Persia. The same attendee also insisted that the collected papers published in Georgia in 1954 sufficiently proved the link between Shamil and Britain and

34 RGANI, f. 5, op. 35, d. 23, l. 23.

35 Khan’ia, Siro, “Sekretnyi doklad N. S. Khrushcheva i vosstanovlenie avtonomnykh territorii v 1957 g.,” *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 22 (2005), pp. 144, 164.

36 “S’ezd kommunisticheskoi partii sovetskogo soiuza,” *Stenograficheskii otchet* (Moskva: Gos. izd-vo polit. lit-ry, 1956), pp. 623–624.

37 K. L. Seleznev, “Strasnyi borets za liniu partii,” in *Zhenshchiny-revoliutsionery i uchenye* (Moskva: Iz-vo “Nauka,” 1982), pp. 42–43. The “Society of Knowledge” was founded in Moscow in 1947 for disseminating political and academic knowledge.

38 Arkhiv RAN, f. 697, op.1, d. 181, ll. 18, 135.

the Ottoman Empire.³⁹ Other attendees posed questions about the history of North Caucasus during the Civil War. One attendee asked how the resolution of the Twentieth Party Congress was related to the party resolution on Muradeli's opera.⁴⁰

Articles published in *Voprosy istorii* reflected similar trends. In March 1956, the journal published Pikman's article on Shamil's rebellion, which emphasized the progressive aspects of the rebellion. A footnote inserted by the editorial department at the end of his article revealed that, after the readers' meeting in January, many readers sent letters with questions about the rebellion. Therefore, the editorial department published the article to promote further discussion of this issue. The footnote also insisted that while the progressive nature of incorporation of the North Caucasus into Russia was clear, it was wrong to treat all nationalist movements as reactionary, and every movement should be evaluated concretely in its own historical context. In the conclusion, it called on readers to discuss not only Shamil's rebellion but also all other national movements within the Russian Empire.⁴¹ It must, however, be added that not all editors of the journal agreed with the publication of Pikman's article. A. Gavrilova, who sent a letter to CC CPSU in June 1956 criticizing the editorial department for publishing the article over the objections of some editors, reported that Assistant Editor Burdzhlov had ignored these objections.⁴²

Burdzhlov and Pankratova shared a common view on Russian colonial policy and Shamil's rebellion. In her lecture, Pankratova accepted that the re-evaluation of Shamil's rebellion after the publication of Bagirov's article in 1950 was an "especially shameful fact for us historians."⁴³ Burdzhlov also criticized the recent phenomenon of historical works portraying all incorporations of nations into Russia positively. At the readers' meeting of *Voprosy istorii* at the Leningrad branch of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR on July 19–20, he emphasized that the original party and government view was that incorporation of only Ukraine and Georgia was a "lesser evil" than incorporation by other countries. When asked by the audience for his opinion on the concept of "lesser evil," Bruzharov answered that without this concept, it would be impossible to analyze Russian colonial policies. He insisted that they should see both the progressive aspects of Russian colonial rule and the severe oppression of non-Russian nations in order to understand the aims of national liberation movements in Russia. In relation to this, he said that if Shamil had been an agent of the Ottoman Empire, local people would

39 "Pervaia reaktsiia na kritiku 'kul'ta lichnosti' I. V. Stalina. Po itogam vystuprenii A. M. Pankratovoi v Leningrade v marte 1956 goda," *Voprosy istorii* 10 (2006), p. 5.

40 "Pervaia reaktsiia," *Voprosy istorii* 9 (2006), p. 11.

41 "Ot redaktsii," *Voprosy istorii* 3 (1956), p. 84.

42 RGANI, f. 5, op. 35, d. 39, l. 98.

43 Arkhiv RAN, f. 697, op. 1, d.182, l. 19.

not have kept fighting against the Russian army for over twenty five years.⁴⁴ When the audience asked why Bagirov's trial was not reported in the press and whether Bagirov had admitted to his crime, Bruzharov replied that it was difficult for him to answer these questions, though Bagirov had in fact admitted to his crime.⁴⁵

These views received support among historians. A conference of the Dagestan branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and the All-Union Congress of Historians planned by the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences, held in Dagestan and Moscow, respectively, in the autumn of 1956, clearly showed that reconsideration of Shamil's rebellion was one of the most important themes in Soviet historical science.⁴⁶

At the same time, these trends also gave rise to criticism. S. K. Bushuev, a historian at MSU, criticized Pikman's article. At an academic council of the Faculty of History at MSU in early 1956, he criticized several dissertations for condemning Russian colonial policy without examining its many dimensions.⁴⁷ The experiences of World War II and the forced emigration of North Caucasian nations cast a dark shadow on the interpretation of the region's history. According to Burdzhhalov, the editorial department of *Voprosy istorii* had received an article that slandered the North Caucasian nations as "robbers by nature" because of their collaboration with the German army during the war.⁴⁸ Institute for Advanced Studies of the CPSU historian B. D. Datsiuk also opposed the positive portrayal of Shamil's rebellion, insisting that it would not promote friendship among the nations of the USSR because "the memory of conflict created by Shamil remained alive."⁴⁹

A. B. Zaks, a historian at the State Historical Museum, wrote in her recollections about a similar mood among historians. In early 1945, she submitted to Moscow City Pedagogical University a dissertation on Tashev Khadzhi, who fought against the Russian Empire with Shamil and in the uprising in Chechnya in 1840. According to Zaks, a few days after *Vecherniaia Moskva* published an announcement of the dissertation defense, the Central Committee of the Com-

44 "Doklad E. N. Burdzhhalova o sostoianii sovetskoi istoricheskoi nauki i rabote zhurnala «Voprosy istorii» (na vstreche s chitateliami 19–20 iyunia 1956 g. v leningradskom otdelenii instituta istorii AN SSSR)," *Voprosy istorii* 9 (1989), pp. 92–93.

45 "Doklad E. N. Burdzhhalova," pp. 129, 134.

46 Henze examined the discussion at these conferences in detail. P. B. Henze, "'Unrewriting' History: The Shamil Problem," *Caucasian Review* 6 (1958), pp. 13–23. In addition, see Tillet, *The Great Friendship*, pp. 208–212; Gammer, "Shamil in Soviet Historiography," pp. 733–737.

47 Expressing his antipathy, E. N. Gorodetskii insisted that Bushuev's opinion was a "distortion, a straightforward falsification." *Vestnik Moskovskogo universiteta* 4 (1956), pp. 146–147. As for the change of Bushuev's view about Shamil's rebellion during the Soviet-German War, see Tateishi, *Kokumin tougou to rekishigaku*, ch. 5.

48 "Doklad E. N. Burdzhhalova," p. 93.

49 "Konferentsiia chitatelei," p. 211.

munist Party and the local party organs began repeatedly calling Moscow State Pedagogical University, ordering that the defense be canceled. Only later did she and her colleagues learn of the forced emigration of Chechens and Ingush that had been carried out in February 1944.

The dissertation defense was ultimately suspended because one of the discussants refused to attend. Zaks resubmitted her dissertation to MSU, but Bushuev opposed the defense, saying that Zaks's dissertation could not show new information postdating his book, published in 1939. Another attendee insisted that the dissertation defense should not be held if historians considered "the activity of the Chechens during the Great Patriotic War." Hearing this remark, Chair Sidorov, vice president of the Faculty of Humanities at MSU, nodded in agreement.⁵⁰

Furthermore, historian S. S. Dmitriev wrote in his diary about the dispute over the rebellion in November 1956. He wrote that in one meeting Burdzhhalov read his paper "marvelously," while Bushuev's presentation was negatively received by the audience. Enraged by Burdzhhalov's lecture, Sidorov tried to silence him.⁵¹

Dmitriev also wrote about another episode involving Sidorov. At the meeting on *Voprosy istorii* held at the Historical Department of MSU on November 29, 1956, some historians, particularly Stichov and other "followers of Sidorov," bitterly criticized "the harmful line" of the journal and the articles by Burdzhhalov, Pankratova, Pikman, and others. Dmitriev did not write about this in detail, but considering that Pikman's article was mentioned, Shamil's rebellion was most likely one of the targets of his criticism against the journal.⁵²

These episodes revealed that not all historians in Moscow were enthusiastic about a reconsideration of Shamil's rebellion even after the Twentieth Party Congress. In addition, P. V. Volobuev, one of Sidorov's students, supervised *Voprosy istorii* as a staff member of the Department of Science and Culture of the CC CPSU and took the most uncompromising position on the journal in the department.⁵³ This shows that the objection to a reconsideration of Shamil's rebellion spread among influential historians in MSU and the party authorities.

50 A. V. Zaks, "Kak ia zashchishchala dissertatsiiu i pytalas' ee opublikovat'," *Voprosy istorii* 6 (1989), pp. 164–165. As mentioned above, Sidorov was also the deputy manager of the Institute of History at the Academy of Sciences at that time. P. V. Volobuev, "Arkadii Lavrovich Sidorov," *Istoriia SSSR* 3 (1966), pp. 234–235; Markwick, *Rewriting History*, p. 70.

51 "Iz dnevnikov Sergeia Sergeevicha Dmitrieva," *Otechestvennaia istoriia* 2 (2000), p. 150.

52 "Iz dnevnikov Sergeia Sergeevicha Dmitrieva," pp. 150–151. Pikman published only one article, which examined Shamil's rebellion, in *Voprosy istorii*. *Voprosy istorii: Author index 1945–1975*, compiled by A. S. Powell (Nendeln: KTO Press, 1977), p. 301.

53 Volobuev said in an interview with *Otechestvennaia istoriia* that Sidorov developed the entire direction of Soviet historical science on the history of pre-revolutionary Russia. "Pavel Vasil'evich Volobuev. 1923–1997. Interv'iu s akademikom," *Otechestvennaia istoriia* 6 (1997), p. 107. As for the attitude of Volobuev to the journal, see Savel'ev, "Nomenklaturaia bor'ba," p. 153.

INTENSIFYING CRITICISM OF *VOPROSY ISTORII* AFTER THE POLITICAL UPHEAVALS IN EASTERN EUROPE

As the activities of *Voprosy istorii* attracted increasing attention, the journal's editors were put under significant pressure. In February 1955, one of the editors of the journal, N. M. Druzhinin, sent Pankratova a letter asking her to accept his resignation from the editorial department. He wrote, "The work of the journal is getting more and more difficult—it requires staff members with more physical and moral strength," and recommended "younger and physically stronger historians" as new editors.⁵⁴

The orientation of the journal's editorial department was not always supported by the party authorities. The Department of Science and Culture of the CC CPSU repeatedly reported irregularities in the journal's activities to the CC from 1954.

Nevertheless, until the autumn of 1956, Pankratova and Burdzhhalov were able to resist these criticisms. A. M. Rumiantsev, chief of the Department of Science and Culture of the CC CPSU, was wary of Pankratova's high level of influence and often asked younger staff members, "Do you know what sort of person Pankratova is? She is a member of the CC CPSU and the delegate of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. You are not dealing with someone unimportant like Kammari; this is Pankratova we are talking about here!"⁵⁵

According to Dmitriev's diary, on October 12, 1956, he heard from B. D. Datsiuk that Datsiuk had organized meetings to criticize *Voprosy istorii* at the Institute for Advanced Studies of the CPSU, and similar meetings would be held at the Academy of Social Sciences and MSU. On the other hand, historian N. L. Rubinshtein told Dmitriev that some authoritative organizations planned to adopt decisions to support the journal.⁵⁶ Accordingly, *Voprosy istorii* seems to have received the support of not only some historians but also some political authorities until October 1956.

However, in addition to the uprisings in Poland and Hungary, criticism of Stalin inflamed negative views of the CPSU and the government within the USSR in late 1956. Criticisms and questions about the party leadership were expressed at the party meetings of the Writers' Union, schools, and Komsomol and in the letters sent to official journals and newspapers. As a result, political leaders stiffened their attitude toward intellectuals from the end of 1956 onward.

On December 19, 1956, the central committee sent a closed letter entitled "Strengthening the work of the party organization in cutting off the attacks

54 Arkhiv RAN, f. 1604, op. 3, d. 54, ll. 5–6.

55 Savel'ev, "Nomenklaturaia bor'ba," pp. 149–153. M. D. Kammari was chief editor of the journal *Voprosy filosofii* at that time.

56 "Iz dnevnikov Sergeia Sergeevicha Dmitrieva," pp. 145–146.

of anti-Soviet, enemy elements" to the party organizations. The closed letter cautioned against misunderstanding the secret speech of Khrushchev at the Twentieth Party Congress and demanded that party members not promote arguments opposing Soviet political systems. In addition, the letter criticized *Voprosy istorii* for weakening people's wariness and critical attitude toward countries hostile to the USSR.⁵⁷

The CC CPSU called Pankratova and Burdzhhalov to a meeting on *Voprosy istorii* on March 6, 1957. According to Dmitriev's diary, not only CC secretaries D. K. Shepilov and P. N. Pospelov but also historian Sidorov and other intellectuals attended this meeting. Shepilov and Pospelov harshly criticized the "mistake in the direction" of the journal and decided to remove Burdzhhalov.⁵⁸ After the meeting, Pankratova's health deteriorated drastically, and she was admitted to hospital the next day.⁵⁹ Three days later, the CC CPSU officially adopted a resolution to criticize the journal because it had undermined the struggles of Soviet historians against bourgeois historical science.⁶⁰

As many studies have already shown, the main target of the official criticism of the journal was its interpretation of the history of the Bolshevik Party and the revolution, such as the rehabilitation of Stalin's opponents, and Pankratova's support for intellectuals oppressed during the Stalin era. We can see some references, however, to the history of pre-revolutionary Russia in an article in the party journal *Kommunist*. It criticized Pikman's article in *Voprosy istorii* for describing Shamil as an enthusiastic defender of democracy, ignoring the class confrontation in the rebellion and the intention of Britain and the Ottoman Empire to use the rebellion for their aggressive policies. In addition, *Kommunist* insisted that Pikman ignored the progressive nature of the incorporation of the North Caucasus into Russia and it questioned why the editorial department published such a non-academic article.⁶¹

Not only the CC CPSU but also some historians expressed their criticism of the journal. The discussion among historians at the meeting of the Faculty of History of MSU clearly showed that the changes of the political situation in Eastern Europe had a significant impact on the historians' view of the history of the Russian Empire, including that of Shamil's rebellion. On January 10, 1957, the party organization of the Faculty of History held a closed meeting to discuss the letter. Bushuev criticized Pankratova and Burdzhhalov, insisting that they were trying to eradicate Russian historical tradition. He said that Burdzhhalov and his fellow scholars in Dagestan held a conference in 1956 to "make

57 RGANI, f. 89, perechen' 6, d. 2, l. 8.

58 "Iz dnevnika S. S. Dmitrieva," in Kukushkin, Iu. S., ed., *Istoriik i vremia: 20–50-e gody XX veka*. A. M. Pankratova (Moskva: Izd-vo RUDN, Izd-vo ob'edineniia Mosgorarkhiv, 2000), pp. 175–176.

59 Ibid., pp. 175–176.

60 *Spravochnik partiinogo rabotnika*, Vyp. 2 (Moskva: Izd-vo politicheskoi lit-ry, 1959), p. 331.

61 "Strogo sobliudat' leninskii printsip partiinosti v istoricheskoi nauke," *Kommunist* 4 (1957), pp. 25–26.

national heroes from imams." He asserted that journals in Britain and the United States welcomed discussions by Soviet historians about the national movements in the North Caucasus or Poland because these movements had always weakened Russian authority. According to Bushuev, the views of Pikman and Burdzhakov were similar to those in these journals. According to Bushuev, the British insisted that if they succeeded in rehabilitating anti-Russian heroes, it would be very easy for them to use the imams in order to "make the flag of struggles against communism in the Caucasus." Fedosov, one of the members of the editorial department of *Voprosy istorii*, also criticized Burdzhakov for the publication of Pikman's article in the journal "in spite of the objections of most of the editors," and insisted that the central point of this article was that the incorporation of non-Russian nations into Russia had no positive significance.⁶²

According to Zaks' recollections, soon after the changes in the editorial department, the new editors called her and said that the current issue had been abandoned, and that her article on the history of North Caucasus had been replaced by one by Bushuev, which was almost identical to Bagirov's 1950 article.⁶³

REFRAMING OF THE "HISTORY OF THE USSR" AND THE SEARCH FOR CONSENSUS IN THE 1960S

After the changeover in the editorial department of *Voprosy istorii*, it seemed that the official interpretation of Shamil's rebellion reverted to that of 1950. However, this situation did not last for long. Considering that changes in the portrayal of North Caucasian history began around 1957, it appears that the restoration of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR in January 1957 had a significant influence on the matter.⁶⁴

Soon after the restoration of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR, meetings commemorating Muradeli were conducted there. Muradeli, who had been invited, said, "I am very proud and glad that I have given a hand of friendship to my brothers Chechen and Ingush in this difficult time. We together drank the cup of bitterness."⁶⁵ In June 1957, the Museum of Revolution of the USSR in Moscow held a meeting of participants in the Civil War in the North Caucasus.⁶⁶

62 Tsentral'nyi Arkhiv Obshchestvenno-Politicheskoi Istorii Moskvy (TsAOPIM), f. 478, op. 3, d. 212, ll. 28, 60.

63 Zaks, "Kak ia zashchishchala dissertatsiiu," p. 167; S. K. Bushuev, "O kavkazskom miuridizme," *Voprosy istorii* 12 (1956).

64 As for the process of the restoration of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous SSR after the Twentieth Party Congress, see Khan'ia, "Sekretnyi doklad N. S. Khrushcheva."

65 S. Lorsanukaev, *Dozhdi meniaiut tsvet: o burnykh dniakh Chechni, o sebe, o liudiakh moego pokoleniia* (Moskva: Voskresen'e, 2003), p. 194.

66 A. F. Nosov, "Vospominaniia," *Oktiabr'skaia revoliutsiia v groznom i v gorakh Checheno-Ingushetii (K istorii narodov Checheno-Ingushetii) 1917-1920* (Groznyi: Checheno-Ingushskoe Knizhnoe Izdatel'stvo, 1961), p. 4.

Since 1957, many works emphasizing the contributions of the Chechens and the Ingush to the Soviet regime were published in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR. They insisted that Russians and the people of North Caucasus had been allies since ancient times.⁶⁷ Political upheavals, such as the Civil War and World War II, did not disturb the development of their friendship.⁶⁸ In Dagestan, the Dagestan branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and the Institute of History, Language and Literature published a source book about Shamil's rebellion and emphasized the continuing need to reconsider Shamil's rebellion.⁶⁹

These changes appeared not merely in works published in the North Caucasus. In Moscow, the party resolution on Muradeli's opera, *The Great Friendship*, and the declaration criticizing the Chechens and the Ingush as "obstacles to friendship among nations" were officially revoked in May 1958.⁷⁰ In the same year, an additional volume of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* appeared with a detailed explanation of the history of the Chechens and the Ingush.⁷¹

An article in *Sovetskaia etnografiia* [Soviet ethnology] explained that one of the Bolshevik leaders in the North Caucasus during the Civil War, Ordzhonikidze, had received enthusiastic support from local people in Nuzhichi, and that this support saved his life while being chased by the troops of Denikin.⁷² These changes in the description of the Civil War had significant effects on the interpretation of the history of nineteenth-century North Caucasus as well. An article published in the same journal insisted that friendly relations between Russians and North Caucasians had been maintained even during the Caucasian War by *Kunachestvo*, an old Caucasian custom.⁷³

67 N. P. Gritsenko, *Istoki druzhby Checheno-Ingushskogo naroda s velikim russkim narodom* (Groznyi: Tipografiia imeni 2 avgusta 1918 goda, 1962), pp. 25, 28.

68 As examples, see E. V. Kireev, *Proletariat groznogo v bor'be za pobedu Velikoi Oktiabr'skoi Sotsialisticheskoi revoliutsii (mart 1917 g. – mai 1918 goda)* (Groznyi: Checheno-Ingushskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1957); M. A. Abazatov, *Iz istorii grazhdanskoi voyny v Checheno-Ingushetii* (Groznyi: Checheno-Ingushskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1962); V. I. Fil'kin, *Checheno-Ingushskaia partiinaia organizatsiia v gody velikoi otechestvennoi voyny Sovetskogo Soiuz* (Groznyi: Chech. Ing. kn. Ind-vo, 1960); Z. A.-G. Goigova, ed., *Checheno-Ingushetiia v sovetskoi istoricheskoi nauke: kritiko-bibliograficheski obzor* (Groznyi: Checheno-Ingushskii nauchno-issledovatel'skii in-t pri Svete ministrov ChIASSR, 1963), p. 69.

69 *Dvizhenie gortsev severo-vostochnogo Kavkaza v 20–50 gg. XIX veka. Sbornik dokumentov* (Makhachkala: Dagestanskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1959), pp. 4–8.

70 "Ob ispravlenii oshibok v otsenke oper 'Velikaia druzhba,' 'Bogdan Khmel'nitskii' i 'Ot vsego serdtsa'," in *Spravochnik partiinogo rabotnika*, Vyp. 2 (Moskva: Izd-vo politicheskoi lit-ry, 1959), pp. 493–495.

71 *Bol'shaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia*, Izd. 2-e. T. 51 (Moskva: Bol'shaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia, 1958), stlb. 127, 306–316.

72 B. Kaloev, "Poezdka v Checheno-Ingushskuiu ASSR," *Sovetskaia etnografiia* 4 (1958), p. 129.

73 B. A. Kaloev, "Iz istorii Russko-Chechenskikh ekonomicheskikh i kul'turnykh svyazei," *Sovetskaia etnografiia* 1 (1961). *Kunachestvo* means two men belonging to different tribes or nationalities forming close ties and promising mutual assistance and defense.

Such changes in the interpretation of Shamil's rebellion were also reflected in *The History of the USSR from Ancient Times to Our Days* (hereafter *The History of the USSR*). *The History of the USSR* consisted of six detailed volumes published by the Institutes of History and Archeology at the Academy of Sciences of the USSR between 1966 and 1968.⁷⁴ The editorial committee consisted of members of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, including Sidorov. Because of their length and the wide range of themes covered, the historians and archeologists participating in the volumes' preparation can be viewed as representative of the historical interpretation of Moscow intellectuals at that time.

The History of the USSR emphasized the friendship between Russians and local populations in the North Caucasus, as did other works. Russian settlers in the North Caucasus were considered to have nothing in common with the imperial government. They did much to help local Chechens and Ingush develop their economy and culture and fight against social and national oppression. In nineteenth-century North Caucasus, Russian settlers imitated the clothes, harnesses, weapons, and farming tools of local ethnic groups. In doing so, they learned local languages and became related to the locals by marriage.⁷⁵

Shamil was "a passionate agitator and brave commander," according to the book, and many local peasants considered him a leader. Such a characterization was common in the 1930s. At the same time, *The History of the USSR* also presented views differing from those seen in the 1930s. For example, it explained that, having attained economic and political privilege, the leaders of Shamil's government transformed into a new privileged class, and peasants gradually deserted Shamil. Mouridism, which was considered in the 1930s to be the basic ideal of progressive national liberation movements, was depicted negatively in *The History of the USSR*, just as it had been in the late Stalin era. The book claimed that the ideology of Mouridism isolated the people of the North Caucasus from other nations and obscured their class awareness through religious convention, thereby preventing them from achieving social liberation and national independence.⁷⁶

Such interpretations were shared by other publications of the time, such as a textbook edited by Datsiuk, who had been a critic of *Voprosy istorii* in the 1950s, and in an additional volume of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*.⁷⁷ As we can see from these descriptions, the new interpretation of Shamil's rebellion differed from both that of the 1930s and that of the late Stalin era.

In addition, the evaluation of Shamil's rebellion was consistent with that of other national movements in nineteenth-century Russia. According to *The*

74 *Istoriia SSSR s drevneishikh vremen do nashikh dnei*, Pervaia seriia toma I-V (Moskva: Izd-vo "Nauka," 1966-1968).

75 *Istoriia SSSR*, Tom IV, p. 359.

76 *Istoriia SSSR*, Tom IV, pp. 433-435.

77 B. D. Datsiuk, ed., *Istoriia SSSR: Uchebnoe posobie*, Izd. 3-e, Ch. 1 (Moskva: Izd-vo "Mysl'," 1970), pp. 177-178; *Bol'shaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia*, Izd. 2-e, T. 51, stlb. 309.

History of the USSR, some anti-feudalist movements in the Russian Empire from the end of the eighteenth century to the 1850s were also anti-colonial movements led by local feudal lords and religious leaders. They tried to use mass opposition to national oppression in order to regain political privilege lost to Russian rule and disseminate religious intolerance and chauvinism. At the first stage of these movements, class conflicts diminished and the movements appeared to be people's movements. However, such movements often failed when their leaders rushed to make peace with the Russian government, and peasants deserted the movements en masse.⁷⁸

Since the 1920s, Soviet historians have been discussing the nature of class conflict within the rebellions of non-Russian people, including Shamil's rebellion,⁷⁹ and in these discussions, Shamil's rebellion has always stood out as a special and unique case. During the Stalin era, the portrayal of Shamil drastically shifted from that of a hero of a national and social liberation movement to that of a leader of a chauvinistic movement and an agent of the Ottoman Empire. However, following discussions among historians after 1953, Shamil's rebellion came to be depicted in works published in Moscow in the 1960s as similar to other national movements, and thus came to be viewed as less exceptional than before. Describing the nature of anti-colonial movements of non-Russian people in the nineteenth century, *The History of the USSR* commented that the greater the orientation toward social reform was, the more progressive the rebellions were, and that the goal of "progressive movements" could not be nationalistic.⁸⁰ Through this standardized evaluation of all the rebellions of non-Russian people, Shamil's rebellion came to be portrayed for the first time as one of several rebellions against nineteenth-century Russia.

CONCLUSION

Many studies considered the dismissal of Pankratova and Burdzhilov from the editorial department of *Voprosy istorii* in 1957 as the end of the "sanctioned freedom" given by the political authorities to historians.⁸¹ Nevertheless, reconsideration of Shamil's rebellion and Russian colonial rule in the North Caucasus never stopped after 1957. The political rehabilitation of the Chechens and the Ingush had a significant influence on the dispute over these problems. As already mentioned, the restoration of the autonomous territories of people deported from the North Caucasus made it necessary for historians to include

78 *Istoriia SSSR*, Tom IV, p. 402.

79 Tateishi, Yoko, "1920 nendai kara 30 nendai shotou no soren ni okeru marukususyugi reki-shika ronsou: hi-roshia shominzokushi wo chuushin ni [Discussion among Soviet Marxist Historians about Non-Russians in the 1920s and Early 1930s]," *Roshia Touou kenkyuu* 40 (2011), pp. 50–64.

80 *Istoriia SSSR*, Tom IV, p. 403.

81 Sidorova, *Ottepel' v istoricheskoi nauke*, p. 162.

these nations in the national history of the USSR again. The Soviet authorities and historians seem to have shared the idea that every autonomous territory within the Soviet Union should have its own history, and in fact, historians have tried to write the histories of each republic and autonomous republic of non-Russian nations since the 1930s. The changes in the portrayal of the history of the North Caucasus after the restoration of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR show that political leaders and historians had maintained this fundamental idea about the descriptions of the history of non-Russian nations until the Khrushchev era. This perspective most likely prevented the official view of Shamil's rebellion from reverting to that of the late Stalin era.

It is noteworthy, however, that objections to the reevaluation of Shamil's rebellion spread among not only political authorities but also among quite a few influential historians. This can be seen in the confrontation between the editors of *Voprosy istorii* and historians from MSU, including Bushuev, Sidorov, and Sidorov's students. That is, the disputes concerning the history of North Caucasus at that time were not simply confrontations between historians and the political authorities. This is also clear from the fact that the chief of the Department of Science and Culture of the CC CPSU, Rumiantsev, was wary of the high level of influence wielded by Pankratova, chief editor of *Voprosy istorii*. At the same time, after the Twentieth Party Congress, Pankratova was often criticized by other historians as a representative historian of the Stalin period. These episodes show that there was not a very clear line between historians and politicians until the late 1950s, though further analysis is needed so as to clarify whether such relationships between historians and the political authorities lasted during and beyond the Brezhnev era.

The debate over Shamil's rebellion from 1953 to 1958 led to standardization of the portrayal of rebellions of non-Russian ethnic groups for the first time in Soviet historical science. Tromly noted that the vagueness in the distinction between healthy and unhealthy thoughts concerning the national question in the post-Stalin era nurtured nationalism among Russian and non-Russian intellectuals.⁸² However, in historical science, the vagueness of these criteria was a peculiarity of the Stalin era rather than of the post-Stalin era. As previously noted, *The History of the USSR* showed the criterion for the progressiveness of anti-colonial movements of non-Russian people in the nineteenth century. This criterion had never been invoked until the 1960s. Therefore, it is most likely that defining the criterion for progressive anti-Russian rebellions and reactionary rebellions in the 1960s made it easier and safer for historians to pursue their own national narratives. Hence, the debate over Shamil's rebellion from 1953 to 1958 created a precondition for the development of the historical narrative of each nation of the USSR, which continued after the Khrushchev era.

82 Tromly, "Soviet Patriotism," pp. 313–314.