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Russia: Feminist Antiwar Resistance Telegram Channel (July 23)—Prestalinist Soviet nationalities policy

Tuesday 13 September 2022, by [Feminist Anti-War Resistance/FAS \(Russia\)](#) (Date first published: 24 July 2022).

FAS (#natsmen_ok voices)-Prestalinist Soviet nationalities policy A series of brochures entitled “The Working Woman of the East” was published in the second half of the 1920s by the Association of Oriental Studies under the Central Executive Committee, by order of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Department of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks).

The main task of the brochures was to explain the specifics of the current situation of different ethnic groups of women in the mostly Soviet East (with a few foreign nationalities). Thirty brochures were published in the series. They had a culturally enlightened tone and were written on behalf of the researchers; the voices of ethnic women themselves were not heard in them. Although the images of women and their traditional way of life (as well as value judgments and appearances of female representatives of certain ethnic groups) were undoubtedly exoticised, the main content of the brochures is very interesting. In essence, they are devoted to emancipation and explore the issues of economic and legal independence of women in different regions that are still relevant to us today. Interestingly, the authors of the brochures draw conclusions that contradict Soviet official policy on the advantages of the nomadic way of life over the sedentary way of life, since according to their observations it is in the nomadic nationalities that women have much more opportunities for self-determination and independence. The anti-imperialist tone of the pamphlets also extends to the organisation of society, where men are presented as capitalists who block the economic and personal independence of women. But what is most striking in this series is the recognition of the vast number of nationalities, erased and depersonalized by the official discourse of power, not included in the canonical pantheon of “peoples of the USSR” and remaining only in the field of “folklore ensembles” and “local festive customs”. The covers of these brochures issued a hundred years ago proclaim - here are the Chuvash, Zyrian, Kabardian, Bashkir, Mari, Oirat, Mordvin, Kamchad, Tatar and many others; they are not only on the pages of ethnographic albums, but now, here too. (https://yadi.sk/d/VbG8DM_xL-P1eA)

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