

CultureTalk Ahiska Turks Video Transcripts: <http://langmedia.fivecolleges.edu>
In Georgia during Soviet Times

English translation:

Umm... As a representative of the Turkish nation, Yusuf Shahanof. Umm ... my birthday is 1961, [in] Uzbekistan. Umm... Our nation's, our suffering nation's... umm... I mean their drama of living ... umm... started off in the 1800s... I mean, dates back to long ago with a long history, that Georgia's... umm... I mean Turkish people who lived on the borders of Turkey, in Ahirkelek,¹ Edigon, Baydanof, Gerenyollari. The Abkhaz Turks... umm... lived until the 1828th year,²... umm... under the Ottoman Empire administration, but after the 1828th-29th year, with the Edirne bargaining³... umm... the Abkhaz Turks were left to the Russians. And then... umm... therefore... umm... until the revolution in 1918th year... umm... under the administration of the Russian Empire, and then under the Soviet Union ... umm... Abkhazia became a district of Georgia and a part of its people. Our people survived there.

Umm... This nation... Umm... after Lenin's revolution, after Lenin's death, I mean after Stalin has taken over... umm... after he became the president of Soviet Union... umm... these people, I mean... since they were a Turkish people, Muslims and also... umm... living on the borders of Turkey. These people weren't fit; they were persecuted by Stalin and his friends, by Beriya.⁴ From the year 33rd [1933] up until... umm... the year 39th – 40th [1939-1940], the leading people of this nation, intellectuals, educated people were... umm... with every kind of... umm, were imprisoned, diminished, exiled... I mean, in order to prevent this nation's objection to the... umm... to the current government, the leading people of this nation has been diminished; I mean they had been exposed to severe persecution. Umm... But in the 40th year [1940], I mean in... 1941st year, World War II, all the Abkhaz Turks, along with the nations of the Soviet Union -- 40,000, some even would say 50,000... umm... [they] were sent to war. They went umm... along with everyone. Yet, even wartime could not stop those people's persecution... umm... I mean, they are going to defend the homeland's security ... umm... guard the homeland. But suddenly, living under persecution until the 1944th year.... in the 1944th, umm... with misinformation from Beriya -- he misinforms Stalin that these people... umm... are living along the borders of Turkey. [He said], "These people have the potential to damage us; these people are collaborating with Turkey"⁵... umm... A certificate for exile was prepared for this nation, and then Stalin confirmed that.

¹ A part of the Posof town in the city of Ardahan in Turkey.

² 1828 - colloquially, they refer to actual years with enumeration suffix.

³ Treaty of Edirne, which ended the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-29 and considerably weakened the Ottoman Empire.

⁴ Lavrentiy Pavlovich Beria, Georgian politician and head of the security apparatus and the secret police under Stalin.

⁵ Turkey was neutral through most of World War II.

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