



ARSEN, KOCOYTI

ARSEN, KOCOYTI (BIBOYI FIRT) (Russian: Arsen Kotsoev), [Ossetic](#) author, b. 16 (3, Old Style) January 1872, d. 4 February 1944. He was from a village in north Ossetia. After finishing his studies at the teachers' college of Äriḏon (Ardon), he was for some years (1897-1904) a school teacher at various places in north and south Ossetia, and at the same time started his journalistic and literary career, contributing commentaries and short stories to Russian newspapers of the Caucasus. In 1909, after some years' sojourn in St. Petersburg, he settled down in Tiflis, where he dedicated himself to cultural activities among the Ossetes of the south, wrote short stories and edited for a while a literary periodical called Äfsir (The Ear [of corn.]). In 1912 he worked for some time at the editorial staff of *Pravda* in St. Petersburg. After the Bolshevik Revolution he became one of the most prominent members of the Ossetic intelligentsia who identified themselves with the new regime. He now lived alternately in south and north Ossetia. From 1927-29 he was the first editor of Fidiuäg (The Herald), a periodical which until the present day has maintained its position as the leading organ of the South Ossetic Intellectuals. In 1924 he published his first collection of short stories, *Radzirdtä* (Stories); his fifth and last collection appeared in 1940.

Although his style is somewhat influenced by Russian, Arsen must be considered one of the founders of Ossetic literary prose. In his short stories the traditional village life of Caucasus is depicted with harsh realism and strong social criticism, but at the same time with gay vivacity, which is frequently intermingled with great humor (he was a renowned cartoonist). In many of



the stories there is a strong antagonistic vein against the Christian and Islamic clergy. He has also written some stories with themes from the times of the Revolution and the early post-revolutionary period.

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(F. Thordarson)