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Political repressions against Kyrgyz and Kazakh elite in the 1930s and their implications

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Abstract

Mass political repression of the Stalin era, especially the campaigns of the 1930s to eradicate a variety of “party inclinations lines” and “bourgeois nationalism,” inflicted a severe blow to the Kyrgyz and Kazakh elite. Several negative consequences of repression are still felt and affect the Direction & features of development in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. With scientific and political significance, this issue is not studied adequately and remains debatable in the historical science in both Republics. It is advisable to study Repression against Kyrgyz and Kazakh elite together since they were almost identical and led to similar consequences, for several reasons.

Keywords: Kyrgyz and Kazakh, Stalin era, politic, historical science.

Represiones políticas contra la élite kirguisa y kazaja en la década de 1930 y sus implicaciones

Resumen

La represión política masiva de la era de Stalin, especialmente las campañas de la década de 1930 para erradicar una variedad de "líneas de inclinación del partido" y "nacionalismo burgués", infligieron un duro golpe a la élite kirguisa y kazaja. Todavía se sienten varias consecuencias negativas de la represión y afectan la Dirección y las características del desarrollo en Kirguistán y Kazajstán. Con importancia científica y política, este tema no se estudia adecuadamente y sigue siendo discutible en la ciencia histórica de ambas repúblicas. Es recomendable estudiar juntos la represión contra la élite kirguisa y kazaja, ya que eran casi idénticos y tuvieron consecuencias similares, por varias razones.

Palabras clave: Kirguises y Kazajos, era de Stalin, política, ciencia histórica.

1. INTRODUCTION

Repressive campaigns of the Soviet regime against the traditional (feudal-nomadic) and young Soviet elite was bound with the elimination of most educated and economically independent social groups, who could become potential opponents of Soviet power, organize and lead appearances, building a totalitarian regime and closed societies, forced redistribution of property in favour of state, scrapping the traditional nomadic society of the Kazakhs and Kyrgyz.

The initiation of mass terror of 1937–38, was launched at the plenum of the Central Committee of the All Russia Communist Party (Bolshevik) - ARCP(B) in December 1936 and then continued in February-March plenum of 1937. The ascent of I.V. Stalin to the Central Committee of the ARCP (B) and his thoughts on the need to "eradicate and destroy enemies of the people was picked up everywhere. The processing of public sentiments reached a point that at mass rallies held throughout the country, including in Kazakhstan, the population demanded the death penalty for N.I. Bukharin, A.I. Rykov and others (KANG'ETHE & MAFA, 2015).

In this setting, I.V. Stalin and his comrades decided to put an end at once, to the likelihood of opposition not only in the center but also in national republics. As reflected by the cases of the so-called

“national fascists”, were subjected to repression in 1937–1938, while N.I. Yezhov and his assistants did not bother to fabricate them. They brought to light the long-standing cases of various groups. Among them were those, who earlier defended the interests of Kazakhstan, openly expressed protest about the mass deaths of the Kazakh settlements in 1931–1933. For greater importance was the version that “*national-fascists*”, which was coined and led by the Dy.

Chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars of Russian Socialist Federation of Soviet Republics, T. Ryskulov, Dy. Secretary of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, N. Nurmakov, Chairman of the CEC of Kazakhstan, U.Kulumbetov and others, wanted to separate Kazakhstan from the USSR keep it as a protectorate of Japan, and they are supposedly Japanese-German spies. The absurdity of these charges was obvious, but it did not bother those who fabricated them. For ensuring the fight against the “*national fascists*” and “*enemies of the people*” on a large scale they were charged along with the Trotskyites and the Rightists (Kemper et al., 2009, pp. 250–251).

2. DISCUSSION

For analogy with the Moscow legal processes court sessions were organized to demonstrate wherein necessary “testimony” were squeezed out from defendants.

If the reports of the NKVD [Peoples' Commissariat of Internal Affairs] are to be believed, then in Almaty region alone there were 29 different counter-revolutionary organizations and residencies of foreign intelligence services which were "exposed". In total, 183 "agents" from among with a total number of 3,720 people in Kazakhstan were exposed (ABUSEITOVA & BARANOVA, 2001, pp. 531).

In Central Asia and Kazakhstan, repression was as widespread as all over the country. By incomplete data in Kazakhstan, for example, from 1920 to 1953, 110 thousand people were subjected to political repression (at the beginning of the 2000s, about 96 thousand of them were rehabilitated). 8.5 thousand were declared *Enemies of the people*, which accounted for almost 17% of the entire Kazakhstan party organization of which, as on January 1, 1938, of about 48 thousand communists (ABUSEITOVA & BARANOVA, 2001, p. 531–532; AKIMBEKOV, 2003). Large-scale *cleansing* of the party ranks was conducted in all Central Asian republics (TAJVIDI & ARJANI, 2017).

In the late 1920s, the old national intellectual elite was subjected to politically-motivated repression. In 1930s elite was almost destroyed. Almost immediately after extrajudicial proceedings, figures of the Alashevsky movement were shot. In total, 4,297 people were subjected to repression in the so-called "Alash Orda" case, of which 2062 people were eliminated (ABUSEITOVA & BARANOVA, 2001, pp. 532–533).

The attacks on the elite in Stalin's times were carried out consistently, systematically and brutally. First by pre-revolutionary, than by revolutionary, and later by new Soviet regimes. All suffered. But the system suffered the most for the formation of the elite among the national minorities of the USSR. The question is not among the repressed, the question is in the mechanism of development of elite.

For example, in Kazakhstan, an elite layer was almost destroyed. At first, the leaders of the party “Alash -Orda” fell under the repressions and this is practically the entire Kazakh intelligentsia, educated before the revolution and having administrative experience: Ahmed Baitursunov, Alikhan Bukeikhanov, Haleb Dosmukhamedov, Mukhamedzhan Tynyshpaev, and many others. Then it was the turn of the old Kazakh Communists: Sanjar Asfendiyarov, Turar Ryskulov, and others. The latest repressions also affected the Soviet workers of the new generation.

Several important moments simplified political prosecution against members of an elite and even gave state security agencies a reason for the same.

These include the noble origins of many Soviet officials of the 1920s – 1930s, pre-revolutionary membership in various national parties and movements (especially in the “Alash” party, which included dozens of representatives of the Kazakh and Kyrgyz bureaucracies & intellectuals), group struggle, clannishness, branched official and unofficial connections (this is typical for all Eastern

traditional societies), active position and participation in political discussions of the 1920s.

On close Kazakh-Kyrgyz interrelations on the example of the party “Alash” writes Kyrgyz historian Z.K. Kurmanov. It is within the “Alash” party that the general views of the Kazakh and Kyrgyz intelligentsia on the future of their peoples, crystallize attitude to Russia, to the common folk and new implanted values.

It was in the ranks of the “Alash” party that the future opposition was born, which opposed Bolshevism and Bolshevization of the country, seeing in this dangerous threat to the lives of those nations against mindless universalization and unification, industrialization and collectivization, excesses in politics, that destroyed the foundation of society, its historical Contribution, cultural & Moral values. One of the features of the repression against the elite was their considerable scale. It is necessary to agree with the Kazakh journalist A. Ikonnikov, who wrote: The scale of the struggle with the national and the creative elite in Kazakhstan at that time was comparable to repression in the main centers, such as Moscow and Leningrad.

Presently, long-term negative consequences of mass political repression against the national elite continue to remain.

The modern elite of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan mainly consists of representatives of one layer of the late Soviet Komsomol leaders

and people from the law enforcement system. All of them have almost nothing to do with the traditional nomadic elite and the first generation of the Soviet elite of the 1920s – 1930s, who possessed invaluable experience and skills of thinking, formulating and implementing strategic goals, the ability to quickly assess the situation and make difficult decisions in critical times.

3. CONCLUSION

The next generation of leaders were nominated by the Soviet system from among politically trustworthy social groups or those few representatives of the traditional elite who managed to survive and join their ranks.

Stalinist repression not only destroyed traditional and Soviet elite, but also forcibly broke the transition between the traditional nomadic elite and first generation of the Soviet elite, destroyed the mechanism of continuity & development of elite and leaders (this happened, thanks to years of prosecution of close relatives of persons subjected to repression, which prevented them from taking advantage of social elevators of the Soviet system & restore lost social status). Creating a similar sustainable mechanism for formation and rotation of elite is one of the most important tasks for modern leaders, political classes and societies of both republics, being in the transit post-Soviet period of development.

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