

## NEW POLITICAL BOUNDARIES IN THE CAUCASUS

William Edward David Allen

The Geographical Journal, Vol. 69, No. 5. (May, 1927), pp. 430-441.

The Geographical Journal is currently published by The Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers).

New Political Boundaries In The Caucasus

W.E.D. Allen

### **Events in the Caucasus, 1916-1924.**

The former Russian Vice-royalty of the Caucasus comprised all the territory between the line of the Manich Depression on the north—bordering the Government of Astrakhan and the territory of the Don Cossaks—and the Turkish and Persian frontiers on the south and south-east. With the collapse of the Imperial *régime* in the spring of 1917, and the seizure of power by the Bolsheviks in the autumn of the same year, a process developed throughout the Russian Empire of disintegration into component national units. That part of the Vice-royalty lying north of the Caucasus mountains, comprising the Government of Stavropol and the Provinces of the Kuban and Terek Cossacks, remained politically a part of Russia, and was during 1918 and 1919 one of the principal theatres of military operations during the Russian Civil War. In the eastern mountains, including the Chechen and Ingush districts and Daghestan, acutely anarchic conditions prevailed. The tribesmen became alternately the dupes of Turkish and Tatar political adventures, and the victims of the military excursions of the contending “Red” and “White” factions. In the first month of 1918 a “Republic of the Mountaineers”—alternately “Gorkskaya” or “Daghestanskaya Respublika”—was formed, with a capital, first at Vladikavkaz, later at Nazran, and finally at Temir-Khan-Shura (now Buinaksk). In March 1919 Denikin occupied Temir-Khan-Shura. In the autumn, however, the tribes rose, and Denikin was only suppressing them with difficulty at the moment when his northern front was broken by the Bolsheviks. It was not until a year later that the Bolsheviks finally re-established Russian authority in the mountains in a six months’ campaign lasting until May 1921, which involved much sharp fighting, and of which a recent account, published in Moscow,\* recalls Baryatinski’s operations against Shamil.

In Transcaucasia, the three republics formed during 1918 on a national basis failed to maintain both their independence of Russia and their democratic systems of government. The failure was due as much to economic as to political reasons. In April 1920 the “Musavetist” or nationalist Government of Azerbaijan, who had for a long time been contending with a severe crisis in the petroleum industry—a crisis insoluble without access to the Russian market—withdrew from Baku, and the “Hummet” or local Bolshevik party received the Russian troops, who arrived on April 27 to occupy “the oil city.” By the autumn of 1920 the position of the Armenian Republic had become hopeless, unless substantial support, both

\* ‘Krasnaya armiya v gorakh’ (‘The Red Army in the Mountains: Operations in Daghestan,’ by A. Todorski). 187 pages, with maps, plans, and tables. “Voenni Vestnik,” Moscow, 1924.

financial, diplomatic, and military, could be obtained from the Allies. This was not forthcoming, and in December, when the troops of Kazim Karabekir Pasha had already occupied Kars and Alexandropol (now Leninakan), the members of the Dashnakist (nationalist) Government retired to Tabriz, and the local Bolsheviks set up a Soviet Government, and welcomed the arrival at Erivan of Russian troops to hold the Turkish advance.

To all political observers it was now obvious that the situation of the Georgian Republic was hopeless. The position of the Republic was weak, both financially and economically, and psychologically the people were either divided or indifferent. In March 1921 the Soviet troops, without a declaration of war, invaded the territory of the Republic at four points—by the Kura Valley, the Daryal Defile (Georgian Military Road), the Mamison Pass (Ossetian Military Road), and the Gagri Pass (Black Sea coast-road). Within a month the whole of Georgia was in Bolshevik occupation, and Russian authority had been restored over the whole of the former Vice-Royalty, with the exception of the border districts seized by the Turks from the Armenians in December 1920, and from the Georgians in March 1921.

The whole of Transcaucasia was, however, still subject to sporadic outbreaks, inspired by the national or religious sentiments of the different populations. In June 1920 there were Tatar risings at Elisavetpol (now Ganja) and Shamkhor, and in the spring of 1921 two or three Dashnakist outbreaks in Armenia; in the autumn of 1922 and the spring of 1923 an expedition was engaged in the pacification of Svanet'hi, and suffered some reserves; and in the spring of 1924 a formidable Georgian revolt swept the Rion (Rhioni) valley and the eastern district of Kakhet'hi.

### **The Transcaucasian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic.**

The growth of national self-consciousness among the minor racial groups of the old Russian Empire has been a slow and obscure process during the last fifty years. The movement, or rather the various movements, are complicated by a number of conflicting tendencies, which have had a contemporary development. Economic Socialism and political internationalism; Agrarianism and Communism; the essentially Pan-Slavonic, yet anti-Muscovite, basis of Ukrainian and of White Russian nationalism; the hesitation in Georgia and in Armenia between a "European" and a "Russian" orientation; among the Tatars between and "Osmanli" and a "Russo-Turanian" orientation, between "Pan-Turanism" and "Pan-Islamism" : all these trends and attitudes have tended to ferment a political and economic confusion, which has expressed and is expressing itself in innumerable conflicts, which continue to have their reactions over the whole of Eastern Europe and Western and Southern Asia.

The Bolsheviks have attempted to evolve a solution which will marshal and combine all the conflicting tendencies and movements of the nationalities of the former Russian Empire, in the formula of the Union of Soviet Republics.

The Union comprises officially six Soviet Republics or Federated Soviet Republics: the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, the White Russian Socialist Soviet Republic, the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic, the Transcaucasian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, the Usbek Socialist Soviet Republic, and the Turkoman Socialist Soviet Republic. Formally, therefore, the Union is no more distinctly Russian than it is Ukrainian, Usbek, or Georgian.

The constitution of the Union is extremely complicated, and for its elucidation a separate paper would be necessary.\* In effect it may be said that all the elaborate rights of the constituent nationalities of the Union are not permitted to interfere with the dictatorship of the Communist Party. The nationalities have, however, scope for a limited development, primarily linguistic and cultural, within the Union. The whole system is both interesting and significant. The philosophy upon which the system is based aims in theory at a World Federation of peoples, and in practice and policy, at a Federation of Asiatic peoples, the influence of which may well prove both attractive and disturbing from the Balkans and Western Asia to Korea. Within the Union itself the system is already provoking a conflict of opinion between (1) those elements who are concerned primarily with world-revolution, (2) those who wish to adopt a Pan-Slavonic basis, and (3) those representatives of minor nationalities who are anxious to develop and improve the position of the national groups. It may at any rate be anticipated that the divisions established within the Union will have a permanent value at least in the collective minds of the nationalities concerned, and any future government in Moscow which attempts to return to a definite Pan-Slavonic basis, will be confronted with the necessity of combating or placating varied and strengthened national movements over all the southern and eastern extent of the Union.

In March 1922 a Plenary Conference of the Central Executive Committees of the Soviet Republics of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia met to consider the association of the three Republics into the Transcaucasian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, and in December of the same year their decisions were approved and confirmed by the First Transcaucasian Session of Soviets of Workmen's and Peasants' Deputies.\*\* The boundaries of the Federation included only the Transcaucasian or southern half of the former Vice-Royalty of the Caucasus, and excluded both Daghestan and the districts ceded to Turkey by the Treaties of Moscow (16 March 1921) and Kars (13 October 1921). The frontiers of the Federation with the Russian S.F.S.R. and with Turkey may be considered in conjunction with the specific boundaries of the different Republics.

\* The Constitution of the Union is set out in a Foreign Office Blue Book, 'Soviet Russia: A Description of the Various Political Units existing on Russian Territory, to which is appended the Constitution of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics of July 6, 1923 (with two maps). Compiled from material supplied by the British Commercial Mission in Moscow' (H.M. Stationery Office, 1924). This publication has now become in some minor respects out of date. It was published before the formation of the Turkoman Socialist Soviet Republic, and before the liquidation of the Gorski Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic. In the spelling of Caucasian names the Russian forms have been very closely followed.

For the Constitution of U.S.S.R. and for present political divisions compare also the 'Soviet Union Year-Book,' 1926, 'The Statesman's Year-Book,' 1926, and Dr. Haden Guest, M.P.—'The New Russia.' In none of these publications is the present political geography of Central Asia really adequately elucidated. Much information on both the Caucasus and Central Asia may, however, be found in *Novi Vostok* ('The New East'), a periodical publication of the All-Russian Scientific Association of Eastern Studies.

But probably the best available authority for the new political divisions is the Administrative Map of S.S.S.R. (1) European Part, 1: 3,000,000, January 1925; (2) ditto, 1: 4,200,000, October 1925; (3) Asiatic Part, 1: 10,500,000, February 1925 (all in the Society's collection), published by the Cartographical Section of the National Ministry for Internal Affairs.

\*\* Zumbadze, 'Constitution of the T.S.F.S.R.' Tiflis, 1923.

## **Boundaries of the Transcaucasian Republics.\***

GEORGIA S.S.R. (capital Tiflis, which is also the capital of the T.S.F.S.R.) comprises the former Government (Guberniya) of Tiflis [with the exception of the Circuit (okrug) of Zakatali and part of the District (uezd) of Borchalu] and the whole of the former Government of Kutais. There are three lesser units either united with or included in the Republic.

- (a) The small Abkhaz people, numbering possibly 100,000, have been constituted into the Abkhazia S.S.R. (capital Sukhum), which is united by treaty with Georgia S.S.R.\*\* The Abkhazian Republic comprises the Region (raion) of Gagri, and the four Districts of Gudauti, Gumist, Kodori, and Samurzakani.\*\*\* Abkhaz, who find mention in many ancient sources from Strabo to Evliya, are among the most interesting of Caucasian tribes. Their language has affinities with the Kartvelian (Georgian) group and in on the other side, remotely connected with the various dialects of the Circassians (Cherkes) and the Kabardians.
- (b) The Georgian-speaking Mussulman hill-men, along the Turkish frontier, have been constituted into the Ajaristan\*\*\*\* Autonomous S.S.R. (administrative centre Batumi), in which are included the seven Regions of Kobuleti, Chakva, Batumi, Ajari-Tskhali, Kedi, Khuloi, and Skhedi.
- (c) The districts north of Gori, whose Ossetian inhabitants were always a source of anxiety to the Tiflis nationalists, form the Southern Ossetia\*\*\*\*\* Autonomous Province. The administrative centre of Southern Ossetia is Tskhinvali, and the Province comprises parts of the Regions of Gori, Dusheti, Shorapan, and Racha.

\* For further details the reader is referred to the following publications (in Russian):

(1) A. F. Lyaister and G. F. Chursin, 'A Geography of the Caucasus: The Country and its Peoples' (pub. Trans-C. Comm. University, Tiflis, 1924).

(2) 'Transcaucasia: A Statistical-Economic Compilation' (pub. Higher Economic Council T.S.F.S.R., Tiflis, 1925).

(3) 'Informationer (*lit.* Spravochnik) for the T.S.F.S.R.' (Tiflis, 1926).

It is a point of interest that in recent publications the Soviet Government has adopted, for purposes of linguistic classification, the "Japhetic Theory" of Professor N. Y. Marr of Leningrad. See Lyaister and Chursin, pp. 269-340, and also current publications of the Russian Academy of Sciences (in the Society's Library).

\*\* F.O. Blue Book, p. 9, states that Georgia "includes" A.S.S.R. Abkhazia. The status of Abkhazia, in being formally united by treaty with Georgia, is in theory slightly different from the A.S.S.R. Ajaristan, which is included in Georgia.

\*\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 9, has "six districts in the former Province of Sukhum."

\*\*\*\* F.O. Blue Book, p.9, gives spelling Ajara, "comprising the former Batumi Province." Parts of the Province of Batumi were ceded to Turkey by the Treaty of Kars (see p. 435).

\*\*\*\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 9, has "The Autonomous Region of Yugo-Osetie."

The northern boundaries of Abkhazia S.S.R. and Georgia, that is, of the Transcaucasian S.F.S.R., follow the small river Psoi, falling into the Black Sea between Sochi and Gagri, and in a general direction east-south-east, continue along the watershed of the Western Caucasus to the sources of the Kodori and the Ingur.

Immediately South-west of Adai Khokh, the boundary as between the Russian and the Transcaucasian Federated Republics makes a considerable southward loop, which leaves in Russian hands the peak of the important Mamison Pass. The boundary cuts across the Georgian Military Road at a point South of the post of Lars, leaving Kazbek and the Daryal defile in Georgia. East of Daryal the boundary takes an east-north-easterly direction, covering the territory of the Georgian-speaking Tushes and Pshavs, and bringing the headwaters of the Argun and of the Andi-Koisu within Georgian territory. At a point north-east of Dano it curves sharply South, and then runs east-south-east along the watershed of the Avari-Koisu and the Alazan.

The eastern boundary of Georgia with Azerbaijan follows the old local boundaries of the District of Signakh and Tiflis; and that with Armenia follows the former boundaries between the Governments of Tiflis and Erivan, with the exception that the Circuit of Lori, formerly in the Georgian District of Borchalu, is now part of the Armenian District of Bambak.

The southern frontier of Georgia contiguous to that of Turkey is of great interest.\* Here, by the Treaty of Kars, the frontier has been restored as it was before 1877, except that the small region round Batum is still included within the Soviet Union. The recent history of this country has been chequered. By the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk the territory, including Batum, was ceded to Turkey. Ottoman troops occupied all the ceded territory, and also Akhaltsikh, Akhalkalaki, Atskura, and Ozurgeti, in the first month of 1918. Only German intervention checked their advance on Tiflis, and persuaded them to concentrate their attention on Baku and the Eastern Caucasus. Under the terms of the Armistice the Turks withdrew, and the Armenians occupied most of the disputed territory, with the exception of Artvin and Ardanuch, which fell to the Georgians. In 1920, when the Turks attacked the Armenian Republics and recaptured Kars, the Georgians entered Ardahan. A few months later, when the Russians invaded Georgia, the Turks occupied Artvin, Ardanuch, and Ardahan without resistance, and advanced to Batum, whence after a skirmish with Soviet troops they again withdrew.

By the Treaty of Kars the Turks evacuated only Alexandropol (Leninakan).\*\* They were confirmed in the possession of the District of Artvin, the southern part of the Batum District of the Province of Batum, the whole of the Province of Kart, and the Surmali Region of the Government of Erivan. The whole area is estimated to represent about 18,000 square miles. The frontier is still subject to delimitation, and as late as July a Turkish Boundary Commission was working in Tiflis.\*\*\*

\* See *Geographical Journal*, June 1923.

\*\* Many place-names in the Caucasus have recently been altered, both on national and political grounds. Alexandropol [formerly (1826) Gumri (? Gimri—Kimri—Kimmerians)] is now Leninakan. Khankend = Stepanakert (? Old Armenian Shaumian, a noted Armenian Communist); Elisavetpol = Ganja (old Armenian Kantzak); Petrovsk = Makhach-Kala; Mikhailovo = Hashuri; Ekaterinodar = Krasnodar; Temir-Khan-Shura=Buinaksk, etc.

\*\*\* The latest information is that the work of the Commission is now complete.

The provisional Georgian-Turkish frontier, beginning at the village of Sarp, on the Black Sea coast, just south of Batum, goes east until it crosses the river Chorokh near the village of Maradidi. It then penetrates the southern part of the Shavsheti range to the northern boundary of the former Circuit of Artvin; following this boundary and the northern boundary of the former Circuit of Ardahan, it cuts across the Lake of Khozapin, to the mountain of Uch-Tapalyar, where the frontiers of Georgia, Armenia, and Turkey converge. This region with the Laz districts of Turkey, extending as far as the hinterland of Trabzon, forms the home of exceedingly intractable Georgian-speaking Mussulman tribes. The Ajars rose against the Russians in 1877 and again in 1914 and 1917, and in 1918-19 they were a constant source of trouble to the Tiflis Government. The Ajars at present remaining within the boundaries of Georgia receive particularly favourable treatment from the Soviet Government, and they show no immediate anxiety to join their recently "liberated" co-religionists across the Turkish frontier. They are aware of the economic decay which has fallen on the districts ceded to Turkey, and when I was among them last summer they were congratulating themselves upon being beyond the scope of Kemal's "hat decree." They are keen hunters, and also inveterate smugglers, doing a roaring trade in contraband in Batum, Akhaltsikh, and the surrounding districts.

AZERBAIJAN S.S.R (capital Baku) comprises the whole of the former Government of Baku and the former Government of Elisavetpol (Ganja), with the exception of the District of Zanzegur, and part of that of Kazakh, and includes the Zakatali Circuit of the former Government of Tiflis.

*Mountain Qarabagh Autonomous Province* (administrative centre Khankend, now Stepanakert) has been constituted to give local self-government to the Armenian majority which inhabits parts of the former Districts of Jevanshir, Shusha, Qarayaz and Kubatli. A minor autonomous division has been formed within this in order to give representation to groups of Kurdish villages in the western parts of Jevanshir and Shusha, and northern Kubatli.

These Qarabagh Armenians are a particularly fine type, renowned throughout the Caucasus, and indeed in Russia, for their military qualities. Until the middle of the eighteenth century they maintained their independence under their own Meliks, who took part in the Transcaucasian Campaign of Peter the Great (1722). Qarabagh has given many famous leaders to the Russian army, including Lazarev, Loris-Melikov and Tergukhasov. The famous partizan leaders of the late war, Murad and Nazarbekian, came from the Qarabagh. Hanoyan, the present Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the T.S.F.S.R., comes from Qarabagh, and also General Gaish, one of the best-known Soviet cavalry leaders. The region is rich in historical remains, which are at the present time being investigated by a Russian Scientific Expedition.\*

Nakhichevan Territory\*\* is a political curiosity. It forms a triangular "enclave" within Armenia S.S.R., and adjoins the Persian Araxes frontier. The population contains a substantial Tatar majority, and for this reason it has been excluded from Armenia S.S.R. and placed under the protectorate of Azerbaijan S.S.R. It covers the territory of the former District of Nakhichevan, and contains the towns of Nakhichevan, Julfa, Ordubad, and Bash-Nurashen. It is of some strategic importance, since Julfa forms the terminus of the Caucasian railway system, and controls communications with Tabriz and Persian Azerbaijan. Julfa will also form the junction of the proposed new line which will link Baku direct with Tabriz and Erivan.

\* F.O. Blue Book omits reference to Mountain Qarabagh.

\*\* F.O. Blue Book describes Nakhichevan as an "Autonomous Province."

The northern boundary of Azerbaijan with Daghestan A.S.S.R. continues in a South-easterly direction along the watershed of the Alazan and the Samur, until north-east of Nukha it curves east, and then north-east, meeting the Samur at the village of Ermolovski, and keeping the course of that river until its debouchure in the Caspian.

The southern frontier of Azerbaijan follows the old Russo-Persian frontier of 1914: the river Astara, the Talish chain—Belyasuvar— whence it cuts due north-west across the Mughan Steppe, to its junction with the Araxes, which it follows to the Armenian boundary, where the small district of Megrin alone separates Azerbaijan from its autonomous protectorate of Nakhichevan.

ARMENIA S.S.R. (capital Erivan) includes the former Government of Erivan, with the exception of the Districts of Surmali (Turkish) and of Nakhichevan. It includes also, from the former Government of Elisavetpol (Ganja), the District of Zanzegur, and part of the District of Kazakh, formed by the Region of Delijan. The Lori Region, formerly part of the Government of Tiflis, is also included in Armenia.

Armenia has suffered a reduction of approximately half her extent as a result of the political developments of 1920-21. She has lost the whole of the old Government of Kars, besides outlying districts. Her two chief centres of population—Erivan and Alexandropol—(now Leninakan) are within gunshot of the Turkish frontier. The sacred mountain of Ararat is once more in Turkish hands, as are also the ruins of the royal city of Ani. Finally, the Armenians have had to abandon all prospect of acquiring the rich plain of Alashkert, where they might have settled the thousands of their refugees.

The new Armeno-Turkish frontier—the old Russo-Turkish frontier of 1877—runs in a south-easterly direction from the junction of the Georgo-Turkish frontier round Uch-Tapalyar. It follows the small but historic stream of the Arpa Chai (the Barley river) to its junction with the Araxes. The Araxes continues to form the frontier between the Soviet Union and Turkey, to the convergence of the three frontiers north-east of Mount Ararat. The boundary of Armenia S.S.R., enclosing the Nakhichevan Territory, touches the Araxes again a few miles below Ordubad.

### **Administrative Areas north of the Caucasus.**

The Soviets, in pursuance of the policy of decentralization on a national basis, have divided the northern and north-eastern parts of the former Vice-Royalty into one Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic and a number of autonomous provinces.

DAGHESTAN A.S.S.R., established by decree January 1921—capital Petrovsk (now Makhach-Kala)—comprises the former Province of Daghestan, the Khasav-Yurt Circuit of the former Province of Terek, and parts of the Province of Terek and of the Government of Stavropol inhabited by the Qara-Nogai Tatars. The Daghestan A.S.S.R. thus includes a great expanse of steppe, and its frontiers stretch from the Kuma to the Samur.

The principal tribes included in the Daghestan A.S.S.R. bear names celebrated in the Mountain War, and immortalized in Mr. J. F. Baddeley's "Russian Conquest of the Caucasus." Not less than twenty-five different languages are spoken in the mountains, and they may be divided into five principal linguistic groups. The present numbers of the mountaineers as estimated by Lyaister and Chursin (1924) are of interest: (1) Avars (234,000); (2) Laki (Lesghi) or Kazi Kumuks (90,000); (3) Dargis (130,000); (4) Kiurins (215,000); (5) Andis and Didos (45,000).

The various tribes scattered over the country between the estuary of the Kuban and middle reaches of the Terek, have been grouped into separate Autonomous Provinces. These are (1) Adighe-Circassia A.P., occupying a narrow stretch of country along the left banks of the Laba and the middle Kuban (administrative centre Ekaterinodar, now Krasnodar\*); (2) Qarachai\*\*-Circassia A.P., inhabited by Turks and Circassians (Cherkes) scattered over the northern slopes of the Western Caucasus along the valleys of the Urup, the Zelenjik, and the Teberda (administrative centre Batalpashinsk); (3) Kabarda-Balkaria A.P., inhabited by "mountain Tatars" who are settled on the northern side of the Central Caucasus over the valleys of the Baksan, the Chegem, and the Uruk (administrative centre Nalchik); and (4) Chechnia A.P., inhabited by the Chechens of the former administrative Circuit of Grozni.\*\*\* The Ossetians, the Ingushes, and the Sunja Cossacks, inhabiting the districts round Vladikavkaz, constituted from January 1921 to June 1924 the Gorskaya A.S.S.R. The Gorskaya Republic has now been liquidated, and there have been established the Northern Ossetia A.P., Ingushetia A.P., and Sunja Circuit. The administrative centre of these Autonomous Provinces is Vladikavkaz, which itself enjoys a special *régime* as a "free town." The same kind of *régime* has been applied to Grozni, which is the administrative centre of the Chechnia Autonomous Province.

The rest of the old Vice-Royalty of the Caucasus, comprising most of the old Government of Stavropol and parts of the former Province of Terek and of the Black Sea Government, constitute an administrative unit known as the North Caucasus Territory. Parts of the former province of the Don Cossacks are in this Territory, which is included in the Russian S.F.S.R., and is in enjoyment of no peculiar *régime*.

To conclude, the present Soviet policy of autonomy and decentralization, which is at least effective in the spheres of language and local culture, gives promise of being an experiment of absorbing interest. The political results cannot be foreseen, and may not become evident before many years have elapsed. It may be said, however, that the new trend towards the autonomy of nationalities within the Union is not a mere essay in cartographical fantasy but represents a considered policy, which is intended to counter, and in some cases actually anticipates, a new consciousness of national individuality among those many groups of varied racial composition and of different degree of culture who find themselves within the borders of the Soviet Union.

\* F.O. Blue Book gives capital as Tokhtomukai (p. 7). Soviet Year Book (1926) and other Russian publications give Krasnodar.

\*\*F.O. Blue Book, p.7, gives spelling "Karachaev," and describes the inhabitants of Kabarda (Russ. Kabardintsi, Eng. Kabardins or Kabards) as "Kabarda."

\*\*\* F.O. Blue Book, p. 7, states that the "Chechensk Region is formed from the Chechensk district (?) of the Gorski Republic." No Russian publication indicates the Autonomous Chechen Territory as having formed part of the now defunct Gorskaya Republic.

#### NOTE ON THE TRANSLATION OF RUSSIAN ADMINISTRATIVE TERMS

The question of the translation of Russian administrative terms is exceedingly complicated, and to the best of my knowledge no standard method has ever been adopted. For example, the word *Oblast'* is rendered by different authorities "Province," "Territory," "Region." If we taken into consideration the general Russian usage of the various words, the following are perhaps the most satisfactory translations:

GOVERNMENT, *Guberniya*: formerly applied to the largest administrative unit of the Russian Empire and retained as an administrative term by the Soviets. There are no Governments in the Caucasus now.

PROVINCE, *Oblast'*: formerly having a more military implication than *Guberniya*, and originally applied to outlying territories in Siberia, Turkistan, and the Caucasus, e.g. Maritime Province, *Primorskaya Oblast'*. It is also the ordinary Russian word for "province" in the figurative sense, e.g. "the province of geography." (The word *Primorskaya* is used of a Province in a foreign country.)

TERRITORY, *Krai*: primarily meaning "border," then "border country," "march" (German *mark*), and finally simply "country" as in the phrase "foreign countries." "Country," however, is too vague a term for a definite political area.

DISTRICT, *Uezd* (pronounced *U-yézd*): the ordinary subdivision of a Government, *Guberniya*.

CIRCUIT, *Okrug* (from the preposition *o* = round and *krug* = circle): originally having the same relation to *Oblast'* as *Uezd* had to *Guberniya*, but now apparently interchangeable with *Uezd*.

DIVISION, *Otdel* (pronounced *Atdyél*): formerly used instead of *Okrug* for a subdivision of an *Oblast'* in certain cases, as in the old Kuban Province. It has a distinctly military significance.

These are the main political areas. Smaller units, not usually shown on Russian maps, are:

Canton, *Volost'*: an aggregation of villages, somewhat like our Hundred or Rural Deanery.

Region, *Raion* (from the French *rayon*): apparently the same, with a military implication, originally meaning a group of connected forts. It is also the word ordinarily used in such a phrase as "gold-bearing region."

The following abbreviations for the titles of autonomous or semi-autonomous areas appear to be in use in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (U.S.S.R.), *Soyuz Sotsialisticheskikh Sovetskikh Respublik* (S.S.S.R.).

S.S.R. = Socialist Soviet Republic, *Sotsialisticheskaya Sovetskaya Respublika*.

F. (inserted between the two Ss of the foregoing) = Federated, *Federativnaya*.

A. (sometimes before and sometimes after the distinctive name) = Autonomous, *Avtonomnaya* (often abbreviated *Avt.*).

P. (anglice) = Province, *Oblast'* (O., but often abbreviated *Obl.*).

The distinctive name in the Russian form is either (i) an adjective with masculine ending *-ski* (to agree with *Krai*, *Uezd*, *Okrug*, *Otdel*, *Raion*) and feminine ending *-skaya* (to agree with *Respublika*, *Guberniya*, *Oblast'*, *Volost'*); or (ii.) a substantive in apposition in the nominative case, e.g. *Avtonomnaya Oblast' Ingushetiya*. In the translations here given an attempt has been made to use substantives only. The termination *-o* to the first part of a compound name is similar to the English usage in "Anglo-Egyptian," "Indo-China," etc.

Names which are pure Turkish words, as *Daghestan*, *Qarabagh*, *Qarachai*, are here transliterated as from Turkish, not as from Russian.

POLITICAL DIVISIONS OF TRANSCAUCASIA, S.F.S.R.  
*Zakavkazskaya, S.F.S.R.*

AZERBAIJAN S.S.R. . . . .	..	<i>Azerbaidjanskaya S.S.R.</i>
Azerbaijan.		
Mountain Qarabagh A.P.	..	<i>A. O. Nagorni Karabakh.</i>
Nakhichevan Territory	..	<i>Nakhichevanski Krai.</i>
ARMENIA S.S.R. . . . .	..	<i>Armyanskaya S.S.R. (or S.S.R. Armeniya)</i>
GEORGIA S.S.R. . . . .	..	<i>Gruzinskaya S.S.R. (or S.S.R. Gruzija).</i>
East Georgia . . . .	..	<i>Vostochnaya Gruzija.</i>
West Georgia . . . .	..	<i>Zapadnaya Gruzija.</i>
Abkhazia S.S.R. . . . .	..	<i>Abkhazskaya S.S.R. (or S.S.R. Abkhaziya).</i>
Ajaria (or Ajaristan) A.S.S.R.	<i>A.</i>	<i>Adjarskaya S.S.R. (or A.S.S.R. Adjaristan).</i>
Southern Ossetia A.P.	..	<i>Yujno-Osetinskaya A. O. (or A. O. Yugo-Osetiya).</i>

NOTE ON A MAP OF THE BRITISH ISLES

POLITICAL DIVISIONS ADJOINING TRANSCAUCASIA S.F.S.R ON THE NORTH, BEING  
PART OF RUSSIA S.F.S.R. (FROM EAST TO WEST.)

DAGHESTAN A.S.S.R.	..	<i>A. Dagestanskaya S.S.R</i>
CHECHNIA A.P. . . . .	..	<i>Chechenskaya A.O.</i> (Containing Grozni, town with provincial status.)
SUNJA CIRCUIT . . . . .	..	<i>Sunjenski Okrug.</i> (A very small area not actually adjoining Transcaucasia S.F.S.R.)
INGUSHETIA A.P. . . . .	..	<i>A.O. Ingushetiya.</i> (Containing Vladikavkaz, town with provincial status.)
NORTHERN OSSETIA A.P.		<i>Severo-Osetinskaya A.O.</i>
KABARDA-BALKARIA A.P.		<i>Kabardino-Balkarskaya A.O.</i>
QARACHAI-CIRCASSIA A.P.		<i>A. Karachaevo-Cherkesskaya O.</i>
ADIGHE-CIRCASSIA A.P.	..	<i>A. Adigeisko-Cherkesskaya O.</i> (A very small area not actually adjoining Transcaucasia S.F.S.R.)
NORTHERN CAUCASUS TERRITORY . . . . .	..	<i>Severo-Kavkazski Krai.</i>
Maikop Circuit . . . . .	..	<i>Maikopski Okrug.</i>
Black Sea Circuit . . . . .	..	<i>Chernomorski Okrug.</i>

