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### **The System of Public Education in Elisabethpol Governorate in the Period 1868–1917. Part 3**

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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 1900 to 1914.

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 Elisabethpol Governorate witnessed significant development in its primary education sector in 1900–1914. In that period, the number of primary schools in the region rose from 91 to 325. This increase was accompanied by a threefold rise in the number of students at them. The growing number of schools intensified the need for teachers. To this end, in 1914 the region's capital became home to a teacher's seminary. Concurrently, transformations also took place in the region's system of lower education, which was reorganized from four- to six-grade. In addition, on the eve of World War I, two of the governorate's regions each became home to a higher primary school, which would contribute to better access to lower education in the region.

The number of secondary educational institutions in Elisabethpol Governorate did not increase in the period under examination. Nevertheless, the growing number of students in the

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region indicated the need for the government to open at least one more male gymnasium in Elisabethpol in the foreseeable future.

As for the ethnic composition of the region's student body, there were declines in each of the dominant groups (Armenians, Tatars, and ethnic Russians). In the period under examination, the number of Armenians at the region's educational institutions dropped from 66 % to 64 %, Tatars – from 19 % to 17 %, and ethnic Russians – from 7 % to 6 %. At the same time, there was a sharp increase in the number of students from other ethnic groups, including Jews and Europeans.

**Keywords:** Elisabethpol Governorate, Caucasus Educational District, 1868–1917 period, 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. The region's student body had a motley ethnic composition (Armenians, Tatars, Jews, ethnic Russians, Georgians, and Europeans). This part of the work is focused on the timeframe 1900–1914.

### **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 1900–1914. 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**

Of the greatest relevance to the present part of the work is the historiography related to the development of the system of public education in the Caucasus in the period 1900–1917. A valuable insight into the subject can be gained from existing research into public education in the following regions: Kars Oblast ([Magsumov et al., 2020](#)), Tiflis Governorate ([Mamadaliyev et al., 2020](#)), Kuban Oblast ([Molchanova et al., 2020](#)), Stavropol Governorate ([Natolochnaya et al., 2020](#)), Black Sea Governorate ([Cherkasov et al., 2020](#)), and Terek Oblast ([Cherkasov et al., 2021](#)).

Research has been conducted into issues of a more specific nature as well, including private education in the Caucasus ([Taran et al., 2021](#)), public education in the Caucasus in the entire prerevolutionary period from 1802 onwards ([Shevchenko et al., 2016](#)), and the operation of mountain schools in the Caucasus ([Natolochnaya et al., 2018](#)).

### **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**

As at 1900, the system of secondary education in Elisabethpol Governorate was represented by a male gymnasium and a female progymnasium in the capital, Elisabethpol, and a real school for boys in Shusha.

On June 28, 1902, Elisabethpol Female Progymnasium was reorganized into a female gymnasium ([Otchet, 1905: 163](#)). In 1908, the Russian government launched a reform introducing compulsory primary education. This raised the issue of preparing an additional teaching workforce. To this end, on June 1, 1914, the capital, Elisabethpol, became home to a teacher's seminary ([Otchet, 1915: table 108](#)).

**Table 1** displays the numbers of secondary educational institutions and students at them in Elisabethpol Governorate in the period 1900–1914.

**Table 1.** Numbers of Secondary Educational Institutions and Students at Them in Elisabethpol Governorate in the Period 1900–1914 (Otchet, 1901: 6, 54, 109, 135, 166, 208; Otchet, 1905: 2, 50, 105, 131, 163, 205; Otchet, 1908: 2, 59, 75, 78, 121, 127; Otchet, 1909: 2, 4, 77, 125; Otchet, 1910: 2-3, 77, 125; Otchet, 1911: 2-3, 77, 189; Otchet, 1912: 2-3, 77, 159; Otchet, 1913: 3, 64-65, 148-149; Otchet, 1914: 3, 64-65, 174-175; Otchet, 1915: tables 1, 36, 108, 123)

Year	Gymnasiums		Progymnasiums		Real schools	Teacher's seminaries	Total	Number of students		
	Male	Female	Male	Female				Boys	Girls	Total
1904	1	1	-	-	1	-	3	983	344	1,327
1907	1	1	-	-	1	-	3	1018	360	1,378
1908	1	1	-	-	1	-	3	984	383	1,367
1909	1	1	-	-	1	-	3	970	385	1,355
1910	1	1	-	-	1	-	3	980	396	1,376
1911	1	1	-	-	1	-	3	970	417	1,383
1912	1	1	-	-	1	-	3	1,065	433	1,498
1913	1	1	-	-	1	-	3	1,128	439	1,567
1914	1	1	-	-	1	1	4	1,210	457	1,631

As evidenced in [Table 1](#), the early 20<sup>th</sup> century did not witness a serious increase in the number of secondary educational institutions in the region. Boys and girls could access secondary education only in the capital, and boys could access secondary education in Shusha as well. Nevertheless, the number of students in the region almost doubled over the 14-year period – from 926 to 1,631. Of particular note is that during that period the capital witnessed significant demand for male gymnasium education. As early as 1911, the number of students at the male gymnasium was 600. It was 684 in 1914. Consequently, the gymnasium was overfilled, which prompted the plans to open up a second male gymnasium in the capital in the observable future. Likewise, there was a twofold increase in the number of students at the female gymnasium, although the figure was still relatively low.

An important part of education in the region was self-education, to which end libraries were used. As at 1900, Elisabethpol Male Gymnasium had a library stock of 19,761, Shusha Real School – 6,651, and Elisabethpol Female Progymnasium – 628 items ([Otchet, 1901: 111, 171](#)). The combined library stock was 27,040 items.

As at 1914, Elisabethpol Male Gymnasium had now a library stock of 29,593 items (20,633 items in the fundamental library section and 8,960 items in the discipular one) ([Otchet..., 1915: table 17](#)). Shusha Real School had a library stock of 7,871 items (2,637 and 5,234 items, respectively) ([Otchet..., 1915: table 51](#)). Elisabethpol Teacher's Seminary, established in 1914, had no library holdings. Its students must have used the library holdings of the male gymnasium. Elisabethpol Female Gymnasium had a library stock of 4,132 items ([Otchet..., 1915: table 138](#)).

Thus, at the end of the period under examination, the region's secondary educational institutions now had a library stock of 41,596 items (a nearly twofold increase).

### Lower education

The first lower educational institution in Elisabethpol Governorate, Shusha Urban School, was opened on June 1, 1875 ([Otchet..., 1895: № 287](#)). As at 1900, the region's network of lower educational institutions included three urban schools (the ones in Elisabethpol, Nukha, and Shusha), one tradesman's specialized school, and one Mariinsky female school.

This network remained unchanged up until 1914, when the region began to witness transformations in this sector.

Specifically, in 1914 all of the region's urban four-grade schools (the ones in Elisabethpol, Nukha, and Shusha) were reorganized into six-grade higher primary schools – the one in Nukha on January 1,

1914, and the ones in Elisabethpol and Shusha on September 1, 1914. In addition, the region became home to another two higher primary schools – Geryusin and Kazakh (Otchet..., 1915: table 183).

Table 2 displays the numbers of lower educational institutions and students at them in Elisabethpol Governorate in the period 1900–1914.

**Table 2.** Numbers of Lower Educational Institutions and Students at Them in Elisabethpol Governorate in the Period 1900–1914 (Otchet, 1901: 296, 350, 431, 456, 486; Otchet, 1905: 292, 346, 427, 440, 452, 482; Otchet, 1908: 228, 252, 324, 346, 394; Otchet, 1909: 264, 366, 406; Otchet, 1910: 264, 290, 404; Otchet, 1911: 264, 290, 404; Otchet, 1912: 264, 290, 390; Otchet, 1913: 232, 250-251, 346; Otchet, 1914: 286, 306-307, 438-439; Otchet, 1915: tables 158, 175, 183, 209)

Year	Higher primary schools	Urban schools	Tradesman's specialized schools	Mariinsky female schools	Total	Number of students		
						Boys	Girls	Total
1900	-	3	1	1	5	1,242	260	1,502
1904	-	3	1	1	5	1,227	309	1,536
1907	-	3	1	1	5	971	192	1,163
1908	-	3	1	1	5	1,149	211	1,360
1909	-	3	1	1	5	1,284	248	1,532
1910	-	3	1	1	5	1,310	243	1,553
1911	-	3	1	1	5	1,393	266	1,659
1912	-	3	1	1	5	1,374	277	1,651
1913	-	3	1	1	5	1,417	246	1,663
1914	5	-	1	1	7	973	264	1,237

As in the case of the region's secondary educational institutions, there was a minor increase in the number of its lower educational institutions – from five to seven. The growth took place in 1914. The size of the student body at lower educational institutions in the region was heavily influenced by social phenomena. Specifically, in the conditions of the First Russian Revolution, the number of students at Elisabethpol Urban School dropped from 541 (1904) to 391 (1907). There was a decline in the size of the student body at the Mariinsky female school as well – from 309 to 192. The next major decline occurred with the start of World War I, when the size of the student body at Elisabethpol Urban School decreased from 623 (in 1913) to 340 (in 1914).

A few words will now be said about the sector's library stock. As at 1900, the three urban schools had a combined library stock of 10,449 items. The Mariinsky female school in Shusha and the tradesman's specialized school in Elisabethpol had a library stock of 1,618 and 2,653 items, respectively (Otchet..., 1901: 301, 432, 459). Thus, the combined library stock in this sector as at 1900 was 14,720 items.

As at 1914, the Mariinsky female school had a library stock of 1,592 items (Otchet..., 1915: table 164). Geryusin and Kazakh Higher Primary Schools, opened in 1914, each had a small library stock – 27 and 22 items, respectively (Otchet..., 1915: table 184). Elisabethpol Higher Primary School had a library stock of 7,320 items, Nukha Higher Primary School – 5,649, and Shusha Higher Primary School – 4,689 items (Otchet..., 1915: table 184). The tradesman's specialized school in Elisabethpol had a library stock of 3,771 items (Otchet..., 1915: table 217). Thus, the combined library stock in this sector as at 1914 was 23,070 items (an increase of more than 50 %).

### Primary education

As at 1885, Elisabethpol Governorate had in operation 33 primary schools under the purview of the Ministry of Public Education (Otchet..., 1886: applications). The figure was 91 as at 1900 (Otchet..., 1901: 536).

Table 3 displays the numbers of primary schools under the purview of the Ministry of Public Education and students at them in Elisabethpol Governorate in the period 1900–1914.

**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 1900–1914 (Otchet..., 1901: 536, 566; Otchet..., 1905: 532, 562; Otchet..., 1908: 350, 352; Otchet..., 1909: 392, 394; Otchet..., 1910: 390, 392; Otchet..., 1911: 390, 392; Otchet..., 1912: 448, 450; Otchet..., 1913: 334-336; Otchet..., 1914: 426-428; Otchet..., 1915: table 199, 202)

Year	Number of schools	Number of students		
		Boys	Girls	Total
1900	91	5,152	1,152	6,303
1904	156	8,326	1,541	9,867
1906	122	-	-	-
1907	119	6,471	1,334	7,805
1908	124	7,163	1,656	8,819
1909	135	7,658	1,840	9,498
1910	160	9,358	1,708	11,066
1911	180	9,633	1,967	11,600
1912	215	10,528	2,381	12,909
1913	313	14,131	3,641	17,772
1914	325	15,077	3,972	19,049

As evidenced in Table 3, in the period 1900–1914, the number of primary educational institutions in the region increased more than three times (from 91 to 325). In the same period, the number of students in this sector increased more than three times as well, with there being increases of 2.8 times among boys and 3.5 times among girls. There were changes in the number of students per school as well. Whereas in 1885 the figure was 35.2 students per school, it was 69.2 in 1900 and 58.6 in 1914. This was associated with the introduction of a per-school limit of 50 students in 1908.

### Private educational institutions

Across the Caucasus Educational District and throughout Elisabethpol Governorate private education was characterized by instability and a tendency to respond to changes in demand. The figure fluctuated significantly – in a range between two and nine. The sector was comprised of secondary, lower, and primary educational institutions.

Table 4 displays the numbers of private educational institutions and students at them in Elisabethpol Governorate in the period 1900–1914.

**Table 4.** Numbers of Private Educational Institutions and Students at Them in Elisabethpol Governorate in the Period 1900–1914 (Otchet..., 1901: 518, 526; Otchet..., 1905: 514, 522; Otchet..., 1908: 454; Otchet..., 1909: 466; Otchet..., 1910: 464; Otchet..., 1911: 464; Otchet..., 1912: 466; Otchet..., 1913: 392-393; Otchet..., 1914: 486-487; Otchet..., 1915: table 234)

Year	Number of schools				Number of students		
	Secondary	Lower	Primary	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1900	-	-	9	9	373	221	594
1904	-	-	5	5	190	25	215
1907	-	-	2	2	54	1	55
1908	-	-	3	3	67	6	73
1909	-	-	2	2	105	21	126
1910	-	-	2	2	114	20	134
1911	-	-	2	2	100	24	124
1912	-	-	3	3	124	48	172



1913	-	1	5	6	188	62	250
1914	1	1	3	5	83	28	111

As evidenced in Table 4, in the period under examination the region did not witness much activity in its private education sector. From 1900 to 1912, it was represented by primary schools solely. It was not before 1913 that this sector saw the addition of a lower educational institution, with a secondary one also opening in 1914. Furthermore, the number of students in this sector continued to decline. This was associated with the dominance of primary schools in the region. Overall, the region's private education sector witnessed a fivefold decline in the size of its student body – from 591 (in 1900) to 111 (in 1914), with the number of girl students declining nearly 800 %.

In terms of ethnic composition, it is worth recalling that from 1868 to 1884 over 57 % of the student body was made up of Armenians, followed by Tatars – 23 %, Europeans – 13.8 %, and ethnic Russians – less than 5 % (Magsumov et al., 2021: 1046). In the period from 1885 to 1900, Armenians now accounted for 66 % of the student body, followed by Tatars – 19 % and then ethnic Russians – 7.2 % (Magsumov et al., 2022: 305).

Table 5 displays the statistical data on the ethnic composition of the region's student body as at 1914.

**Table 5.** Ethnic Composition of the Student Body in Elisabethpol Governorate as at 1914 (Otchet..., 1901; Otchet..., 1915)

Educational institution	Ethnic Russians	Georgians	Armenians	Tatars	Mountaineers	Other ethnicities, including Jews
<b>Secondary education</b>						
Male gymnasium	115	22	233	139	-	165
Real school	4	8	329	136	-	1
Female gymnasium	139	19	262	19	-	18
Teacher's seminary	8	7	8	9	-	6
Total	266	56	832	303	-	190
<b>Lower education</b>						
Elisabethpol Higher Primary School	50	40	100	150	-	-
Shusha Higher Primary School	6	-	110	41	-	1
Nukha Higher Primary School	16	1	81	147	-	-
Geryusin Higher Primary School	5	-	55	18	-	-
Kazakh Higher Primary School	5	-	28	31	-	-
Mariinsky female school	26	-	222	8	-	8
Tradesman's specialized school	14	-	31	62	-	5
Total	122	41	627	457	-	14

Private education						
Private schools	Data not available					
Primary education						
Primary schools	739	17	10,028	2,647	-	1,618
Total	739	17	10,028	2,647	-	1,618
Grand total as at 1900	667	91	6,163	1,772	59	614
Grand total as at 1914	1,127	114	11,487	3,407	-	1,822
Total number of students as at 1914	17,957					

As evidenced in Table 5, relative to 1885 the number of Armenians at educational institutions in the region increased in 1900 from 57 % to 66 %, declining a little by 1914 – to 64 %. The number of Tatar students dropped to 17.2 %, and the number of ethnic Russian students declined a little as well – from 7.2 % (in 1900) to 6.2 % (in 1914). At the same time, there was a sharp increase in the number of students from other ethnic groups – from 673 (in 1900) to 1,822 (in 1914).

## 5. Conclusion

Elisabethpol Governorate witnessed significant development in its primary education sector in 1900–1914. In that period, the number of primary schools in the region rose from 91 to 325. This increase was accompanied by a threefold rise in the number of students at them. The growing number of schools intensified the need for teachers. To this end, in 1914 the region's capital became home to a teacher's seminary. Concurrently, transformations also took place in the region's system of lower education, which was reorganized from four- to six-grade. In addition, on the eve of World War I, two of the governorate's regions each became home to a higher primary school, which would contribute to better access to lower education in the region.

The number of secondary educational institutions in Elisabethpol Governorate did not increase in the period under examination. Nevertheless, the growing number of students in the region indicated the need for the government to open at least one more male gymnasium in Elisabethpol in the foreseeable future.

As for the ethnic composition of the region's student body, there were declines in each of the dominant groups (Armenians, Tatars, and ethnic Russians). In the period under examination, the number of Armenians at the region's educational institutions dropped from 66 % to 64 %, Tatars – from 19 % to 17 %, and ethnic Russians – from 7 % to 6 %. At the same time, there was a sharp increase in the number of students from other ethnic groups, including Jews and Europeans.

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