



# ЯЗЫК И КОММУНИКАЦИЯ

в современном  
поликультурном  
социуме

Сборник  
научных трудов



# **ЯЗЫК И КОММУНИКАЦИЯ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ ПОЛИКУЛЬТУРНОМ СОЦИУМЕ**

**Сборник научных трудов**

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## НАЦИОНАЛЬНАЯ И ЯЗЫКОВАЯ ПОЛИТИКА В ИСТОРИИ РОССИИ

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### **Аннотация**

*В статье дается детальный обзор основных этапов национальной и языковой политики в истории России и показываются причинно-следственные связи принятия тех или иных государственных решений. Анализ разнообразных факторов обнаруживает определенную динамику колебаний в национальной и языковой политике России, зависящих, в первую очередь, от внутривнутриполитической ситуации и международного положения - спокойные и благополучные времена либо времена внешних / внутренних угроз. Эта политика колеблется от либерального законодательства, предусматривающего демократическое самоуправление национальных территориальных единиц, использование национальных (этнических) языков в сфере образования и администрации, организацию и финансирование структур для развития национальных культуры, литературы, СМИ и языков до таких мер, как укрепление наиболее многочисленного национального языка как языка межнационального общения (а также титульных языков автономных республик), возврат к объединяющей патриотической идеологии и образованию, гражданская и государственная консолидация, формирование «единого народа». Кроме того, как показывает исследование, существует значительная зависимость культурно-языковой политики от потребностей модернизации и технического прогресса, но этот фактор, в целом усиливая положение многочисленного языка межнационального общения (русского), также предполагает развитие языков других этносов и национальностей внутри России, основанное на практике переводов с / на Н-язык, заимствования и обогащения терминологии.*

**Ключевые слова:** национальная политика, языковая политика, коренизация, языковое строительство, титульный язык, язык межнационального общения.

## NATIONAL AND LANGUAGE POLICIES IN HISTORY OF RUSSIA

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### **Abstract**

*The article gives a broad excursus into the national and language policies of Russia, highlights their major stages and reveals cause-effect connections. We conclude that the national and language policies of Russia follow the pattern of dynamic fluctuations, dependent, in the first place, on the domestic political conditions and international situation – calm and prosperous times or the times of external / internal threats. These policies fluctuate from liberal laws providing for democratic self-governance of national territorial units, use of national (ethnic) languages in education and administration, institutionalization of and financing structures for the development of national media, cultures, literatures and languages to such steps as strengthening of the major national language as language of inter-ethnic communication (as well as titular languages of the autonomous republics), return to unifying patriotic ideology and education, civic consolidation, “convergence in a single nation” and etatism. In the second place, there is a dependence on the needs of modernization and technological progress, but this factor, while giving prominence to a single developed national language, also presupposes the development of minor languages based on the practices of translations from / into the H-language and borrowing / enriching terminology thereof.*

**Keywords:** *national policy, language policy, indigenization, language building, arabization, romanization, cyrillization, titular language, language of inter-ethnic communication*

Despite a considerable number of works devoted to the Russian and, particularly, Soviet national and language policies in the West, they have often been liable to far-fetched and arbitrary interpretations. As V. M. Alpatov<sup>2</sup> points out, the majority of Western works, primarily written by scholars who are not directly Slavists or Türkologists, are characterized by the lack of knowledge of Soviet material. The linguistic situation in Ireland or Indonesia is much better known to American and West European theorists of sociolinguistics than that in the USSR or in post-Soviet Russia [Alpatov, 2000, p. 6].

There are two major trends in the Western interpretation of Russia's national and language policies.

The works by L. Laurat, J. Ornstein, E. R. Goodman, C. Humphry, most articles published in the collective volumes *Language Planning* (1989), *Sociolinguistics* (1985) and the like exhibit the intent of their authors to reduce all the various processes, which took place in the Soviet Union as regards the national and language building, to one – tough russification. The above-

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mentioned linguists grossly magnify the scope of russification in the Soviet language policy and disregard such major processes occurring in the USSR as indigenization, wide involvement of the local population in administrative activities, languages building and standardization, opening of national schools, universities, promotion of national literature, publication of books, periodicals in these languages, introducing them in mass communication etc. - the processes which continued and developed in the 1930s through the 1980s. Besides, the country's recourse to the Russian language is invariably evaluated negatively by these scholars: rather than the corollary of objective circumstances, consolidation in the times when the unity of the peoples was necessary, it is viewed as a testament of ill will - the desire of the communist elite to gradually eliminate all the languages except Russian, making it global, as opposed to the "suffering linguistic minorities." The obvious differences in language policy in different periods of Soviet history are ignored or assessed only as tactical moves of the authorities, perpetually bent on russification, as well as the undifferentiated struggle of non-Russians, who "opposed the destructive action of Russian and attempted to save their national languages" [Bruchis, 1982, p. 12]<sup>3</sup>. V. M. Alpatov regrets these authors' "commitment to a priori schemes" [Alpatov, 2000, p. 4-9].

The second trend is represented by scholars who often assess the two decades after the revolution positively, but criticize the subsequent period as totalitarian imposition of Russian [Winner, 1952; Bennigsen, Quelquejay, 1967; Bacon, 1966; Lewis, 1972, 1982; Crisp, 1989; Kirkwood, 1991], even though among them there are a few works with the obvious sympathy for the national and language situation in the USSR [Imart, 1965; Comrie, 1981]. The sharp division between the "good" 1920s and the "bad" past 1930 is traced in most non-Russian works on the Soviet language policy. For instance, typical of the collective work [Language Planning, 1989] is the contrast between S. Crisp's benevolent article on the early period and I. T. Kreindler's rather rigid in tone article on later years. Some of the second category of scholars pay due homage to the theoretical value, methodological accuracy and practical efficiency of the linguistic method, elaborated by Soviet theorists and practitioners of language planning. E.g. V. Reznik (2001) argues, that in the course of language construction "Soviet linguists elaborated an original materialist method, based on Saussure's sociological conception of language

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3 A detailed critique of this kind of revisionist historiography of the implementation of the Leninist national policy in the Moldavian SSR is in A. G. Morar's "Kritika burzhuaznoj i revizionistskoj istoriografii dejatel'nosti KPSS po pretvoreniju v zhizn' leninskoj nacional'noj politiki v Moldavskoj SSR (1917-1980)", *Doctoral Thesis in History* (1984).

as a social fact and a Marxist interpretation of the relationship between language and society. This synthesized method allowed Soviet language planners <...> to treat language as a tangible material phenomenon, susceptible to a conscious language change on the part of society in general and its language specialists in particular. <...> The elaboration of a materialist method ensured the practical success of language reform. Therefore Soviet linguists' contribution is regarded as one of the earliest examples of a sociolinguistic approach to language, on the one hand, and as a more productive implementation of Marxism in linguistics, on the other.” Also, these linguists recognize that there are objective regularities in the development of public and language processes, in many respects common for the "totalitarian" and "not totalitarian" countries; that russification is connected not only with the will of the rulers, but also with realities of life; that occurring events do not always keep within the scheme "russification from top-down — russification counteraction from bottom-up."

This second group of authors outwardly strive for objectivity, but their conclusions are seldom corroborated by certain evidence: they mostly use materials at second hand, sometimes rely entirely on Western sources. As V. M. Alpatov notes, few of these authors could collect their own data, the most serious of them drew on Soviet census information, which they tended to “overly absolutize”<sup>4</sup> [Alpatov, 2000, p. 8]. There are some foreign publications which put the alleged large-scale forcible russification into question, e.g. [Shiokawa, 1999], but still there is practically no factual and statistic analysis in these publications either.

Then, romanticising the Soviet language policy of the 1920s-1930s (democratic, but bordering on state interests denial), these scholars do not answer the questions: why is the use of foreign scripts for the languages of the peoples of the USSR considered more democratic than the use of the native Cyrillic script; what language other than Russian (the language of the overwhelming majority) was it natural to apply as the language of inter-ethnic communication in the polyethnic country that was the Soviet Union?

Some scholars even go so far as to attribute the collapse of the USSR to russification, compare the following passage: “Early Soviet Policy was thus tolerant and promotive of linguistic differences, and Soviet citizenship was thus not contingent on a knowledge of Russian. Later, however, the old (pre-revolutionary, and post-revolutionary covert) russifying tendency reasserted

itself, partly justified by the Marrist idea, partly just plain old russification under the paternalist Big Brother leadership of the Russian people, who were thus *primus inter pares*. It is no wonder this idea crashed and burned in 1991, and that the Soviet Union collapsed so easily, and that all the old hostilities and tensions between various national groups reemerged in all their old virulence. Soviet ideology about bourgeois nationalism and how it would wither away under socialism had totally masked and suppressed all the hostilities between various groups, rather than eliminate them. When the suppression was lifted, the old tensions reemerged” [Schiffman, 2008]. This statement is untrue, both in the factual and logical aspects. Perhaps, the national factor as a propellant of social forces was underestimated in the later Soviet period, but the Soviet ideology of solidarity and fraternity of nations - on the level of ordinary people - did educate the Soviet people in mutual tolerance and respect and played a great role in the consolidation of the peoples into one supranational community. Before a series of provocations in the Union republics, connived at by a part of the elites, most Soviet citizens could not even conceive of their great country breaking up.

Proof-lacking and twisted-logic are not only many Western publications on the past of Russia's area national and language policies, complete with their initial theses of the inherent “oppression” or “totalitarianism” of the imperial Russia and USSR, but many works concerning the present-time situation in the ex-Soviet area. Let's take a few examples. In [Lepretre, 2002] we observe the high-handed claim of knowing the problems of the Russian national-political reality and the demand of delegating their solutions to certain supranational structures: “In order to guarantee their development, credible and effective policies have to be set in motion so as to reinforce the links among the autochthonous populations (of the Northern Caucasus and Siberia) and the European regions and institutions (very especially the European Union and the Council of Europe), as well as with the NGO's that may develop a twofold role as mediators and promoters to help the local social partners to design and apply flexible and realistic initiatives using their own resources. Only in this way may we help to prevent Russia and all the former Soviet republics from undergoing new wars such as those of Kosovo and Chechnya.” Rather than statement of objective facts, the purpose of the above-quoted article appears to be a barely veiled attempt at interference into the internal affairs of a sovereign country, as well as projecting non-existent inter-ethnic conflicts. Another book [Danjoux, 2002], justifying the continued not granting citizenship to the Russian-language minority in some Baltic



states and their refusal to consider the status of the Russian language, employs a whole range of far-fetched arguments: starting with an absurd claim of Russia's denial of the lawfulness of the Baltic states and her desire to annex the Baltics ("Russia demands that Baltic Russians automatically become citizens in states whose right to exist it challenges"), and finishing with a distorted-mirror claim that the Soviet citizenry was determined by the totalitarian and "unscrupulous" (!) mindset ("the weakness of the Scruples (as) psychological legacies from the Soviet period") and that the Russian minorities lack "political maturity." Yet another book [Chinn, Keiser, 1996] allege Russian colonial exploitation and "dominant status of Russians living in the non-Russian periphery" (statements, based on the Western colonial policies patterns, perhaps), speak about "national reawakening" of nationalities, forgetting that, given the processes of indigenization, top-down encouragement of local schools, cultures and literatures, ethnic language building, actually, in many cases, nationalities building, it would be more natural to speak of the nationalities ripening out under one crown, and, having ripened, break away from their common stem.

We believe that the best way to eliminate preconceptions and misrepresentations is to adduce sober facts and put the evidence in a historical perspective. Therefore we formulate our aim as presenting an objective factual survey of national and language policies of Russia from the time of its expansion, highlighting the major stages, revealing cause-effect connections. This enables us to see both the general patterns of national and language development in Russia and how details fit into them. Debatable points are elucidated from different aspects so as to provide a broad view. The larger part of materials and theoretical sources we use are Russian and those of the national republics of the former USSR.

Expansion, Christianization and national unity (16<sup>th</sup> - late 19<sup>th</sup> cc.). In the words of Vasily Klyuchevsky, Russia was a country that "colonized itself": the processes of the nation's formation and the formation of the non-colonial empire were inalienably integrated. Ethnically based on the East group of Slavs, the country expanded and included other peoples, many of which were of non-Slavic roots. According to Ivan Ilyin, the mentality of Eastern Slavs was determined "by vast expanses, wide plains, freely penetrated by eye and wind", which imparted to them specific spiritual freedom, contemplativeness, generosity and hospitality [Ilyin, 1993]. The Rus had early known the several quality of their strain and language and were open to contacts with different ethnicities, languages and religions. For centuries the peoples in the Eurasian

area lived side by side, seeking to develop appropriate formats of cooperation. Their assimilation with each other occurred as natural ethnic and cultural interpenetration.

Though the relations were sometimes troubled (e.g. with Turkic nomads Pechenegs, Polovcians, with Tatar khanates), peoples allied with the Rus and mingled with them, or their rulers swore allegiance to Russian tzars and were taken on their service, whereas their realms were included as subjects rather than colonies, their languages and cultures were generally respected. Even when Russia attached lands by force in the 17th and 19th cc., the readiness with which the Russian settlers shared and exchanged practices, production techniques, beliefs and languages with the native peoples, blurred the demarcation line between the “colonies” and “the mother-country” [Vakhtin, Golovko, 2004, p. 179]. Moreover, the former were commonly recipients and the latter - the giver of material and other assistance. Russian rulers used to provide local peoples with the same rights as "natural Russians" [ibid., p. 181]. Moscow Russia, the Russian Empire, as well as later the Soviet government, gave national elites access to high levels in the state hierarchy. If native languages had developed written traditions, official records were made in them, literature was composed in them, too. Children were customarily taught in their native languages at schools (initially religious – parish schools, medressehs, seminaries etc.).

To use a concept that I.T. Kreindler attributes to J. Fishman and reinterprets [Kreindler, 1985], Russia manifested “Eastern nationalism,” with the focus on and preservation of different local cultures and languages the establishment of one set of values, one faith and one language. Most peoples of the Russian area preserved their ethnic identity, language, culture, religion and developed them, a lot of them gained their own written tradition, literature and national intelligentsia. At the same time, as mentioned above, they largely assimilated and brewed into one civilization, forming their identity as nationalities within one country. This tendency was maintained in the times of the Soviet Power, which conducted on a regular basis the Marxist-Leninist national and language policy of equal rights of nationalities. It may be said, that upon the 1917 socialist revolution in Russia, the Eurasian civilization even gained ground: writers, poets and thinkers combined national, civilizational and Soviet socialist egalitarian ideological features. Linguistically, the long-continued mutual influences caused the appearance of what some linguists identify as the "Eurasian language union" (R. Jakobson) or "Russian-area language union" (O. Trubachov) - a special type of areal historical

community of languages that emerged over centuries within the vast Eurasian boundaries.<sup>5</sup>

While commencing the establishment of administrative and commercial ties with local national elites of the Russian Tsardom and, later, Empire, Russian missions encountered ethnicities with Turkic, Finno-Ugric, Baltic, Mongolian and other languages<sup>6</sup> and various religions (Islam, Lamaism, Catholicism, etc.). Russian Orthodox Christian missionaries studied local ethnic languages (Komi, Mari, Chuvash, Tatar, Kazakh, Dagestani, languages of the peoples of Siberia and the North etc.) [Ibid., p. 181]. Usually there was no cultural oppression and traditional religions which had taken root prior to Russian Orthodox Christian missions stayed. To elaborate scripts for languages which had no writing became a common practice for Russian missions. Thus during the 14th c. monastic colonization of Perm, the missionary Stepan Khrap (Saint Stephen of Perm) developed the alphabet for Komi combining Cyrillic and Greek letters with Komi runes (tribal signs) [Struve, 1960].<sup>7</sup> In 1383, the Moscow Metropolitan Pimen, with the consent of Dmitry Donskoy, put Stepan Khrap in charge of the new Perm diocese, which extended its activities to the Upper Kama region.

At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> c., Kalmyks - the last people who migrated in large numbers across the Eurasian steppe - came into contact with Russians, passing east of Mongolia through the lands of modern Kazakhstan. In 1608 they sent an embassy to Moscow and received permission to move westward along the southern borders of Russian Siberia, by the mid 17<sup>th</sup> c. they settled in the area between the Lower Volga and the Don. In 1664 there the Kalmyk Khanate was established under the protection of Russia. Kalmyks were Lamaists and spoke the Old Mongolian language. Thus, in less than a century after the accession of the Volga and Ural regions and long before "cutting through the window to Europe," Russia, which did not have any exit to the Baltic or the Black Sea then, was present in the Pacific Ocean [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 242].

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5 *Russkiy yazyk kak yazyk mezhekulturnogo i delovogo sotrudnichestva v polilingvalnom kontekste Evrazii (Russian as the language of inter-cultural and business cooperation in the context of polylingual Eurasia) (2009): Proceedings of the II International Congress / Ed. N. Zh. Shaimerdenova. Astana: PH Sary-Arka.*

6 *Ethnicities of the present-day Russian Federation represent 14 language families.*

7 *The first monuments of Old Komi literature, based on Stephen of Perm's system, relate to 14-16th centuries. Further, in the 19th century, Russian scientists A. Sjögren, N. Nadezhdin, G. Lytkin began to record and publish Komi folklore, in the same century the basis of Komi literature was laid by the democrat-poet I. A. Kuratov (Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, 1969-1978, The Komi ASSR). In 1918 the Komi-Perm script was reformed by V. A. Molodtsov.*



Two populous Turkic peoples – the Tatars and Bashkirs - lived in the regions of the Volga, Astrakhan, Ural, Siberia, the Pontic-Caspian steppe.<sup>8</sup> In the 13-14<sup>th</sup> cc. these peoples, with other Turkic peoples, were united in the Golden Horde. Since the accession of the Kazan, Astrakhan and Siberian Khanates in the 16<sup>th</sup> c., and the break-down of the Nogai Horde in the 17<sup>th</sup> c., they became part of the Russian Tzardom and then Empire, and lived as autochthonous peoples. The Russian State also included among its subjects such Turkic peoples as Mordovians, Chuvash, Cheremisy (Mari), Votyaks (Udmurts). All of them were influenced by the Tatar language, which had quite a significant written tradition, and retained it as the main language of inter-ethnic communication well into the 20<sup>th</sup> c. In the 17<sup>th</sup> c. the Ambassadorial Order of Russia had translators and interpreters from Tatar. This tradition was maintained for a long time, and Tatar was taught at School of Oriental Languages at St. Petersburg College of Foreign Affairs (founded 1798), along with the Chinese, Manchu, Arabic, Persian and Turkish [ibid., p. 241-242].

After the conquest of the Siberian Khanate by the eastern neighbors of Russia in the 16<sup>th</sup> c., there remained numerous small ethnic groups without serious government power as far as the Pacific [ibid., p. 242]. As a result, rapid Russian expansion to the east began, starting with the Cossack Ataman Ermak's campaign in 1581-1585 sponsored by the merchants-manufacturers Stroganovs. New townships and forts were built: in the south there appeared Tyumen (1585), Tobolsk (1587), Tomsk (1604), Kuznetsk (1618), Krasnoyarsk (1628), Chita and Nercinsk (1653); in the north - Beryozov (1592), Obdorsk (Salekhard) (1595), Turuhansk (1607), Yakutsk (1632), Okhotsk (1647) and others. The so called "foreigners" (non-Russians) paid tribute (yasak) with furs and cattle, instead of state tax, as a sign of allegiance and for Russian tzars' protection. They had "special rules to be governed and judged by their customs, their elected elders and superiors, and general courts have jurisdiction only in more serious crimes," quoted in [Vdovin, 2013, p. 262]. A more serious economic development of these territories continued in the 18<sup>th</sup> c.

Russians came into close contact with the peoples of North Asia, in varying degrees, mastering their tongues. Among "foreigners" only a few mastered Russian, primarily "knyaztsy" who had contact with collectors of tribute. Tungus were often used as interpreters, probably due to their

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<sup>8</sup> The tract of land stretching from the Caspian Sea and the Ural Mountains to the Pacific Ocean was from the Middle Ages designated in Western literature and cartography as Tartaria.

maximum spread on the open spaces of Siberia - from the Yenisei to the Sea of Okhotsk. Those Russians who settled in Siberia (the Semey of the Transbaikalian, Ruskoustintsy of the Lower Indigirka, Kamchadals etc.), anthropologically mixed with the natives, but the language of the resulting population was almost always Russian, experiencing lexical and phonetic impact of local languages. At the same time, the Dolgan language was formed on the basis of the Yakut language (the Dolgans emerged in the 18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> c. from the mixture of Tungus, Yakuts, Nenets and Russian "Tundra-peasants"). By the way, the ability to sakhala ripgi ("to speak Yakut") was quite frequent among Russians of Eastern Siberia [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 243].

In the times of Peter I, in Muslim areas of Russia, the Arabic language was taught in religious schools. In Estonia and Livonia the German language dominated. These languages also served as languages of official communication. Russian tsars revealed curiosity towards local peoples, they arranged fancy-dress carnivals in national costumes for representatives of each ethnicity, admired the language of "Little Russians" - Ukrainians (Peter I, Catherine II). In the times of Catherine II, the Educational Commission was created, which recommended that schools in areas, where indigenous peoples lived, should take into account their language and culture in teaching. Catherine ordered to collect materials on all the languages and dialects of the Russian Empire [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 246], whereupon the expedition headed by Academician P. S. Pallas was carried out in 1768-1774.

The liberal national and language policies continued through the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. In 1804, the Holy Synod ordered "at schools and churches, to give instruction in their natural language until all of their parishioners, young and old, understand perfectly the Russian language" [Sudakova, 1972, p. 90]. The 1822 Charter on the Governance of Indigenous Peoples, as part of Mikhail Speransky's reforms in Siberia, contained provisions, under which households received the right to use their language for official purposes, teach it at schools etc. [Vakhtin, Golovko, 2004, 181].<sup>9</sup> In 1830, the injunction

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9 According to the Charter, "settled foreigners" (chiefly Siberian Tatars) were legally equated with Russian taxed estates - burghers and state peasants. "Itinerant foreigners" (Nenets, Koryaks, Yukagirs and other hunting peoples of northern Siberia) were granted self-management, which was implemented by representatives of traditional tribal elites - the knyaztsy ("konungs") and the elders. "Nomadic foreigners" (Buryats, Yakuts, Evenki, Khakascs etc.) were divided into uluses and camps, each of which received a patrimonial administration, made up of elders (heads of uluses) and 1-2 assistants elected for three years by the community and approved by the governor. Several uluses and camps obeyed "foreign councils" - administrative, financial and economic institutions. "Foreign councils" obeyed the orders of the district council chief and court judgments, levied yasak (tribute), other taxes and fees. Several councils united in Dumas (legislatures). The Charter assigned the lands in their use of the indigenous peoples of Siberia, designated

was repeated to establish schools, teach literacy, prayer and faith in the native languages of the peoples of the Russian Empire.

During the process of the accession of Finland (the Grand Duchy of Finland), Alexander I recognized the benefit "of approving and certifying the religion, indigenous laws, rights and benefits, with which every state of a given principality in particular and all its subjects <...> hitherto enjoyed" [Natsionalnaya..., 1997, p. 72], he even increased the territory of the principality at the expense of the land ceded to Russia in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In autonomous Finland, the previous Swedish laws, legislative body (the Sejm) and government (the Senate) survived [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 246].

Poland was granted almost full rights of autonomy.<sup>10</sup> The Polish language substantially retained all of its functions. It was widely used in education, being not only the only language of schools, but also of the University of Warsaw (in theology, Latin was used). Teaching was also conducted in Polish in Vilna University, with Lithuanian at the time existing as the Samogitian dialect and not used as the language of education [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 247]. However, after the uprising in Poland in 1830-1831<sup>11</sup>, the administration of local schools was devolved on the Ministry of National Education. The obligatory training in the Russian language was introduced. Outside of the Kingdom of Poland, the Polish language teaching and publication of literature in it was banned. In contrast, since 1833 it was sanctioned to teach Lithuanian (Samogitian), which had had no serious written tradition and had never been taught at schools and universities before.

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*the order and size of the yasak, regulated trade with Russians, executed the criminal law of the country among the aborigines, sanctioned the opening of ethnic schools and colleges and sending children to Russian schools. It declared full religious tolerance. The local ethnic administrations and foreign councils established in accordance with the Charter existed until the early 20th century (Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, 1969-1978, Ustav ob upravlenii inorodtsev).*

<sup>10</sup> After the Napoleonic wars the Congress of Vienna decreed the partition of Poland, dividing it among Russia, Prussia and the Habsburg Empire. Austria annexed some of its territories in the south, Prussia took control over the semi-autonomous Grand Duchy of Poznań in the west, and Russia assumed hegemony over the semi-autonomous Kingdom of Poland (Królestwo Polskie) – the state in the status of the kingdom, which was in personal union with Russia. It was a constitutional monarchy, managed by the biennial Diet and the King (the Russian Tsar acted as King of Poland), who was represented by the governor in Warsaw.

<sup>11</sup> The Polish uprisings of 1830-1831 and 1863 were rather controversial events. Despite popular support and independency slogans, the main driving force of them was the Polish and Lithuanian nobility, who dreamt of regaining, with the help of Europe, their state within the borders of 1772, including in it the "eight provinces" of Ukraine. "No concessions and favours could satisfy the Polish revolutionaries, who wanted to restore the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the borders of 1772." (Airapetov, Oleg. (2006) *Vneshnyaya politika Rossiyskoy imperii (1801-1914) (The foreign policy of the Russian Empire, 1801-1914).* Moscow: "Evropa" Publishing House. P. 131). When the uprising of 1830-1831 was suppressed, the Kingdom of Poland was proclaimed part of Russia; the Sejm and the Polish army were disbanded; the old administrative division into voevodstvo was replaced by the division into provinces; Russia's coinage, weights and measures were adopted.

Successful attempts were made to establish the written form of oral-tradition local languages (dialects) and teaching in them, especially in the eastern parts of the Russian Empire and in the Ukraine. For the time being the Malorussian (Little Russian) language was in use in the Ukraine, the language that was the result of the break-up of the Old Russian language (which, in turn, was derived from the Proto-Slavic language), together with the Great Russian and Belarusian languages [Istoriya ukrayinskoy movi, 2004, p. 235-239]. The differences between Little Russian, Russian and Belarusian were slight, and up until the 14<sup>th</sup> c. these languages may be considered variants of the same language, as evidenced by the lack of written records in the Ukraine other than in Old Russian before the 16<sup>th</sup> c.<sup>12</sup>

Traditionally, Malorussian townspeople spoke literary Russian. In the 17<sup>th</sup> c. Kiev scholars did much to consolidate the Russian Church Slavonic language, and in the 18<sup>th</sup> c. Malorussia was involved in the formation of the Russian literary language. For example, Gregory Skovoroda (1722-1794) wrote poetry, in which it is very difficult to identify Ukrainian linguistic elements, it was written in what may be called the Common Russian language. One of the greatest Russian writers - Nikolai Gogol, who knew the peasant dialect of the Poltava Province, wrote in Common Russian, too. At the same time, much of rural Ukrainian population spoke Surzhik, the uncoded conversational language, resulting from the mixture of Ukrainian dialects with Russian, in which many items of lexis are Russian, and most of grammar and phonetics - Ukrainian. The population of Carpathian Ruthenia (Carpathian Rus), including the present Western Ukraine, from Transcarpathia (Ugrian Russia) to Bucovina and Galicia, underwent polonization and germanization.<sup>13</sup> It was to single out the Ukrainians from

12 The first written monument in Ukrainian is considered to be the Peresopnitsa Gospel, written in the 16th c. in what is believed to be the Ukrainian dialect of Old Russian.

13 The northwestern Russian Principality of Galicia-Volhynia, or Kingdom of Rus' (1199-1349), along with Novgorod and Vladimir-Suzdal, was one of the three most important powers to emerge from the collapse of Kievan Rus' under the pressure of the Mongol invasion. In the 13th -14th c., the strength of the once mighty Galicia-Volhynia state was gradually undermined by the deepening crisis in the political life, the deformation of government, economic decline and depletion of economic forces owing to the Mongol-Tatar yoke, continuous wars with neighbors. In 1349 Poland's King Casimir III mounted an invasion, capturing and annexing Galicia. By the mid 14th century, the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania divided up the region between them. In 1569 Poland annexed Lithuania and the Lublin Union was created, which implemented a large-scale strategy of curtailing the national life in the Ukrainian lands, expanding the dominant position on the Polish gentry. It strengthened economic and social oppression of the local population, eliminated their spiritual and cultural values. The Uniate Church was established, while Russian Orthodox Christians were persecuted. In 1772, Austria annexed Galicia. The Austrian pressure increased during the First World War. The ethnonym "Ukrainian" came into use, in its modern sense, only in the twentieth century (before the terms "Rus", "Ruthenians", "Rusiny", "Rutenen" were used to designate the East Slavic population of Galicia, see e.g. the materials of Vienna Institut für Geschichte [http://www.univie.ac.at/igl.geschichte/vocelka/SS2002/vo\\_ss2002\\_1006.htm](http://www.univie.ac.at/igl.geschichte/vocelka/SS2002/vo_ss2002_1006.htm) (7.26.2013). The then new



Russians that “Ukrainophilia” emerged among Ukrainian, Russian and Polish intelligentsia in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> c. Representatives of this movement aggrandised Ukrainian culture, sought to develop the Ukrainian language<sup>14</sup> and compile history of Ukraine. At first the Russian government did not interfere in the process. Sunday schools were set up where children were taught Ukrainian. Ukrainian plays were performed on stage [Shejko, Tishevskaya, 2006]. It was the time when first belles-lettres, educational books, popular science and scientific papers began to be published in Ukrainian. Among those engaged in literary work, ethnography, folklore were V. B. Antonovich, M. P. Drahomanov, A. A. Potebnya, P. P. Chubinskiy, D. I. Mordovtsev, D. I. Bagaley, M. S. Grushevskiy (Brockhaus and Efron, *Malyiy entsiklopedicheskiy slovar* (Small Encyclopædic Dictionary), 1907-1909, *Ukrainofilstvo*). Many intellectuals engaged in political activity, later withdrawing from it because of the administrative pressure in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> c.

In the Belarusian lands, since their accession, Russian schools, both state and church, functioned, but in Catholic (Order) and Uniate schools the teaching was conducted in Polish.

In general, up until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the multinational Russian Empire conducted liberal national and language policy, mainly drawing on traditions. However, the last three to four decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> c. witnessed the change of government policy, especially towards the peoples living in the western regions of the Empire. This came in the wake of the Polish Uprising of 1863<sup>15</sup>. The “Eastern” type of national and language policy

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*“Ukrainian” ethnicity was virtually imposed by the Austrian authorities. Many people who refused to accept it, who called themselves Russians or Ruthenians were hanged by the Austrian military, mass destroyed in Terezin and Talerhof concentration camps e.g. see Vavryk V. R. (2001). Terezin i Talerhof: K 50-letney godovschine tragedii galitsko-russkogo naroda (Terezin and Talerhof. On the 50th anniversary of the tragedy of the Galician-Russian people). Moscow: Moscow Society of Friends of Carpathian Rus.*

14 At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. M. S. Grushevskiy was especially instrumental in the development of “ukrayinska mova” (the Ukrainian language). He also wrote the eight-volume *History of Ukraine*, emphasizing Malorussian facts from the common Russian history.

15 The Uprising of 1863 was first presented to the Russian public by Alexander Herzen in his *The Bell* as the struggle for civil liberties, agrarian reforms, democratization and independence. Yet the main driving forces of it were the nobility and the clergy, who sought to recreate the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of 1772, re-capturing the Lithuanian, Belarusian and Ukrainian territories. Mikhail Katkov, the then *Moskovskiy Vedomosty*'s editor-in-chief, pointed out that the liberal policy of the Russian Government in respect of the Kingdom of Poland was the main undoing: the Polish instruction at schools and universities, the Polish occupation of administrative positions – all of this set Poland for national development on an autonomous basis. But so far from calming the region, it led to an uprising. The leaders of the rebellion instigated the anti-Russian sentiment (e.g. Franciszek Duchiniński's theory) in the Ukraine and Byelorussia and vastly resorted to murders of those Belarusians and Ukrainians, whom they thought traitors or enemies of the Polish cause, many times more than the deaths brought about by the suppression of the uprising by Mikhail Muravyov (cf. Lev Tikhomirov's essay “Warsaw and Vilna in 1863”). Determining the causes of the uprising, Katkov describes their order of importance as follows: the struggle for power - foreign influence - people's need for

in Russia gave way to the “Western” one; the national policy changed in the direction of the strengthening of the unity of the Power, the centre tightened its hold on the rebellious provinces.

In 1864, Mikhail Muravyov imposed a ban on the use of the Latin alphabet and the issue of textbooks in this alphabet, attempting to shift to Cyrillic script. In 1865 the Vilna governor-general Konstantin von Kaufman ordered the ban on the print of Lithuanian editions in “Latin-Polish letters.” Some minor bans, imposed after the Uprising, were soon remitted. Among them was the 1866 ban on the use of the Polish-Lithuanian language in public places and in official correspondence under threat of fine. Yet since 1871 obligatory study of the Russian language was introduced in all primary schools, including Catholic and Lutheran, in Poland and the Baltic states. In 1876, Alexander II signed the Ems decree, effective through 1904 (although considerably remitted since 1882), that confirmed the ban on Lithuanian Latin [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 251].

This decree also envisaged measures to curb the radical trends in “Ukrainophilia”<sup>16</sup> and restricted the use of the Ukrainian language. There was a ban on the use of it in educational books and books of popular science, while historical documents, works of belles-lettres and poetry were published under formal permission. It also envisaged the ban on the public use of Ukrainian on stage, though this did not hold for amateur theatres. Since 1882, when the ban was remitted, the Ukrainian dramatic art emerged in its glory. In the 1880-90s there were about 30 small troupes that put on Ukrainian plays. Since 1891, in Kiev, the first permanent theaters were founded: the Kievan Kropivnitsky Troupe, the Sadovtsev Theatre, the Kharkiv City Theatre, Society of the New Drama and others, staging Russian and Ukrainian plays.

The Belarusian language still had no written form then, it had the status of a dialect and oral folklore and continued to be the language of the rural masses, largely dominated by the Polish szlachta (gentry). On the territory of Belarus, Mikhail Muravyov and his successors implemented a policy, unprecedented at the time: the peasants were not only equalised in rights with landowners there, but also given certain priority<sup>17</sup>. All Polish landowners

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*self-development. According to him, the Polish uprising of 1863 was not national-liberating, but, rather, national-destructive. Catering to “Polish national sentiment,” wrote Katkov, could be the “death for both Poland and Russia”, see Katkov M. N. (2002). Weak is not our power, our opinions are weak. Need to put down the rebellion // M.N. Katkov. Imperskoe slovo (Imperial Word). Moscow. 112-117.*

<sup>16</sup> *It should be said, that simultaneously a harsher suppression of the Russian-speaking population took place in Austrian Galicia.*

<sup>17</sup> *<http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Муравьев-Виленский>, Мухаил Николеевич; Milovidov A. I. (1901). Osvobozhdenie krestyan Severo-Zapadnogo kraia i pozemelnoe ustroystvo ih pri grafe M.N. Muravyove*

were taxed 10 per cent of all incomes received by them into the treasury, while Belarusian peasant land holdings increased by nearly a quarter, their taxes 64.5% lower compared with the rest of the Russian peasants<sup>18</sup>. In the western regions of Belarus, the most exposed to the Polish rebels, peasants received the highest preference. The peasant lands had increased in the Kovno Province by 42.4%, in the Vilna Province – by 42.4%, in the Grodno Province – by 53.7%, in the Minsk Oblast – by 18.3%, in the Vitebsk Oblast – by 3.7%<sup>19</sup>. The aim of all those measures was to create the prosperous Belarusian peasantry, capable of withstanding the Polish economic dominance.

Linguocultural policy on the Northwest Territory was implemented in the form of belarusification and emancipation from the Polish cultural dominance as one of its components<sup>20</sup>. Ethnic Belarusian culture was given a major boost. With the support of Governor Muravyov and his staff, a Belarusian edition of *Talk of an Old Fighter with New Ones about Their Cause and Tales of the Belarusian Dialect*<sup>21</sup> saw the light. To prove the original Russian Orthodox character of the province, in early 1864, the Wilensky Commission for the analysis and publication of ancient historical documents was established on the initiative of Muravyov, which proved to be of importance for the formation of the historical identity of Belarusians. Light was shed on the past of White Russia. The first head of the commission, Peter Bessonov, appointed personally by Muravyov, was, in fact, the founding father of scientific Belarusica. The *Belarusian Song*, a collection published at the time, was a unique monument of Belarusian culture, still widely used by folklore researchers now. At the same time, bans were issued on periodicals and theatre in the Polish language in Belarus, on the use of Polish in public places, on public service for the people of the Catholic faith, while, on the other hand, officials, teachers, priests from interior provinces of Russia were invited for work.

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(*The Liberation of Peasants of the North-Western Territory and Land Allotment under Count M.N. Muravyov*). Wilna: St. Spirits Brotherhood Printing House.

18 Richter D. I. (1900). *Materials on Land Allotment of Former Serfs and Easement in South and North-Western provinces of Russia* // *Vestnik finansov, promyshlennosti i trgovli* (Journal of Finance, Industry and Trade). (39), 589-591.

19 Anisimov V. I. (1911). *Allotments* // *Velikaya reforma [19 fevralya 1861 - 1911]: Russkoe obschestvo i krestyanskiy vopros v proshlom i nastoyaschem* (The Great Reform of February 19 1861-1911. Russian society and the peasant question in the past and the present). Moscow. V. 6, 92.

20 Gigin V. F. (2005). *Slandered but not forgotten, Essay on the M.N. Muravyov-Vilensky* // *Neman magazine*. Minsk. (6), 127-139.

21 «Беседа старого вольника с новыми про их дело» и «Рассказы на белорусском наречии»

While pursuing the policy of russification in its western parts since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> c., in the east the Russian Empire officially recognized the important role of indigenous languages. So, while the Polish and Ukrainian languages were ousted from school teaching, the Kazakh language was introduced as one of the subjects and languages of teaching [Vakhtin, Golovko, 2004, p. 182]. Kazakhs, the northernmost of the Turkestani peoples, were the first to come under the rule of the Russian Empire (the 18<sup>th</sup> c., as the Nogai Horde and Kazakh Khanates). The Kirghiz came in Russian citizenship in 1855-1863, the Kokand Khanate joined in 1865, Bukhara and Khiva recognized Russian protectorate in 1868 and 1873 [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 244]. The Turkestani Province was formed in the 1860s-1880s.

Historically, the sedentary population of Central Asia were Iranian descendants (Tajiks), with their ancient cities of Bukhara, Khiva, Samarkand and their famous sons Al-Khwarizmi (783-847), Rudaki (858-941), Khujandi (940-1000), Ibn Sina (980-1037) and many others. Since the Middle Ages a gradually increasing number of Turks (partially Turkicized Iranians) settled there. The Turkic peoples of Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Turkmen, and Uzbeks developed a bulk of folklore and literature in Arabic and Chagatay. Geographically, Iranians and Turks lived in the center of the region, in areas suitable for farming; Turkmens lived in the west, and nomadic Kazakhs and Karakalpaks - in the north.

Despite long traditions of their cultures, the majority of Central Asian population were illiterate and semi-literate.<sup>22</sup> As M. Dickens notes, education could only be obtained through the system of mektebs (Muslim religious schools) and medressehs (Islamic seminaries). And, although most boys in urban areas attended a mekteb, the instruction was largely restricted to rote memorization of the Qur'an (in Arabic) and other religious books (in both Arabic and Persian), so very few actually learned how to read and write even in these languages, let alone in their native tongue. Only the privileged minority who were able to study in a medresseh (where, in addition to theology, they were taught history, mathematics, astronomy, and poetry) could hope to attain the degree of literacy needed to be a mullah (Muslim cleric) or to work in a governmental administrative position. This traditional system of Islamic education was augmented by the network of Russian and Russo-native schools that were set up in Central Asia, beginning with Kazakhstan. As Russian settlers moved into the area, Russian language

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22     *At the turn of the 19-20th c. the number of the literate in Central Asia was estimated at 3.3-6%.*



schools were established, at which promising Central Asian students were able to study. In addition, Muslim children were taught about the Russian culture in their native language at special Russian-native schools. Only a very small percentage of local children had access to this education, but it was hoped that students from both of these types of schools would serve as a cultural bridge between the Russian rulers and the local people [Dickens, 1989].

As for the Tatars and Bashkirs, before the 19<sup>th</sup> c. these peoples were monolingual and monocultural. Thus in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century teaching at religious schools and Kazan University was carried out in the Tatar language. Most ordinary people were illiterate. The situation with the training of the Volga and Siberian "foreigners" in their native language improved in the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century, which is connected with the works of a Russian orientalist and pedagogue N. I. Ilminsky, whose Kazan Tatar School (founded 1863) graduated more than 6 thousand people, including about 900 teachers, in 50 years [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 252-253]. For most Muslims primary schooling was in their native languages, and later they switched to Russian. Although the school had Christianization as its objective, the content of textbooks compiled by Ilminsky was sufficiently secular: advanced stages of training gave parallel texts of "geographical character on different countries and peoples, animals, great explorers, <...> on the steam train, <...> on vaccination and its usefulness" [Sudakova, 1972, p. 216].

In general, since the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> c., in the eastern areas, native monolingual and monoculture traditions were gradually replaced by bilingual native language – Russian language trends in teaching. Education and language teaching at universities and schools were conducted both in native languages and Russian. By the turn of the century, there were hundreds of mixed Russian-Azerbaijani, Russian-Tatar, Russian-Bashkir, Russian-Kazakh and other schools. However, according to V. I. Belikov and L.P. Krysin, the intake of the local population in Russian-native schools and their command of Russian (in monolingual native areas) remained not too high [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 254].

The national and language policies in the Caucasus had their own specificity. Although the nations living there aligned themselves with Russia (for example, Georgia came under the protectorate of the Russian Empire, which was enshrined in the Treaty of Georgievsk (1802)), their own languages and cultures were intact and developed independently. The Russian authorities did not interfere with the use of native languages as official in the Caucasus, the

Office of the Caucasian viceroy was manned by a staff of interpreters. Along with the public schools run by the Ministry of Education, there were schools run by Georgian Orthodox churches and monasteries. The Armenian Gregorian Church was in charge of Armenian schools, and the Russian language was taught as a subject. However, since the 19<sup>th</sup> c. several schools and colleges were set up in the Caucasus with the Russian language as a subject and one of the languages of instruction. The most important of them was the Tiflis Noble School for Learning of the Russian and Georgian languages, established in Tbilisi in 1804, on the 1803 draft of Duke Pavel Dmitrievich Tsitsianov. Training there was in Russian, while Armenian, Georgian and Azeri (then called Tatar<sup>23</sup>) were taught as subjects; Caucasian languages were obligatory for Russian students. In 1830, the Noble School was transformed into a gymnasium with the Russian language as the language of instruction save the first and second years, where local languages were used for instruction. A network of uezd (county) and parochial colleges was developed (by 1848 in the Caucasus there were 21 uedz and 10 parish colleges). Under provisions of 1835 and 1848, in primary school of uezd colleges training was conducted in native languages (Armenian, Georgian, Azeri), while Russian was taught as a subject. In the secondary school the latter became the language of instruction, while the former continued to be studied as subjects [Sudakova, 1972, p. 74].

With the appearance of textbooks in the North Caucasus languages (Adyghe — in 1853, Kabardian - in 1865), they were used in Stavropol, Ekaterinodar, Novocherkassk, Yeisk gymnasiums. For pupils of the Caucasus Line Cossack Host (including Russians), funded from the Treasury, the study of local languages was compulsory [Zekoh, 1979, p. 160]. Since 1876, History and Geography, being part of the syllabus, were taught in Russian. Then, in compliance with the 1883 administrative reform in the Caucasus, the new government was assigned the task of bringing the Caucasian elites closer to the imperial centre, and the school was recognized as "the best tool to facilitate these ends", so the partial russification of education continued [Natsionalnaya..., 1997, p. 97].

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23 As a nationality, Azerbaijani did not exist before 1918; rather than seeing themselves as part of a continuous national tradition, like the Georgians and Armenians, the Muslims of Transcaucasia saw themselves as part of the larger Muslim world, the ummah (Britannica, Azerbaijan, Russian suzerainty). Azerbaijani Khanates of Karabakh, Ganja, Shirvan, Sheki, Baku, Derbent, Cuban, Talysh, Nakhchivan, Ordubad, as well as Eastern Georgia and Dagestan joined the Russian Empire in 1803-1828. It brought relief from devastating invasions from outside, internal feudal strife and disunity and created more favorable conditions for the interaction of Russian and Azerbaijani cultures, which manifested itself in the works of outstanding representatives of the Azerbaijani culture: A. Bakihanov, M. Topchibashev, K. Zakir M. F. Akhundov et al. (see Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic in Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, 1969-1978).

Bessarabia (Moldavia), formerly Orthodox, was subjugated in the 16<sup>th</sup> c. by the Ottoman Empire and then liberated by Russia during the Russian-Turkish war of 1806-1812. According to the Bucharest Peace Treaty of 1812, Bessarabia merged with the Russian Empire. The Moldovan language in the Cyrillic alphabet was developed. ABCs and grammars were published in this language. In 1840, in St. Petersburg Ya. Ginkulov (Hancu) published *The Wallachan-Moldovan Rules of Grammar and The Collection of Essays and Translations in the Wallachan-Moldovan Language*. Record management was done in Moldovan, Moldovan was taught at schools. Since the 1840s most public schools in Chisinau and regions began to work according to the all-Russian syllabus, so in primary school instruction was in Moldovan and in secondary school Moldovan was studied as a subject, with Russian being language of instruction. In many parish schools instruction was only in Moldovan [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 252]. Since 1873 the Moldovan language was ousted from the syllabus to be re-introduced into school teaching after 1905.

There appeared publications in native languages, in case those languages had written tradition. Otherwise literary standards were developed, literature and periodic publications were created. To take just two examples: in the Yakut Cyrillic script, developed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> c. by O. N. Betling and D. V. Khitrov, about 100 titles of books were published before 1905 [Isaev, 1979, p. 101]. Publications in the Lithuanian (Samogitian) and Estonian languages, non-existent earlier, appeared in the early 18<sup>th</sup> c. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> c. periodicals were issued on a regular basis: Lithuanian - since 1822, Estonian - since 1857 [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 259].

Remarkably, the government founded newspapers in local languages, even if literacy in those regions was low. In Tbilisi, for example, in parallel with the 1828-established official Tbilisi Gazette in Russian, its Georgian version - Tbilisi Utskebani - was released, and since 1832 a similar periodical in the Azerbaijani language appeared - Tiflis Ehbary. In Central Asia, since 1870 Turkistan News began to come out, first in Turkmen, later in Uzbek (Chagatai), and Kazakh. Private periodicals sometimes appeared before official ones (in Georgian - since 1819) and sometimes later (in Azerbaijani - since 1875). The State did not interfere in the private press, unless it touched the foundations of the state [ibid., p. 260]. Books and periodicals had been produced on a regular basis in more than 20 languages, in larger quantities – in Polish, the Baltic languages, Yiddish, Tatar, Armenian, Ukrainian, Georgian [ibid., p. 263].

Table 1. Distribution of books published in Russia in the main national language, 1913 [Levin, 1930, p. 18-19], quoted in [Isaev, 1979, p. 34].

Languages	Number of editions	Total circulations	Languages	Number of editions	Total circulations
Avar	3	2, 800	Moldovan	1	500
Altay	—	—	Mordovia	—	—
Armenian	263	404, 407	Nogai	—	—
Bashkir	—	—	Ossetian	3	1, 270
Belarusian	12	33, 000	Tajik	5	15, 000
Bulgarian	1	300	Tatar (Kazan)	267	1, 052, 100
Buryat	—	—			
Georgian	236	478, 338	Tatar (Crimea)	—	—
Dargin	—	—			
Jewish	574	1, 541, 015	Tat	—	—
Ingush	—	—	Turkmen	—	—
Kabardian	—	—	Turkic	95	115, 540
Kazakh and	37	150, 300	Uzbek	36	85, 300
Kirghiz			Uygur	—	—
Karachay-Balkar	—	—	Ukrainian	228	725, 585
Kalmyk	—	—	Finnish	1	10, 000
Komi	—	—	Khakassian	—	—
Kumyk	—	—	Circassian	—	—
Lak	—	—	Chechen	—	—
Lezgin	—	—	Chuvash	57	106, 900
Mari	17	27, 200	Yakut	1	1, 614
			Russian	26, 029	98, 819, 103

In a number of languages books were published not annually, e.g. in Dargin during the years 1910-1912 three titles (3,200 copies) were produced, in Komi and Turkmen in 1910-1915 – one title.

For passage through the ranks of one's professional career, it was vital to master the Russian language (for Baltic Germans - to a lesser extent, before Alexander II), as for one's nationality, it largely did not matter for an occupied post [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 260-261].

According to the 1897 first general census, in which the question was asked not about nationality, but about one's mother tongue, there were all in all 146 languages and dialects in the Russian Empire [Vdovin, 2013, p. 259].

Great Russians totalled 43.4% of the population (80.5 million people), Malorussians (Little Russians) - 18.4% (33.4 million people) and Belarusians - 4 million people. All of them were officially considered "Russian", so their number was 117.9 million people.<sup>24</sup> The total number of Russians - in this broad sense – was 65.5% of the total population of the Russian Empire. All the "non-Slavic subjects" constituted 28%, and "foreigners," in the legal sense of the word - "ethnic groups, mainly Mongolian, Turkish and Finnish, that by their rights of status and management enjoyed a special position"<sup>25</sup>, numbered 6.6% of Russia's population [Vdovin, 2013, p. 262].

Early 20<sup>th</sup> c. views on national and language issues in Russia

After the revolution of 1905 there were a few dissonant trends as to how the Russian national and language policies should develop. Monarchists in their programme documents insisted on a "united Russian state language, uniform Russian law and a single Russian public school" [Nenarokov et al., 1992]. Octoberists recognized "absolute equality of rights of all Russian citizens", "without distinction of nationality or religion", "broad satisfaction of cultural needs", but completely excluded federalism [ibid., p. 41]. Cadets advocated "a free use of different languages and dialects in public life" and put forward the idea of non-territorial national cultural associations that needed to receive financial support from the state [ibid., p. 43]. The Socialist-Revolutionaries (Mensheviks) sought to build a democratic federal republic with national-territorial autonomies, and tended to adopt the RSDLP program item on self-determination of "the peoples oppressed by the monarchy." The Bolsheviks advocated the right of the peoples to self-determination, to the extent of secession, and denied the need to formally proclaim an official language.

The Bolshevik doctrine of national and language policy, elaborated by V. I. Lenin as a continuation of Marxist theory, deserves more attention. Lenin's approach to the solution of the national question can rightly be called dialectical, and this dialectic revealed itself in its further practical application, in the unity and struggle of opposites.

In general, in the era of advanced capitalism, as Lenin writes, a strong nation-state is the most progressive social organization. This echoes the position of Engels on the "counter-revolutionary national fragments" (as in Democratic Pan-Slavism, The Magyar Struggle, What Have the Working

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<sup>24</sup> The data of Demoscope – site of Institute of Demography at [http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/rus\\_lan\\_97.php/](http://demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/rus_lan_97.php/) (6 December 2013)

<sup>25</sup> As mentioned above, the regular state tax for "foreigners" was replaced with smaller special tributes etc.



Classes to Do with Poland?). In his *Critical Remarks on the National Question* (1913), Lenin points out: "Marxists, of course, are hostile to the federation and decentralization - for the simple reason that capitalism requires for its development possibly larger and more centralized states. All other things being equal, the class-conscious proletariat will always stand for a larger state. He will always fight against the medieval particularism, he will always welcome the closest possible economic amalgamation of large areas, on which the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie could widely unfold. <...>...as long as different nations form a single state, Marxists will not preach either the federal principle or decentralization. The great centralized state is a huge historic step forward from the medieval fragmentation towards the future socialist unity of the world, and, except through such a state (which is inextricably linked with capitalism), there can not be the path to socialism." At the same time, Lenin appreciates the role of bourgeois autonomy, although he emphasizes its crippled and limited nature, as it arises as a kind of concession to the struggle of the people forcibly attached. According to him, autonomy highlights the need for the solution of national issues in a country, but does not solve it, since a smaller nation remains inequitable in relation to the "sovereign" nation, it exists in a system of bureaucratic centralism. Lenin says that the autonomy contributes to the rapid development of capitalism and strengthening of bourgeois democracy, and to the growth of self-consciousness of the working class. "Broad, free and rapid development of capitalism, - he writes, - would make it impossible, or at least it would be extremely difficult without such autonomy, which facilitates the concentration of capital and the development of the productive forces, and the consolidation of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat on a national scale." Bureaucratic interference in purely local, regional, ethnic etc. issues is "one of the greatest obstacles to economic and political development in general, and, in particular, it is one of the obstacles to centralism in serious, large, major issues" (*Critical Remarks on the National Question*).

There are many other records, letters and public statements, in which Lenin and Bolsheviks speak against federalism, e.g. in December, 1913, in a letter to one of the leaders of the Transcaucasian Bolsheviks, Stepan Shaumyan, Lenin explains: "The right to self-determination is an exception to our general premise of centralism. The exception is of course necessary in the face of the Black Hundred's Great-Power nationalism, and a slightest rejection of this exception is an opportunistic mechanism, <...> a stupidest game into the hands of the Black Hundred's nationalism. But an exception

cannot be interpreted broadly. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, and there cannot be anything except the right to secession here." In the same letter, Lenin clearly and openly advocates the Unitarian state against federalism: "In principle we are opposed to federation - it weakens economic ties, and is unsuitable for an integral state. You want to secede? - go to the devil, if you can sever the economic ties, or, rather, if the burden and friction of "co-existence" are such that they spoil and corrode these economic ties."

But already in the paper *On the Right of Nations to Self-Determination* (1914), contesting Rosa Luxemburg's criticism of the Russian Social Democrats' programme, Lenin emphasizes the right to self-determination of smaller peoples of Russia, their right to autonomy. Lenin writes: "From the point of view of national relations, the best conditions for the development of capitalism is, of course, the nation-state. This does not mean, of course, that such a state, based on bourgeois relations, can eliminate the exploitation and oppression of nations. It only means that Marxists cannot lose sight of the powerful economic forces that give rise to the desire to create national states. This means that the "self-determination of nations" in the program of Marxists cannot have, from the historical and economic point of view, any other meaning than political self-determination, national independence and the formation of the nation-state."

In the paper *The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up* (1916) Lenin expresses his vision of nations under socialism and in the time of revolutionary transformation: "In actual fact its (the state's) frontiers will be delineated democratically, i.e., in accordance with the will and "sympathies" of the population. Capitalism rides roughshod over these sympathies, adding more obstacles to the rapprochement of nations. Socialism, by organising production without class oppression, by ensuring the well-being of all members of the state, gives full play to the "sympathies" of the population, thereby promoting and greatly accelerating the drawing together and fusion of the nations... By transforming capitalism into socialism the proletariat creates the possibility of abolishing national oppression; the possibility becomes reality "only"—"only"!—with the establishment of full democracy in all spheres, including the delineation of state frontiers in accordance with the "sympathies" of the population, including complete freedom to secede. And this, in turn, will serve as a basis for developing the practical elimination of even the slightest national friction and the least national mistrust, for an accelerated drawing together and fusion of nations that will be completed when the state withers away...

If we do not want to betray socialism we must support every revolt against our chief enemy, the bourgeoisie of the big states, provided it is not the revolt of a reactionary class. By refusing to support the revolt of annexed regions we become, objectively, annexationists. It is precisely in the “era of imperialism”, which is the era of nascent social revolution, that the proletariat will today give especially vigorous support to any revolt of the annexed regions so that tomorrow, or simultaneously, it may attack the bourgeoisie of the “great” power that is weakened by the revolt... It is the freedom to secede “granted” to the colonies <...> that will attract the small but cultured and politically exacting oppressed nations of Europe to union with great socialist states, because under socialism a great state will mean so many hours less work a day and so much more pay a day. The masses of working people, as they liberate themselves from the bourgeois yoke, will gravitate irresistibly towards union and integration with the great, advanced socialist nations for the sake of that “cultural aid”, provided yesterday’s oppressors do not infringe on the long-oppressed nations’ highly developed democratic feeling of self-respect, and provided they are granted equality in everything, including state construction, that of, experience in organising “their own” state. Under capitalism this “experience” means war, isolation, seclusion, and the narrow egoism of the small privileged nations (Holland, Switzerland). Under socialism the working people themselves will nowhere consent to seclusion merely for the above-mentioned purely economic motives, while the variety of political forms, freedom to secede, and experience in state organisation—there will be all this until the state in all its forms withers away—will be the basis of a prosperous cultured life and an earnest that the nations will draw closer together and integrate at an ever faster pace.” As we can see, in this reasoning Lenin's dialectic regarding the national question gains a finished form.

Thus Lenin's stand on the problem had transformed. As the editors of “Frustrated Anniversary...” point out, Lenin went all the way from “the unyielding confidence in the benefits of a unitary state, characteristic of <...> the period prior to the First World War, to the recognition of the inevitability of the federation; from the simple regional territorial division of the unitary state to the recognition of the legitimacy of emerging independent public entities on a national basis, entering into contractual relations with each other; from the complete denial of cultural and national autonomy to its recognition in the territorial and extraterritorial aspects.” [Nenarokov et al., 1992, p. 8]



By and large, we can make the following conclusions. Marx, Engels and Lenin do not recognize the historical equality of nationalities, for, objectively, in the cultural-civilization perspective, nationalities are not equal. But, at the same time, they demand full civil equality of nationalities and ethnic groups within larger historical nations-states, which is necessary for the class organization of the proletariat, and for the assimilation and erasure of national and ethnic differences. National equality from the Marxist point of view means the equality of people of different nations within a state. Therefore they protect autonomy as a general, universal principle of a democratic state with a multi-national composition, with sharp distinctions in geographical and other conditions.

And from the very beginning of their participation in the State Duma the Bolsheviks consistently advocated the principle of the equality of nations. Lenin's article *On the Question of National Policy and the Draft Law on National Equality*, written by Lenin for the Russian Social-Democratic Labour group of the fourth State Duma in 1914, are quite indicative of the fact. Yet the Bolsheviks emphasized that it is not permissible to mix the right of nations to self-determination (i.e. providing by the state constitution of quite a free and democratic way of solving the question of secession) with the expediency of secession of a nation.

Lenin's language policy is based on the same principles of proletarian internationalism, national equality and democracy. In the article *Do We Need an Obligatory Official Language?* Lenin wrote: "We know better than you (i.e. the liberals) that the language of Turgenev, Tolstoy, Dobrolyubov, Chernyshevsky is great and powerful. We want more than you, that between the oppressed classes of all nationalities living in Russia, without distinction, the possibly closest communication and fraternal unity should be established. And of course we are in favor of ensuring that every citizen of Russia had an opportunity to learn the great Russian language. We do not want only one element – coercion..." He concluded that there should be no mandatory state language, schools should educate the population in all local languages, and a basic law should be included in the Constitution, which should declare null and void whatever privileges any of the nations might have and any violation of the rights of national minorities.<sup>26</sup> In his *Critical Remarks on the National Question*, Lenin wrote: "If all privileges disappear, if the imposition of one of

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<sup>26</sup> In compliance with this idea, in the Soviet period the Russian language was given no official status; the term "language of inter-ethnic communication", that entered into use in the 1970s, was not legislated (Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 267).

the languages ceases, all <...> will easily and quickly learn to understand each other and will not be frightened at the "horrible" thought that that speeches in different languages will be heard in the common parliament. The requirements of economic exchange will themselves decide which language of the given country it is to the advantage of the majority to know for the benefit of trade relations. This decision will be all the firmer because it is adopted voluntarily by the populations of various nationalities, and the adoption of this policy will be the more rapid and extensive, the more consistent the democracy and, as a consequence of it, the more rapid the development of capitalism."<sup>27</sup> Thus Lenin predicted, that voluntariness, coupled with the rapid economic development and the objective needs of economic, cultural, scientific, technological etc. exchange, would condition the broad use of Russian as a language of inter-ethnic communication.

Reforms in the USSR in 1920s-1930s, combating illiteracy, national-territorial division, indigenization, reform of Arabic script, romanization, languages construction

Immediately after the February Revolution of 1917 numerous national movements and parties emerged that demanded at least autonomy, but often also independence. In March 1917 the Provisional Government recognized the independence of Poland, later many of the "national peripheries" achieved various levels of autonomy. Parallel power structures, scarcely controlled by the centre, proliferated. The country was plunging into turmoil. Immediately after the 1917 October Socialist Revolution, the new Soviet government issued sequential programmes of national solutions to national and language problems. One of the first documents of the Soviet power was the Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia, which proclaimed "the free development of national minorities and ethnic groups," "the right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, including secession and the formation of an independent state" and the cancellation of all national and religious privileges and restrictions. Convening in January 1918, the Third All-Russian Congress of the Soviets announced the creation of a new socialist state, the Federal Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. The

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<sup>27</sup> It is noteworthy, that in the early 20th century, similar democratic views on the issues of the state language were expressed by such a prominent scholar and linguist, supporter of Esperanto as a language of international communication, as Ivan Aleksandrovich Baudouin de Courtenay, who wrote in 1905: "No language is considered to be public and compulsory for all educated citizens, but for the reasons of a minimum expenditure of time, the language of central government agencies, the language of the State Duma is thought to be the language of the numerically dominant nationality...". With this, I.A. Baudouin de Courtenay did not concede to minor nationalities the right to self-determination up to secession, not even to his native Poland.

Congress adopted the Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People, which essentially recognized proletariat and peasantry as subjects of national relations, rather than a national group as a whole. Thus, the democratic forms implied communist ideological content related to the formation of cultures, "national in form, socialist in content."

Along with the revolutionary changes in the political and economic life of the country, there were transformations of culture. The all-round cultural revolution began. There was a radical reform of primary, secondary and higher education, accompanied by a multiple increase in primary schools, secondary and higher educational institutions; a sharp growth in circulations of newspapers, magazines, books; the all-country radiofication; the promotion of the high achievements of culture among broad masses of the population.

The Soviet national policy of the 1920s-1930s was characterized by the creation of new Soviet republics and autonomous national areas, a remarkable effort to boost the economy on the outskirts of the USSR in order "to level them off with the centre"<sup>28</sup>, to create industrial centres in national areas with the maximum involvement of local populations<sup>29</sup>, to eradicate illiteracy there and establish a broad system of local educational institutions.

Since total literacy was considered one of the key prerequisites for the fundamental reforms in social relations, economy and culture, large-scale work on the elimination of illiteracy and semi-literacy was started. According to the census of 1897, the total population of the Russian Empire was 21% literate, and without children under 9 years of age - 27% literate; in Siberia 12 and 16% in Central Asia - 5 and 6% respectively [Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, 1969-1978, V. 7, Gramotnost' (Literacy)].

In 1926, the literacy rate of 9-year-olds and older was 3.7% in Tajikistan, 10.6% in Uzbekistan, 12.5% in Turkmenistan, 15.1% in Kyrgyzstan, 22.8% in Kazakhstan, 25.2% in Azerbaijan [Zack, Isaev, 1966, p. 6]. By 1936, education was provided to about 40 million illiterates and semi-literates. In the years 1933-1937 schools engaged in literacy over 20 million illiterates and about 20 million semi-literates. By the end of the 1930s illiteracy had lost the character of a pressing social problem. According to the 1939 census, the number of literate persons aged 16 to 50 years was close to 90%. By the

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<sup>28</sup> Through the consistent implementation of the Leninist national policy, it became possible to establish the industrial base in national republics. Heavy industry was especially rapidly developing. Thus, compared with 1913, in 1940 the production of heavy industry increased 6.8 times in Azerbaijan, 7.6 times in Uzbekistan, 10 times in Ukraine, 14 times in Byelorussia, 27 times in Georgia, 20 times in Kazakhstan.

<sup>29</sup> As in J. V. Stalin's Final Word on the Report on National Factors in Party and State at the 12th Congress of the RCP(B) April 25, 1923.

early 1940s the task of eradicating illiteracy was basically solved. By the early 1950s of the Soviet Union became the country of almost universal literacy. The historic lesson of literacy in the USSR is that the increase in the general educational and cultural level of the people, coupled with the broadening of their outlook, becomes one of the essential principles of social reconstruction and the transition to a new quality of society (Russian Educational Portal of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation <sup>30</sup>).

The rapid social development of national regions is evidenced, for example, in Jan Gross's study *Revolution from Abroad*, based on the records of those Poles who had left the USSR together with Wladyslaw Anders's army. Although the author made no secret of his anti-Soviet sentiments, he had to admit that after the establishment of the Soviet Power in the Western Ukraine, "there were more schools, more opportunities for higher education and vocational training, for education in the mother tongue, for the promotion of physical and artistic development... There was a sharp increase in employment - factories and offices required twice as many workers and administrative employees as before the war... It seemed that many of the usual obstacles, hindering the movement upward, had been removed."<sup>31</sup>

The assumptions underlying the national policy of the early Soviet Union were that the country should be formed as a system of territorially hierarchically ordered, but equal in rights, national structures, within which languages of the peoples concerned fulfilled official functions. There was a notion of a titular<sup>32</sup> nationality, that is an ethnic group, after which a national-territorial formation was named. For example: the Ingush people – the Ingush language - Ingushetia / Republic of Ingushetia. A titular nationality of a Union republic (autonomous republic or autonomous okrug), together with the Union authorities, should provide for minor nationalities and ethnic groups the right to education in their native languages and use of them in document management. The lower the rank of a national constituency, the less autonomy it had, but the number of social functions of local languages did not decrease: it was assumed that within, say, an autonomous republic its titular language enjoyed completely equal rights with the language of the Union republic of which it was part, and the languages of non-titular ethnicities within this autonomous republic were equal with its titular language.

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<sup>30</sup> [http://museum.edu.ru/catalog.asp?cat\\_ob\\_no=13047&ob\\_no=13401](http://museum.edu.ru/catalog.asp?cat_ob_no=13047&ob_no=13401) (8 February 2014)

<sup>31</sup> Quoted in: Emelyanov Yu. *The Press of Presentiment / Literaturnaya gazeta (Literary Gazette)*. № 32 (6426) (07 August 2013).

<sup>32</sup> However, the term "titular" itself came into wide use only at the end of the Soviet period (Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 267).

At the time of the formation of the Soviet Union on 30 December 1922, the Russian Federation included eight ASSRs<sup>33</sup> (including Turkestan and Kirghistan), 12 autonomous regions, two labor communes, while the Bukhara and Khorezm People's Soviet Republics were in a contractual relationship with the Russian Federation. Ukraine and Belarus had no autonomous regions in their structures. The TSFSR<sup>34</sup> was a confederation of three Transcaucasian Soviet republics: Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, with Azerbaijan including the Nakhichevan SSR as an autonomous republic and Georgia - the Adjara Autonomous Republic and the South Ossetian Autonomous Region, as well as, on a contractual basis, the Abkhazian SSR<sup>35</sup>.

In theory, the boundaries of Union, autonomous republics and autonomous regions at different levels had to coincide with compact ethnic territories. But there were objective obstacles to creating administrative units similar to compact ethnic territories, because people often migrated, lived intermingled and dispersed, and the ethnic composition of cities was often very different from the ethnic composition of the surrounding countryside. This situation was handled flexibly and democratically. Firstly, if within an ethnic area there was no sufficiently large settlement, the capital of that autonomy could be taken outside — thus, the centre of the Adygea Autonomous Region was originally Krasnodar, separated from the territory of the autonomous region by the Kuban river. Another example: as the Gorskaya ASSR was divided into the Ossetian and Ingush Autonomous Regions, the capital of both was Vladikavkaz, which remained singled out as a special administrative unit of the North Caucasus Region and not part of the autonomies. Still other example: Grozny had not been part of Chechnya until 1929, though lying within its territory. Secondly, smaller autonomous regions were created within autonomous republics. In this regard, the concept of

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33 Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics

34 The Transcaucasian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic

35 The hierarchy of the republics and regions was based on the principle of the majority of the population and the maturity (ancientness) of an ethnic group. The unifying principle was the class principle: the workers and peasants' solidarity and the unification of social life, with certain cultural differences. This principle enabled to quench conflicts, sometimes leaving them latent, when there was an integration of two differently oriented and even warring ethnic entities, as was the case with Georgia and South Ossetia, just gone through an inter-ethnic war in 1920. According to researchers, including Georgian ones, in the early years of Soviet power in Georgia a kind of forced social and ethnic peace was established. The strength of that artificial structure was often ensured by the arbitration role of the Union Centre. In general, the Georgian SSR was a rickety structure that could not be durable and at the slightest crisis had every chance to fall apart. As acknowledged by researchers, including Georgian ones, the unity of Soviet Georgia was unreal not only for Abkhazians, Ossetians, Armenians, Azeris, who did not see for themselves any support in the Georgian Republic, but also for ethnic Georgians, for reference see Troitsky K. (2009). *The Divided People / Voenno-promyshlennyi kurer (Military-Industrial Courier)*, (7), p. 273, of February 25, 2009, URL.: <http://vpk-news.ru/articles/4802> (20 February 2014)



national minority was clarified: a national minority was considered any ethnic population living outside of their national education or in a non-native environment [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 267].

There was also a task of defining national identities of the population, structuring and fixing ethnic and administrative boundaries of peoples, served by this or that language. This task was particularly topical for the for the peoples of Central Asia and small peoples of the North.

In Central Asia, the ethnic principle of administrative division was especially hard to apply, owing to the dispersed settlement of various ethnic groups. For example, the population of Uzbekistan included many Tajiks and Uigurs, who were registered as Uzbeks. The ethno-linguistic composition of the peoples of Central Asia was rather complicated, and though they realized their relation to large ethnic associations, their leading identity was Muslim. As orientalist V. V. Barthold noted, the settled inhabitants of Central Asia felt primarily Muslim and then - residents of a particular city or area; "the idea of belonging to a particular nation was no matter for them," quoted in [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 271]. By the way, until 1925 the Kazakhs had been called Kirghiz in Russia.

During the first years of the Soviet power, the ethnic identity of Tajiks and Uzbeks was forming, especially in linguistically homogeneous regions and among intellectuals. As for rural population, their identity was more determined by their settlement and kinship, for example, a Uzbek woman from a village near Samarkand, having married a Tajik from Samarkand, said: "I was an Uzbek woman, now got married and became a Tajik" [Bronnikova, 1993, p. 157].

In this situation, in 1924-1925 the territorial demarcation of the Turkestan ASSR, Bukhara and Khorezm People's Soviet Republics was carried out on the ethnic principle, abolishing the above-mentioned republics and creating new territorial units. The nomenclature of republics and autonomous regions was also applied here.<sup>36</sup> The Uzbek and Turkmen SSR were created with autonomous regions, of which three (Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan) were later given the republican status. Thus there were five union Central Asian republics: the Uzbek SSR (1924), the Turkmen SSR (1924), the Tajik SSR (1929), the Kirghiz SSR (1936), the Kazakh SSR (1936).

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<sup>36</sup> The autonomous status was later heightened to union republic status, and the boundaries were revised several times.

The linguistic component in this demarcation was very significant, as it demanded the re-creation of the literary languages of each of the peoples. The Tajik literary language was based on classical Persian and heavily influenced by the living local dialects. In regard to the Uzbek language, there was a heated discussion in the 1920s on the choice of the basic dialect of it to be chosen as a literary language. The Uzbeks as a nation included Sarts and some smaller Turkic groups, both sedentary (e.g., Kurama living in the district of Tashkent, kipchaks of the Fergana Valley) and nomadic, often ethnically defined as Turks.

The boundaries of autonomous regions were established with the account of different reasons: ethnic, historical, economic, political. For example, the creation of the Chukchi, Sea of Okhotsk, Vitim-Olekminsky, Evenk national regions did not affect the neighboring territory of Yakutia, although the ethnic territories of Chukchi, Evens, Evenks crossed its boundaries - for these peoples parallel national districts were created. A part of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug was transferred to the Komi Republic with the beginning of the development of the Vorkuta Coal Basin. The area of the Ural Cossack troops, the backbone of the Ural Army under the command of Admiral Kolchak during the Civil War and Intervention of 1918-1923, was given over to Kazakhstan, while the areas of the Orenburg and Siberian troops were divided between the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 268].

A number of resolutions were adopted, in particular the resolution of the Sovnarkom of the USSR of August 29, 1924, significantly lowering the population norm necessary for the formation of lower-national administrative units. Previously, to create an ordinary administrative region it was required that not less than 25 thousand people should live on a territory, and for a village council — 1,000 people were needed. Now to create a national unit it was sufficient to have 10 thousand and 500 people respectively.

To govern national regions, national councils were set up. Any minority had the right to its own national administrative entity, with its own official language. In national regions, village councils (selsoviets) for minorities, which lived there dispersed, were organized. For example, by 1930, in Ukraine there were nine Russian, eight German, four Bulgarian, three Greek, three Polish and one Jewish national regions. As for national village councils, in the late 1920s in Ukraine there were more than 100 Russian, German and Polish village councils, a few dozen Jewish, Moldavian, Bulgarian and Greek ones, also 13 Czech, two Swedish and one Belarusian village councils. The

Markhlevsky Polish region with the population of 41 thousand people, where the Polish majority accounted for 73%, and the minorities, Ukrainians and Germans - for 17% and 8% respectively, had three German and two Ukrainian village councils. In all these formations administrative apparatuses operated in national languages, whereas in villages schools gave instruction in local languages [Klyachin, 1989]. This pattern was observed throughout the USSR. In the Kazakh autonomous republic, in 1928 there were Russian, Ukrainian, German, Cossack, Tatar, Mordovian, Chuvash, Bulgarian, Estonian and Polish village councils, Uyghur, Uzbek, Tajik, Dungan kishlak councils, later the compact arrangements of national village councils were organized into 18 Russian, two Uzbek, two German and one Uighur areas [Boltenkova, 1988, p. 63]. There were shortcomings in this system, too. As V. I. Belikov and L.P. Krysin note, while on lower levels of administration this system worked well, ethnic minorities' national village councils and districts (okrugs), not constitutionally enshrined, could disappear with the same ease as they were established [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 267].

In 1933, at the opening session of the Central Executive Committee, Mikhail Kalinin reported that the USSR included 250 national regions and 5,300 national village councils, quoted in [Boltenkova, 1988, p. 63].

By and large, despite all the costs of nation-building in the 1920s, it laid the foundation for a political system that was unique in the degree of consideration for the interests of individual nationalities and ethnic groups. The Soviet government supported and promoted the development of ethnic cultures and languages (with the reservation, that the communist ideology rejected the religious, "bourgeois", "backward" aspects of cultures and actively fought religions).

The language policy of the Bolsheviks, in consistence with V. I. Lenin's principle, was expressed as early as in 1918 by J. V. Stalin, then the People's Commissar of Nationalities of the RSFSR: "No compulsory "state" language - either in the legal proceedings or at school. Each region shall select the language or languages that correspond to the ethnic composition of its population, and there will be complete equality of languages of both minorities and majorities in all social and political institutions" [Stalin, J. V. Collected Works. V. 4, p. 70], quoted in [Alpatov, 2000, p. 40]. The Russian language did not have the state or official status in the Soviet period, and the term "language of inter-ethnic communication", which entered into use in the 1970s, was never fixed as a legislation.



In the early 1920s in the USSR there was an all-through thrust for the so called "korenization"<sup>37</sup>, or indigenization, of the party-state structures, administration, record keeping, office work, education, culture, literature - that is the campaign for making local ethnic languages functionally leading in different republics and regions. The Party and the government counted on the widest possible involvement of the local population in administrative activities. In many areas, attempts were made to conduct clerical work only in ethnic languages. It was assumed that the Russian population of national republics would gradually master local languages, and the party-state functionaries were simply obliged to do it in the shortest possible time.

Speaking at the 12<sup>th</sup> Congress of the RCP(B) in April 1923, Stalin explained the importance of the indigenization as follows: "It is necessary that the power of the proletariat should be as dear to ethnically non-Russian peasants, as to Russian ones <...>, that its policy should be clear to them, that it should function in their native language, that schools and authorities should be staffed with local people who know local languages, customs, traditions, ways of life. Only then, and only thereby will the Soviet government, which until recently has been the Russian government, become the power not only Russian, but also international, when institutions and authorities in the republics of these countries speak and function in their native language" [Stalin, J. V. Collected Works. V. 5, p. 240–241], quoted in [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 270]. The Congress adopted a resolution on the issue of special laws that would ensure the use of native languages in all the institutions catering for the non-Russian population.

Although later the indigenization of ethnic inclusions other than union / autonomous republics and regions was mostly limited to education and culture, the Soviet language policy set a good example of enabling minorities and small ethnic groups to develop their identity. As a consequence, in the late period of the USSR (before 1991) there were more written literary languages than anywhere in the world - about 130<sup>38</sup>, their speakers living in 15 union, 20 autonomous republics, eight autonomous regions and 10 autonomous okrugs (districts). The focus on indigenization, including national education building, brought its fruit.

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37 Literally, "putting down roots."

38 Desheriev Yu. D. (1990). *Yazyki narodov SSSR (Languages of the USSR peoples)* // *Lingvistichesky entsiklopedichesky slovar (Linguistic Encyclopaedic Dictionary)* / Ed. V. N. Yartseva. Moscow: Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya. Sociolinguist and historiographer of linguistics V. M. Alpatov gives the figure of 150 languages.

In raising the cultural level of the population and refocusing it on the building of a democratic communist society, priority was given to education. For instance, in 1929, only in the RSFSR there were 85 national (ethnic) teacher training colleges and 8 pedagogical institutes, besides there were ethnic departments in 24 other pedagogical institutes. According to the School Census of 1927, teaching at primary schools of the RSFSR was conducted in 48 languages of indigenous ethnic groups, with more than 90% children of particular ethnicities passing through them [Kuzmin, 2001].

At first, the organization of ethnic schools was viewed as a self-regulatory business, and much depended on the education within ethnic communities themselves. In Siberia, for example, there were many immigrants from the Baltic states, thus the first Latvian and Estonian schools were opened there: in the Yenisei Province as early as 1922. There were, respectively, 11 and 10 of them, alongside with two old Tatar schools previously set up [Boltenkova, 1988, p. 157]. Later the government took the task of organising education, where the interests of every ethnicity should be observed, upon itself.

To take Ukraine as an example of the ethnic education policy: in the 1925-26 school year, Ukraine had overall 2,764 national schools, including 1,214 Russian, 625 German, 457 Jewish, 337 Polish, 74 Bulgarian, 31 Tartar, 17 Czech, 5 Armenian, 3 Assyrian, 1 Swedish. In the 1920s, in Ukraine books were published in 11 languages, periodicals — in eight languages (Ukrainian, Russian, Jewish, Polish, German, Greek, Bulgarian, Tatar). In 1918 several Ukrainian theatres<sup>39</sup> opened in Kiev, in 1925 the Jewish Theatre opened in Kharkiv, in 1926 — the Polish Theatre in Kiev [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 273]. In Krasnodar, the ukrainianization of Pedagogical University was carried out. In addition to it, in the Kuban Province there were 12 Ukrainian teacher training colleges and 950 schools of the 1st stage. In 1931, the province turned out 149 titles of books in Ukrainian in a total edition of 968 thousand copies, the plan for 1932 provided for the release of 600 titles of books in a total edition of 4.8 million copies [ibid., p. 273].

Along with schools for children, in all the national autonomies there were so called “literacy points” for adults, reading rooms, clubs, “red corners” etc. They were also in great numbers outside of their national administrative units. So, Leningrad had 11 National Houses of Education (Polish, German, Latvian, Lithuanian, Hebrew, Hungarian, Tatar, Ukrainian, Belarusian,

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39 *The State Drama Theatre and The Young Theatre (since 1922 known as the modern Ukrainian theatre "Berezil")*

Estonian, Finnish), along with 274 Finnish, 89 Estonian, 55 Veppsian and 21 Latvian schools in the Leningrad Region in the 1929-30 academic year. Only for the Finnish minority, 32 reading rooms, 118 "red corners", 14 schools for the uneducated were opened. By the mid-1930s, the number of cultural institutions had grown. In 1934 among the village reading rooms of the Leningrad Region (which included the Murmansk Region then) there were 24 Veppsian, 10 Ingrian, 4 Karelian, 2 Norwegian and 1 Lapps ones [Boltenkova, 1988, p. 156].

With these democratic communist principles in view, large-scale language construction began. Writing was developed for previously oral languages; textbooks were written and published in an ever growing number of national languages (e.g. in 1934 - in 104 languages [Kuzmin, 2001]); mass education of teachers of indigenous nationalities was carried out; a system of primary schools was created, with the instruction in local languages and the content of education based on the ethnic-national cultures (though oriented in the spirit of the official ideology); ethnic cultural monuments (oral epics, legends and folklore) were recorded.

Within linguistic construction, two major tasks were specified: 1) to eliminate illiteracy and semi-literacy among the peoples with a written tradition, to develop uniform norms for their languages based on some leading dialect, to create literary standards; 2) to alphabetise languages which had no serious written tradition (no published books in the former Russian Empire and even no written records whatsoever (such languages as Kirghiz, Karakalpak, Khakass etc.)), to develop scripts for those languages. In fact, the question of dialect-based written languages had not been fully resolved in the Russian Empire, even the graphic basis (script) of those languages, not to mention their spelling, was in flux.

Languages for which scripts, grammars, and norms of usage were developed were called "new-script" languages. Those included about 48 ethnic languages, among them - Kirghiz, Karakalpak, Abaza, Avar, Adygei, Ingush, Altay, Koryak, Khanty, Khakass, Chukchi and others [Mladopismennyye yazyki..., 1959]. On the other hand, there were so-called "old-script" languages that already had a national written form. Those included more than 70 languages, among them Tatar, Bashkir, Azeri, Kalmyk, Georgian, Armenian, Latvian, Estonian and others [Desheriev, 1976].

The national and linguistic construction required enormous financial investment, it needed textbook authors, developers of writing in national languages, folklorists. In this respect, the success of Soviet linguistics in the

1920s - early 1930s was unprecedented. Over the decade, dozens of writing systems were developed, many languages were first used in scientific fields, in the socio-political field and office work. All this involved painstaking work to create terminology and develop styles.

Defining and developing scripts lay at the core of language construction. Initially, this concerned the Muslim nations which used the Arabic script ("Arabica") to write in their languages - Turkic, Iranian, Caucasian. The use of the classic Arabic script was challenging, especially for rendering the vocalism of the above-mentioned languages. At the same time, being the script of the Qur'an, it was sanctified in the eyes of some Muslims. When applied to specific languages, it was usually subjected to some modifications in pre-revolutionary Russia. In the Soviet period, a large-scale reform of the Arabic script was carried out during the campaign against illiteracy. It went mainly along three lines: elimination of unnecessary graphemes, normalization of phoneme-grapheme correlation (first of all, for those vowels that Arabic did not have) and unification of letter forms irrespective of their position in a word. A. Baitursunov developed a reform of the Kazakh Arabic script: given vowel harmony in the Kazakh language, he offered to designate paired front and back vowels with similar graphemes, but to put a special mark indicating the synharmonic row before each word [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 275].

In the course of the reform of the Arabic script, the idea of replacing it with Latin appeared. The reasons given for this were very diverse, ranging from the complexity of the Arabic script, even reformed to the inconvenience of combining it with musical notation due to different directions of writing. N. F. Yakovlev, working at the Research Institute of Ethnic and National Cultures of the Peoples of the East, and some other figures in language construction supported the idea of romanization. They made calculations and determined that of the proposed alphabets Latin was more economical and saved printing costs.

Romanization also pursued sociopolitical aims. From the point of view of a secular state that the Soviet Union was, the adoption of the Latin script would contribute to the break up with old religious ties, the loss of Quranic literacy. In the words of Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of Azerbaijan S. A. Agamali-oglu: "Literacy, before spread among the upper classes, clergy, kulaks, merchants, landlords and Islamic intelligentsia, has migrated now to broad working masses. The clergy, formerly connoisseurs of Arab letters, are deprived of their authority. Alas, there is no old script now.

The isolation of the clergy in the new world in this situation is undeniable..." [Agamali-oglu, 1929]. Also, the unified Latin-based script was viewed as a means to make new generations break away from traditional agrarian ways, go to towns, study and facilitate industrialization. Then, there was a romantic communist revolutionary aspiration for a single language of the peoples of the world, for which the transfer to the Latin script would be the first step. E. D. Polivanov wrote in 1928: "The Latin alphabet as the basis of our national writing is no more, no less than the international system designed to ensure, first, the mutually beneficial convergence of national cultures within the Union, and, secondly, the convergence of graphic communication techniques on the international scale <...> Romanization is the cultural revolution in the East," quoted in [Alpatov, 2000, p. 68]. No question of using the Russian script was raised, as it was associated with the "great-power chauvinism." [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 275] The international character of the Latin alphabet was considered an important advantage, as it was assumed that the process of its assimilation would facilitate the cause of the world socialist revolution (cf N. Ya. Marr and his theory). Finally, the transition to the Latin script was thought conducive to the ideological integration of the society, albeit on a diverse language and cultural basis, with national cultural archetypes deemed ideal cultural matter to abstract it into humanist egalitarian ideology.

The transition to the Latin script was first tried out in Azerbaijan, where the reform of the Arabic script was abandoned and the romanized alphabet adopted in 1922. A committee was set up in Baku to develop the new Turkic alphabet (the All-Union Committee for the Development of the New Turkic Alphabet, the CNTA, later transformed into the Committee of the New Alphabet), headed by S. A. Agamali-oglu. The Committee started working in Baku in June 1927. In the first years of the reform the Arabic and Latin alphabets were used on an equal basis, the Latin script was made mandatory only in 1925. The I All-Union Congress of Turkology in Baku (1926) adopted a resolution recommending that all the USSR nationalities should explore the experience of Azerbaijan "for the possible implementation of this reform" [Isaev, 1979, p. 71]. The idea of romanization was supported by the Union Government. Since January 1, 1929, schools, office work, printing in Azerbaijan were fully converted to the new alphabet.

The reform turned into the joint work of the country's leading linguists, specializing in Caucasian (L. I. Zhirkov), Finno-Ugric (D. V. Bubrikh), Mongolian (N. N. Poppe), Turkic (N. K. Dmitriev and K. K. Yudakhin) and other languages and was headed by the Caucasian languages expert N. F.



Yakovlev. The polyglot E. D. Polivanov could simultaneously engage in many different languages, in particular, the languages of Central Asia, from Uzbek to Dungan.

There were some difficulties: the number of letters in the Latin alphabet was insufficient for the unambiguous graphic conveyance of the Turkic phonological system, at the same time, digraphs, superior diacritics and accent were rejected. As a result, the Latin alphabet used for the Azerbaijani language frequently received graphic conventions, unusual for Western languages. The alphabet was made uniform with regard to the peculiarities of the Turkic languages, then on the basis of the Turkic-Latin phonemic-graphemic correlates individual alphabets were created, adapted to the needs of specific languages, they contained from 26 characters in Yakut to 35 in Bashkir [Isaev, 1979, p. 230].

The transition to the Latin alphabet in the Turkic peoples' republics was accelerated by the regulation of the Presidium of the USSR Central Executive Committee of August 7, 1929 (Novyi alfavit (The New Alphabet), 1934). In 1929, it was completed in Turkmenistan and Kirghizstan - the republics where literary languages were not yet fully formed and literacy was low. There were shortcomings in this process, often because of too early an implementation of the tasks of language construction. A sort of competition began among the republics for being first to romanize writing, often at the expense of other matters. Thus, the early abandonment of the Arabic script in Bashkiria led to the fact that the circulation of the newspaper "Bashkortostan" dropped from 10,000 to 3,600 copies. So the Bashkir administration had to urgently re-authorize the use of the Arabic script to publish the most important news and to restore the record management in Arabic [Alpatov, 1997, p. 75].

As for Kalmykia and Buryat-Mongolia, in the former the traditional old Mongolian vertical script fell of use except for religious offices, giving way to the Cyrillic script, while in the latter the Trans-Baikal region widely used the Mongolian vertical script, which continued to operate as official in the early 1930s, and western Buryats resorted to the Russian language in their official proceedings and used the Russian script in writing letters in their native language. At first it was assumed that Soviet Buryats would transfer to a new script, common with the script of the residents of the Mongolian People's Republic. This decision was officially adopted by the Central Executive Committee of Buryat-Mongolia and the regional Party committee on January 1931, but the same year the idea was abandoned and the creation of the



separate Buryat language and script was initiated. The romanization in these republics began in 1931 [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 277].

The indigenization of the Soviet North began to unfold from the late 1920s. On February 1931, the All-Union Central Committee of the New Alphabet approved of a common Northern alphabet (Latin), on the basis of which specific written languages were being developed (Novyi alfavit (The New Alphabet), 1934). This activity was concentrated in Leningrad, where in 1930 the Institute of the Peoples of the North (IPN) was set up and the Northern Department was opened at Herzen Pedagogical Institute. The All-Russian Conference on the Development of Language and Writing of the North in January 1932 approved of the project of the development of 14 northern national literary languages, proposed by the IPN: Saami, Nenets, Mansi, Khanty, Selkup, Ket, Evenk, Even, Nanai, Udehe, Chukchi, Koryak, Nivkh, Eskimo. It was found necessary to create the literary Itelmen and Aleut languages, explore the possibility of the establishment of national literary languages for Nganasans and Yukagirs, as well as consider whether Ents could be catered to with the Nenets language, and Karagases — with the Tuvan language. It was decided that the Ulchs would use the Nanai language, the Orochi — the Udehe language, the Negidals — the Evenk language [Isaev, 1979, p. 223-224].

Peculiarly, in the late 1920s - early 1930s, the romanization embraced those languages, for which scripts based on the Russian alphabet had been constructed, no matter whether long before or only a few years earlier. For some of these peoples [Altai, Kalmyks, Khakassia, Shor] mastering the Cyrillic alphabet had been slow, so the change of the script to Latin did not much affect the level of literacy [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 278]. For other peoples this step had quite negative effects. They did not master the romanized alphabet and were burdened by it, among them being Vepsians, Izhorians, Karelians, Komi-Perm and peoples of the Far North (Nenets, Evenk, Even, Khanty, Mansi etc.). Some of them had previously had the Cyrillic-based scripts, created by Russian Orthodox missionaries and scholars in the previous centuries, these scripts were taught at schools, literature was published in them (e.g. the Komi-Perm script developed by Stepan Khrap as early as the 14<sup>th</sup> c., reformed by V. A. Molodtsov in 1918 [Isaev, 1979, p. 204]), others had not previously had their own written language, but in their conditions of life were well familiar with the Russian language and knew Russian writing. For example, while in 1926 the literacy rate among the Komi was 38.1%, after the reform of romanization a good half

of the people were deprived of the chance to read new editions [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 278-279].

To a lesser degree the romanization affected Georgia. The Government of Georgia made a decision to change their script in August, 1926, but its implementation was slow. In Belarus in the Soviet time the choice was made in favour of the civil Cyrillic script, approved in 1926 at an international conference organized by the Institute of Belarusian Culture [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 279]. Some peoples (Chuvash, Mordvinians, Mari) did not romanize their scripts, even in the period of maximum thrust for it, but preserved and developed their Cyrillic-based writing [Isaev, 1979, p. 236].

There were attempts as well to romanize the Russian writing in the USSR, including the RSFSR. In 1929, the People's Commissariat of the RSFSR created a special commission to consider the issue of the romanization of the Russian alphabet. Printing professionals, teachers of the Russian language, linguists and other experts were enrolled on this commission. At its first meeting the theses of N. F. Yakovlev, Chair of the Commission, were adopted. The Commission declared the Cyrillic (Russian civilian) script a "relic of the 18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the script of Russian feudal landlords and the bourgeoisie, the script of autocratic oppression, missionary propaganda, great-power chauvinism. <...> it still binds the population that reads in Russian with the national-bourgeois traditions of Russian pre-revolutionary culture." <sup>40</sup> In 1930 the Commission decreed that "the transition in the near future to a single Russian international alphabet was inevitable." It also decreed the inevitability of the transition to the Latin alphabet of other 16 languages of the USSR, who continued to use the civil Cyrillic script. The romanization of the Russian script was supported by A.V. Lunacharsky, Soviet People's Commissar of Enlightenment, who wrote an article Romanization of Russian Writing, published in the journal Culture and Literature of the East (Book VI, 1930). "From now on, our Russian alphabet does not only alienate us from the West, but also from the East, to a large extent awakened by us..., - he asserted. - The benefits, offered by the introduction of the Latin text, are enormous. It gives us the maximum internationalization, tying us not only with the West, but also with a renewed East." At the 16<sup>th</sup> Congress of the CPSU(B) (1930) Stalin summarized the task of the national policy as follows: "...The efflorescence of cultures,

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40 Yakovlev N. F. (1930). *Za latinizatsiyu russkogo alfavita (For the romanization of the Russian alphabet)* // *Kultura i pismennost vostoka (Culture and writing of the East)*. V. 6. Moscow: VTSK NTA. 27-43, at <http://www2.unil.ch/slav/ling/textes/Jakovlev30a.html> (5 November 2013)

national in form and socialist in content, under the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country, with the view to merging them into a single socialist (both in form and content) culture with a common language, after the proletariat is victorious in the whole world" [Political Report of the Central Committee of the 16<sup>th</sup> Congress of the CPSU(B), V. 12, p. 369].

Still, even the supporters of romanization admitted the difficulties of the transition to the Latin script: a considerable expense of the conversion of the printing industry to Latin, the cost of the re-training of the population, including the preparation of respective cadres, and the need for the reissue of books in the Latin alphabet, especially the most vital ones<sup>41</sup>.

A group of philologists, united in the Society of Lovers of Russian Literature, sharply criticized the romanization. This society set up a commission that issued a statement that Latin "not only does not make it easier, but rather makes it more difficult for foreigners to study the Russian language." Yet it was not until the late 1930s that the attempt of the romanization of the Russian alphabet was given up.

By the early 1930s the Latin script had completely supplanted the Arabic and Mongolian scripts and partly replaced the writing systems on the basis of Russian and Yiddish and Hebrew (Lashon-Kodesh was widespread among Russian and Soviet Jews<sup>42</sup>). All the newly built languages, including the languages of the North, were developed on the Latin alphabet basis.

In 1936, the agency of the All-Union Central Committee of the New Alphabet published the list of 102 nationalities of the USSR, of which only 12 had no written language<sup>43</sup>. The alphabets of the following languages, all in all 66, had been romanized or newly constructed: Abaza, Abkhazian, Avar, Adygei, Azerbaijani, Altaic, Assyrian, Bashkir, Baluchi, Buryat, Vepsian, Dargin, Dungan, Judeo-Tajik, Ingrian, Ingush, Itelmen, Kabardino-Cherkess, Kazakh, Kalmyk, Kara-Kalpak, Karachay-Balkar, Karelian, Ket, Kirghiz, Chinese, Komi, Koryak, Crimean Tatar, Krimchak, Kumandin, Kumyk, Kurdish, Laz, Lak, Lezghian, Mansi, Moldavian, Nanai, Nenets, Nivkh, Nogai, Ossetian, Persian, Lappish, Selkup, Tabasaranskiy, Tajik, Talysh, Tatar, Tat, Turkmen, Udeghe, Udi, Uigur, Uzbek, Khakas, Khanty, Tsakhur, Chechen, Chukchi, Shor, Shughni, Evenki, Even, Eskimo. Projects for the romanization

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41 Zhirnov E. (2010). On the romanization of the Russian alphabet / *Kommersant' Vlast*, № 2 (856), at <http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1301421/print> (18 January 2010)

42 *Istoriya sovetskogo evreystva (History of the Soviet Jewry)*, at <http://zebam.org/publications/7/1.html> (13 November 2013)

43 *Revolutsiya i natsionalnosti (Revolution and nationalities)*. 1936, (4), 75-85.

of the following languages had been drawn up and approved of (however, not introduced): Aleut, Arabic, Korean, Udmurt.

Focus shift in late 1930s - 1945: introduction of Russian as obligatory school subject, cyrillization of nationalities' scripts

The late 1930s in the USSR witnessed the abandonment of romanization of scripts and the strengthening of the positions of titular languages, especially Russian. It became obvious that the previous schemes had failed to provide for the needs of modernization, to mold the peoples of the USSR into a new socialist, industrialized and urbanized society: their ethnocultural and ethnolinguistic basis was too narrow for this. Most of the ethnic cultures, serving different types of agrarian societies, could not be forced, within a decade or two, to synthesize a new system of values and assimilate new spiritual content that could provide a way of life in the new socialist state. Many languages, especially "new-script", could not on their own satisfy the demands of the rapidly developing society. The processes of written language development are slow: vocabulary codification and enlargement, grammar sophistication, style differentiation, standardization objectively demand immeasurably greater historical time. A distinct divide which revealed this contradiction was the transition from the universal primary education, with its usual basis of popular national culture, to the next level of education – seven-year secondary school, based on the modern system of science and technology. It became clear that it was not a didactic, but a general cultural problem. Urgently needed was a linguoculture that could accomplish the mission of modern knowledge conveyance, alongside with the function of inter-ethnic communication of the urbanized population [Kuzmin, 2001]. And objectively, this role was best performed by the Russian linguoculture, which had accumulated a large extent of the world culture of the Modern Times, was well-known and understood.

On the practical side, teaching Russian as a second language at schools of the Soviet national republics and regions ensured communication between the peoples of the USSR, their economic and cultural growth, further improvement of national cadres in the field of science and technology, necessary conditions for successful military service in the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army and Navy etc.

There were also political reasons for the introduction of Russian as a second language. From the international perspective, the Soviet leadership was disillusioned with the course for the world communist revolution, which was now viewed as a matter of distant future. The need for a common

international script on the European (Latin) base was no longer as topical as before. At the same time, there was an urgent need for the consolidation of the state and its peoples in the face of the possible dangers and threats. The events in Germany since January 30, 1933, when Nazis came to power and declared as their aim the march to the east to capture resources and "living space" greatly contributed to it. The USSR realized the enormous importance of the national question and recognized the great role of the country's history and patriotism in the consolidation of the society [Vdovin, 2013, p. 52]. And here again, the Russian language, culture, reflecting the history of Russia as a multinational state, appeared to be the major means of consolidation. As V. M. Alpatov, referring to I. Kreindler, points out, while in the 1920-1930s, all the Soviet languages except Russian were the centre of language planning, now, in a single united country, such a centre inevitably shifted to the Russian language [Alpatov, 2000, p. 98; Kreindler, 1989, p. 46].

From the domestic perspective, on the one hand, the new educated strata of each national minority, especially its party-administrative part, were bilingual. Representatives of small ethnic groups generally welcomed the restrictions on indigenization, because the quality of education at Russian schools was better, and representatives of the nomenclature, regardless of their nationality, preferred to send their children to Russian schools.<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, as N. K. Krupskaya testified in the early 1930s, the bourgeois nationalists among the elite "under various pretexts blocked their workers' and peasants' access to the Russian language", and great-power chauvinists, in fact, "helped the flourishing of local nationalism," quoted in [Isaev, 1979, p. 260].

Meanwhile, the teaching of Russian had not been prioritized since the beginning of national building. So, in 1936, school syllabuses reduced the number of hours for teaching Russian. The situation when schools of autonomous republics of the Russian Federation taught Russian till the 5th grade was considered temporary [Sovetkin, 1974, Vol. 1, p. 101]. In many rural schools of Bashkiria in those years the Russian language was not taught at all because of the lack of teachers, or Russian lessons were conducted in Tatar or Bashkir (Pravda, 03/20/1938), quoted in [Alpatov, 2000, p. 86].

In 1938 a school reform was started, following the decree of the Central Committee of the CPSU (B) and the Council of People's Commissars of 13 March 1938 "On the Study of the Russian Language at Schools of National

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<sup>44</sup> Already in the 1920s, E.M. Polivanov lamented the refusal of national elites to learn their national languages, accusing them of philistinism (Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 280).



Republics and Regions.” According to that decree, the learning of the Russian language at schools of the RSFSR was to start in the first year of study, and in other Soviet republics, temporarily, from the second year or from the third year of study. The party and government organizations were obliged to pay due attention to the teaching of the Russian language in national schools, as well as to exposing and suppressing bourgeois-nationalist attempts to undermine this process. At the same time, the Central Committee of the CPSU(B) and Council of People's Commissars of the USSR emphasized that native languages were the basis of teaching at schools of the national republics, and the exceptions to this rule, which occurred in some autonomous republics of the Russian Federation, could only be of temporary nature; the tendency to transform the Russian language from the subject of study into the language of teaching, to the infringement of the mother tongue, was called harmful and wrong.

There was mounting criticism of romanization. It was admitted that, in some cases, there had been overreliance on the alphabetical creativity of the linguists, engaged in language construction, which manifested itself in the creation of individual alphabets for numerically very small dialects, as well as in the overly large number of letters for some alphabets, in frequent disregard for the practical problems of language construction and in the exclusive use of the Latin as a possible basis for the creation of writing for the illiterate peoples, as well as in the insufficient attention to the use of other alphabets [Novyi alfavit (The New Alphabet), 1934]. There were railings against the Latin script among different sections of population. Workers rejected romanized newspapers. There were testimonies of some parents demanding: "Do not force us to our previous (romanized) language. Do not force our children to become as disadvantaged as we are" [Vdovin, 2013, p. 61]. In 1927, there were protests against the Latin script in Dagestan with demands to establish national scripts on the basis of the Russian alphabet (A. O. Tamazishvili, quoted in [Alpatov, 2000, p. 85]). Similar remonstrances were expressed by other ethnic minorities.

In 1935, it was agreed in principle that all the Northern languages, which had originally been created Cyrillic, should be translated back into the Cyrillic alphabet. In August 1936 the All-Russian Conference of People's Commissariats of Enlightenment of Autonomous Republics recommended that the conversion of national languages to the Russian script would facilitate the study of the Russian language [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 281].



Yet romanization was still the main landmark in 1935-1936 period and continued through 1937-1938. Specifically, to Alexander Pushkin anniversary in February 1937, his works were translated and published in many languages in the Latin script, including rare languages, such as Koryak ("Blizzard" and "The Stationmaster"), Evenk ("The Tale of the Priest and of his Workman Balda" and "The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish"), Circassian (all "Belkin"), Assyrian ("Dubrovsky", "The Stationmaster", "The Captain's Daughter"), Gypsy ("Gypsies", "The Captain's Daughter", "Dubrovsky"), etc. [Revolutsiya i natsionalnosti, 1937, (1), 48; (2), 72]. Latin alphabets continued to be created and improved. In 1937 the Dungan alphabet was published, in 1937-1938 the romanization reform was continuing in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Bashkiria, quoted in [Alpatov, 2000, p. 78].

However, already in the years 1938-1939, a massive shift of the languages of the Russian Federation to the Cyrillic script began. The cyrillization of alphabets, graphics went hand in hand with unification of the spelling of national alphabets. The cyrillization was conducted more swiftly than romanization. It did not have the synchrony observed during the first Soviet alphabet shifts: for some peoples it took place in 1937-1938, for others a little later, from one to two years. With that, a single state body, similar to the All-Union Committee for the Development of the New Turkic Alphabet, dedicated only to cyrillization, was not set up. New alphabets were created directly "in the field." Even so, the transition from the Latin alphabet to the Russian alphabet was more smooth and easy than the first "letter revolution" [Alpatov, 1993].

The successful completion of cyrillization was announced in June 1941. "At the present time, - wrote B. Grande, formerly one of active employees of the All-Union Central Committee of the New Alphabet, in September 1939. - "romanized alphabets are not able to provide further cultural growth of the USSR <...>. The peoples of the USSR meet the transition to the new alphabet based on the Russian language as a celebration of socialist culture" [Shorter Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, 2nd ed., V. 10, p. 2881], quoted in [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 281].

The Cyrillic alphabet was already used by almost all the languages of the Soviet Union. But in a few cases, romanized alphabets lasted well into the 1950s: in the case of the Kurds - until 1946, the Uighurs - until 1947, Dungans — until 1953. Georgian, Armenian and Yiddish retained their scripts,

moreover, the scope of the Georgian alphabet use expanded, as it was transferred to the Abkhaz and Ossetian languages in South Ossetia in 1938.

Basically, the script reform had positive consequences, despite the inconvenience of the frequent changes of scripts (Arabic in the 1920s, Latin in the early 1930s, Cyrillic in the late 1930s) and the need to accordingly adjust the systems and rules of languages. This inconvenience was offset by the careful examination and refinement of the related languages' systems. The transition to the Cyrillic script had a special significance: its assimilation was fruitful owing to the deep historical foundations, of centuries old tolerant intercultural interaction between the peoples [Bazarova, 2009, p. 97].

During the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945, the role of the Russian language as the language of international communication and a "rallying tool" enhanced even more. Military service and large population movements (more than 17 million evacuees from threatened areas in the eastern regions of the USSR in the initial period of the war in 1941-1942, about 2.4 million deportees) significantly contributed to the increase of the level of command of the Russian language among other nationalities of the USSR.

In the postwar years, the role of the Russian language steadily increased in all spheres. The victory of the Soviet Union over Nazism resulted in a growing tendency towards the unification of the liberated peoples under the communist idea. The tendency towards the unification of the Slavic peoples was also marked, in view of the tribulations fallen to their lot owing to the racist theory of Nazism. Thus, in March 1945, at a reception with the governmental delegation of Czechoslovakia, headed by E. Benes, Stalin, disowning kinship with the "old Slavophiles" of the Russian Empire, nevertheless, said: "We, the new Slavophiles-Leninists, Slavophiles-Bolsheviks, Communists, do not stand for the joining, but for the union of the Slavic peoples... The whole history of the life of Slavs teaches us that this union is necessary for the protection of Slavdom."<sup>45</sup> The Russian language asserted itself on the international arena: it became one of the working languages of the United Nations, the main foreign language at schools of People's Democracies, the working language of inter-state organizations of the socialist camp (the Warsaw Pact, CMEA (COMECON)), a language of science. In school education, the share of Russian schools began to grow. In Union and autonomous republics and regions of the USSR, schools of titular nationalities were predominant, but the study of the Russian language as a

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45 Malyshev, V. A. *Dnevnik Narkoma (Narcom's Diary)*, quoted in (Vdovin, 2013, p. 54).

school subject was obligatory. At the same time, schools for ethnic minorities other than a titular nation of a particular republic or region were significantly reduced. Thus, while immediately before the war, in the 1940/41 academic year, there were 19 Jewish and 13 Uzbek schools in the Ukraine [Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, 1926-1947, USSR, p. 1821], after the war there was nothing like this [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 285].

Since the 1940s, the pace of industrialization, begun in Soviet national regions in the 1930s (the Turkestan–Siberia Railway, the Grozny-Tuapse, Baku-Batumi oil-pipes etc.), steadily accelerated. There was the all-round rebuilding of the plants destroyed by Nazis and building of new ones throughout the USSR, power stations (hydroelectric on the Dnieper, the Kama, the Angara etc., atomic) were built, metro systems in large cities created, the Kara Kum Canal and the Volga-Baltic Waterway dug, the melioration and development of virgin lands in Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan) begun etc. Thus, in addition to the movements of the 1940s, there were massive population movements in the post-war period, in fact, well until the 1990s. The industrial proletariat was formed of different nationalities of the USSR. Most of them were Russian or spoke Russian in their inter-ethnic contacts. This enhanced the number of the Russian-speaking population in Union and autonomous republics, in particular, in the urban areas of Kazakhstan and Kirghizstan.

#### **“The Great Russian Language”**

The year of 1945 saw the publication of Academician V.V. Vinogradov's book *The Great Russian Language*, devoted to the historic role of the Russian language. It came out in the wake of the victory of the Soviet Union over Nazi Germany, and, though written with academic rigour, was noticeably instinct with the patriotic spirit. Vinogradov emphasises the greatness and power of the Russian language and culture, refuting the Nazi's myths of the inferiority of the Slavic race and culture. V. M. Alpatov makes several keen observations on the book. “It could as well have come out in 1915 as in 1945, and then the author would have been perceived as a man of right wing views (which Vinogradov had never really been).” The pre-revolutionary period was extensively referred to in the book. Such writers as F. M. Dostoevsky and A. A. Fet, formerly viewed as reactionary, were named among the great Russian classics, the emigrant I. A. Bunin was twice mentioned sympathetically. The book did not refer to imperial Russia as the “prison of nations” or any national oppression under tsars, despite the fact that that kind of language still remained in official circulation at the time. The Russian language was

referred to as "state", although that term had never been fixed in the Soviet Constitution. Vinogradov widely drew on Slavophilic ideas, and the book ended not with a quote of Lenin or Stalin, but with one of S.T. Aksakov [Alpatov, 1997, p. 90-92].

Vinogradov's book apparently objectivates the strengthening of the positions of Russian and the unification of language policy. Proceeding from the concept of the inalienable connection of a language as a means "of national expression" with the history and culture of nations (K. D. Ushinsky, A. A. Potebnya), he praises the felicity, versatility, "honest chastity and untrammelled power" (Turgenev), "richness, comprehensiveness and universality" (Dostoyevsky) and other qualities of the Russian language; its capacity to express numerous shades of meaning, "to produce, with its colourful and plastic expression, with its structure and order, the tangible impression of the liveliness and spontaneity of feelings, sensations, movements of the soul and external manifestations of the will," "to carry the reader away to the sphere of higher, intense ethical existence..." [P. P. Khokhryakov, *Language and Psychology*, 1889]. Vinogradov asserts: "The power and majesty of the Russian language are conclusive evidence of the great vitality of the Russian people, their original and high national culture and their great and glorious historical destiny. The Russian language is universally recognized the great language of a great nation."

Speaking of the Old Russian literary language, Vinogradov points out its close connection both with Old Church Slavonic and varieties of the Old East Slavic language, making it particularly rich, vivid and harmonious.<sup>46</sup> Common Slavic, normalised by Cyril (Constantine) and Methodius and their disciples as Old Church Slavonic, became the common written language of the Slavs, merging into the linguistic, imaginative and stylistic wealth of the pre-Christian East Slavic language. The written language that was eventually

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<sup>46</sup> Apparently, writing had existed in Ancient Rus prior to the adoption of Christianity in 988. A ritual earthenware vessel dating from the era of the Chernyakhiv culture (2-4th cc.) bears an inscription in runes (Kaya, 1998). There is a record that in Hersonissos Cyril himself saw books, hand-written in "Russian writings" (probably Cyrillic) (Kultura Drevney Rusi, 2014). Writings were found on utensils and implements, e.g. an earthen vessel of the early 10th c. found in one of the mounds of Smolensk, with words in Cyrillics. Prince Oleg's agreements with the Greeks of the years 907 and 911, as well as those of Prince Igor and Svyatoslav, consisted of two official legal texts, one in Greek and the other in Russo-Slavic. Old Russians appreciated books and knowledge (a chronicler praised "book learning" and compared books to "rivers watering the universe," "sources of wisdom"). Old Russian manuscripts manifest high levels of decorative art (e.g. the 11th c. *Ostromir Gospel*, *Miscellany of Prince Svyatoslav Yaroslavich*). There were schools in Ancient Rus, literacy being not just the privilege of the ruling class, but widespread among townspeople. The proof of this are Novgorod letters written on birch bark (dated approx. 11th c.), found in plenty (more than a thousand), which contain correspondence of officials, merchants, ordinary citizens (Kultura Drevney Rusi, 2014).

formed in Ancient Rus - the Old Russian literary language - was the result of the blend of Russo-Slavic with the Old Church Slavonic literary language. According to V. I. Lamansky, V. A. Istrin, S. P. Obnorsky, L. P. Yakubinsky, the Old Russian literary language included the sappy folk element, as well as the elements of the state-official and poetic styles. This contrasts with West European languages, which had long experienced the gap between the Latin language of educated literate nobility and the national languages of illiterate masses. The ancient monuments of the Russian language - the Russian Codes, The Tale of Igor's Campaign, Tale of Bygone Years, Praying of Daniel the Immured, Sermon of Law and Grace by Metropolitan Hilarion, Tale of the Princes Boris and Gleb, Admonition by Vladimir Monomakh, The Tale of Igor's Campaign evince stylistic variety, high artistic merits, psychological subtlety and eloquence of the speech culture. Vinogradov writes: "The Old Church Slavonic language only enriches and fertilizes the soil deeply tilled by the distinctive voice of East Slavic culture."

Vinogradov's statements were illustrated by copious linguistic facts and examples. Discussing the influences of Russian on the Serbian, Croatian (Illyrian), Slovenian, Krajinian, Bulgarian, Czech, Slovak, Polish, Lithuanian languages, their mutual borrowings, Vinogradov elicits the interaction of Slavic linguocultures [Vinogradov, 1945, p. 50-70]. He quotes famous people, men of letters and philologists, theorizing on the unity of the Slavic cultures and languages. Thus, the Czech poet of the era of national revival Jan Kolar (1793-1852) in his book "On the literary reciprocity between the different tribes and dialects of the Slavic people" (1837) called on all the Slavs, particularly Russians, Serbians, Polish and Czech to seek close language interaction and exchange, to create great pan-Slavic literature. He spoke of Slavic literary affinity and reciprocity. A Slovak Jan Herkel in his "Principles of the common Slavic language" (1826) sought to derive the Common Slavic language on the basis of a comparative study of individual dialects and subdialects. Vinogradov emphasizes, that "the idea of the great organizing role of the Russian language and Russian culture in the history of the Slavs must not be mixed and merged with all sorts of Slavophilic dreams, fantasies and reactive political theories. These ideas are unacceptable to us. Likewise are alien to us the judgments that correspond to chauvinistic pan-Slavism, committed to the political subordination of the Slavic peoples to the Russian <...> government... The denial of national cultures, independent national development are alien to Soviet ideology. And in this regard there is a commonality between the interests of the western and southern Slavs with



Russian culture. The right of peoples and the protection of this right is a slogan and banner of Slavic movement. <...> The influence of the Russian language and literature, the broad interest towards them in the Slavic countries are merely the natural result of the growth and flowering of Russian culture. The sense of its greatness and at the same the relationship to it are deeply rooted in the people of all Slavic nations. The Russian language and Russian literature have had a great fertilizing effect on the development of national languages and literatures of different Slavic peoples" [ibid., p. 69-70].

Vinogradov adduces statements of regal personalities, ambassadors, travellers, ascertaining the closeness of the Slavic languages even in the 15<sup>th</sup> c; the broad meaning and usage of the word "Russian", related not only to the Old Church Slavonic, but also to the living Slavic languages of the South and West; the ability of Croats, Bulgarians, Serbians, Slovenians to understand each other. The Russian language was the language of diplomacy in the intercourse between Muscovia, Poland and Lithuania.<sup>47</sup> But of all Slavic languages especially close to Russian are Ukrainian and Belarusian. These are the languages of one East Slavic branch, which arose from the ancient dialects of the Eastern Slavs through continuous regrouping them within the larger medieval state associations. The formation of three kindred national languages accompanied the process of formation of the three East Slavic nations - Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian.

47 The Western Slavic tribe of Litvins (cf other Slavic tribes' names - Polans, Drevlans etc.), who inhabited Old Lithuania, spoke the Western Russian written language ("Ruska", "simple Mova", "Lithuanian-Russian", "Western Russian"). Modern Lithuanians as a nation have descended from the tribe of Samogitians who had no written language at the time. Most of the written documents, government regulations, collections of laws (statutes), chronicles, as well as the metric (State Archive) of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were written in "Ruska" (a small part of the documents was written in Polish and Latin). In this language, personal correspondence was conducted by Lithuanian dukes and grand dukes among themselves, as well as overseas correspondence (including the surviving letters of princes Gerdenya 1264, Lubart 1322, Algirdas 1347, Jaunutis 1352 and others). The great Duke of Lithuania Jogaila (Jagiello) of the 14th c. also spoke and wrote in the Russian language. Polish historians state that Jagiello in Krakow always spoke Western Russian, because "he knew no other language" (as in W.A. Maciejowski's "Pamiętniki o dziejach, pismienictwie i prawodawstwie Słowian"). The Wilno Bishop Andrew Vassil (died November 15, 1398 in Vilnius) in his will gave a few Latin phrases in the "simple Mova" and wrote that "it is not my words, but those of the common people of Lithuania" (V. Vasilevsky. "Essay on the history of the city of Vilnius"). An anonymous Order cleric in Gdansk in about 1440 said that the language of Pomeranians (Pomeranian Poles) is commonly understood by the Poles, Lithuanians and Ruthenians (Scriptores rerum Prussicarum). In 1464, Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini called the speech of the Lithuanian nation Slavic (Pii II Pontificis Maximi Historia Rerum ubique Gestarum cum Locorum descriptione). European scientists, such as Gertman Schedel in the "World Chronicle" (1493), Ian Cocles Noricum in "Dekastihone" (1511), Yang of Bohemia in "Customs of All Nations" (1538) wrote that the Slavic language was used in Lithuania. The supreme laws of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, constituting its code of laws (Lithuanian Statutes), the third edition of which was published in 1588, were written in the Western Russian language, too. (Leontovich F. I. Russkaya Pravda i Litovskiy statut (Russian Truth and Lithuanian Statute); Wikipedia: Лутэвіны; Trusov S.V. O Vilnyuse, Rige i litovskom yazyike (On Vilnius, Riga and Lithuanian Language), at <http://skolo.ru/secrets-towns/36-o-vilnyuse-rige-i-litovskom-yazyke.html> (15 December 2013).



Occupying the intermediate geographical position between Europe and Asia and surrounded by a range of languages of different families and systems, the Russian language throughout its history was enriched by the most diverse linguistic elements, though always retained all the essential features of the Slavic language system. There was centuries long exchange of spiritual values with the peoples of the Finnish, Mongol, Turkish and many other branches. The Russian language used the achievements of the Byzantine and Western cultures, incorporating the diverse elements of human wisdom; "born through the encounter of the East and the West", it was receptive to the practical, scientific and poetic specimens of the diverse multinational cultures on the endless spaces of the Russian land, experienced various processes of mixing and interbreeding with the languages of Eastern European and Asian peoples. It included numerous foreign words with their music, with their manifold meanings and values, recasting them in its own way. On the other hand, it shared everything in it that was Slavic, greatly influencing the Finno-Ugric, Baltic, Turkic languages [ibid., p. 158-164]. Thus the languages of the Russian sphere of influence had a mutually enriching and civilising role on each other, with "the Russian language having a great impact on organizing all the languages of the peoples of the Soviet Union, especially their written forms" [ibid., p. 158]. In conclusion, V. V. Vinogradov asserts: "The modern Russian language represents, one might say, a kind of unprecedented event in the history of world culture" [ibid.: 166].

V. M. Alpatov passes the following judgement on the role of the book for the Soviet language policy: "Apparently, even a decade earlier V. V. Vinogradov's book would have been considered an extreme manifestation of "great-power chauvinism." But now it was completely in line with the public consciousness. The times of revolutionaries in politics <...> have passed, and the position previously branded as "bourgeois", was now more to the point. In general, among the changes in policy and ideology in the late Stalin period, the glorification of the great Russian language found its place alongside with the improvement of relations with the Orthodox Church, the appeal to the names of Alexander Nevsky and Alexander Suvorov, restoration of the old military ranks and shoulder straps etc. [Alpatov, 1993, p. 98]. Thus the book *The Great Russian Language* earmarks the post-war Soviet ideological trend of overcoming the early Trotskyite internationalism, to the point of

cosmopolitanism and self-deprecation, the return to patriotic stance and etatism.<sup>48</sup>

The postwar period. The war caused enormous damage to the Soviet economy, industry, agriculture.<sup>49</sup> The system of education was also affected. The Nazis destroyed about 84,000 schools, colleges and universities. The number of students in middle school dropped by half, and in the higher - 2.5 times. Yet, despite all the difficulties and hardships, in 1941-1945, 687 school buildings were built, about half of them - in the liberated territories. After the War, within the span of 1946-1950, 18.5 thousand new schools for 2.4 million pupils were built. Many schools for young workers were established since 1944.<sup>50</sup> In 1952, the 19<sup>th</sup> Congress of the CPSU was held, which stated that by that year the transition to the seven-year compulsory education had been completed. The transition to the ten (eleven) -year public compulsory education of children from the age of seven was set as a goal. However, this goal proved to be premature: the economy needed to be restored and the country needed workers, while polytechnics, vocational and young workers' schools could not provide enough manpower for the working and technical specialties, as the young (the scarce population of the wartime as it was) preferred to get higher education and work as engineers. In 1955, 1,068,000 young men and women completed secondary (high) school, which was almost four times greater than the intake of higher education institutions [Narodnoe..., 1977]. The main objective of high school - preparing young people for entry into higher education institutions - came into conflict with the needs of the society.

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48 I. T. Kreindler asserts, with a negative connotation, that there was a return to the "tsarist" concept of Russian as the "cement of the Empire" (Kreindler, 1982, p. 7). However, the idea that a single second language as a tool of inter-ethnic communication also unites peoples and individuals in a single mindset is quite obvious and employed in all countries, as well as globally (compare the role of "global English" in the instillation of Anglo-Saxon culture, values and modes of life worldwide, given the apparent cultural and informative bias of most English textbooks). It is obvious that, until a single artificial language, enriched by the linguistic and conceptual matter of other languages, is implemented for use in the international communication, there will be major languages that influence other languages and serve as interlanguages. The current problem and the current task are, then, to make those major languages neutral, unimposing and friendly to the cultures of minorities. Rather than transmitters of a foreign culture, they should be tools of communication and, perhaps, exchange medium of culturally void matter, such as scientific terms and concepts.

49 Suffice it to say that more than 1,710 cities and towns and more than 70,000 villages, about 32,000 factories, 98,000 collective farms and 2,890 machine and tractor stations were destroyed, see Chaadaev Ya. E. (1985) *Ekonomika SSSR v gody Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny (1941-1945 gg.)* (The economy of the USSR in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945). Moscow: Mysl'.

50 Fedorov I. *Kak sozdavalas sovetskaya sistema obrazovaniya (How the Soviet system of education was created)*, at <http://ipkgos.ru/overviews/Kak-sozdavalas-sovetskaya.html> (The website of the Russian Academy of Public Administration) (28 April 2014)

On December 24, 1958, the law "On the strengthening of ties of school with life and on the further development of the system of public education in the USSR" was adopted. This law formalized a mitigated version of the 19<sup>th</sup> CPSU Congress' declaration - the transition to the eight-year public compulsory education, with a view to implementation of universal ten (eleven) -year education. Under the law, high school took on a "polytechnic profile." After receiving eight-year education, the young were "to be included in feasible socially useful work", and all further education was associated with productive labour for the economy. Anyone wishing to obtain complete ten (eleven) -year secondary education should study at a polytechnical school with industrial training, a vocational school (college), or at evening (shift) and correspondence schools for working and rural youth (Shestakov, 2008). It was not until 1972 that the USSR launched an active transition to universal ten-year secondary education. The general educational potential of the Soviet population increased from 2.1 in 1920 to approximately 9.1 years in 1989 [Kuzmin, 2001].

The school reform lasted from 1958 to 1964 (in the period of N. S. Khrushchev as CPSU Secretary General and shortly after him). Among other aspects, it provided for parents the right to choose schools for their children, including the right to choose between the Russian and the national school. This step was designed to provide the all-Union general secondary education for all the Soviet children and facilitate its qualitative unification, for which many schools of minor nations and ethnic groups were unready, there being not enough methodological basis (textbooks, dictionaries, manuals) for the eight-year and ten-year schooling.

An important incentive for parents to have their children learn Russian as the second language was that it had become one of the major world languages of education and scientific and technical progress. The Russian language was deemed an effective means to transmit the achievements of science and culture. So a large number of families of ethnic minorities opted for the Russian language (or other languages of the Union republics) as the language of teaching.

On the negative side, the establishment of right to choose between the Russian and the national school resulted in the "enlargement" of education - a decrease in the number of national schools and the number of pupils in them. There was stoppage of many national schools caused by their small intake. In the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic, the process of the enlargement of language education led to stoppage of some ethnic schools: Karelian - in

1956-1958, Buryat, in lieu of the Regional Committee resolution, - in 1960, Kalmyk - in the early 1960s, Kabardian and Balkar - in the 1965/66 academic year [Namzhilov, 1994, p. 155; Silver, 1982, p. 31-32]. By the early 1970s, from the numerous minor local languages of the North Caucasus, only Dagestani remained the language of instruction [Silver, 1982, p. 33; Crisp, 1985, p. 154]. Nevertheless, in the early 1960s, the number of languages of instruction in the RSFSR was 47 – the number, unmatched with any country in the world. In 1982, the number of the languages of instruction in the RSFSR was already 17 [Kuznetsov, Chekhoeva, 1982, p. 12], with other 32 national and ethnic languages taught as subjects<sup>51</sup>. Among these 17, in 12 languages schooling was conducted up to the fourth grade, in the Tuvan and Yakut languages – to the eighth grade, and in the Russian, Tatar and Bashkir languages – to the tenth grade [ibid., p. 13]. Similar processes occurred in the other Union republics of the USSR. Thuswise the number of languages of schooling in the Uzbek SSR dropped from 22 to 7 from 1939 to 1962 [Khanazarov, 1963, p. 176], quoted in [Alpatov, 2000, p. 122].

In Union republics, there also appeared a trend to send children to Russian schools, although on a smaller scale. This process concerned all the Soviet republics, including the Baltics. Least of all it affected the Central Asian republics, where, according to I. T. Kreindler, parents sometimes, counter trend, actually prevented their children from attending Russian schools [Kreindler, 1985, p. 355]. In fact, a large part of the Central Asian population was rural, so parents saw their future as the life of agricultural workers, for which their national languages were most fit.

It should be noted that the influence of the reduction of national schools of minorities' languages was mitigated by two trends. Firstly, it basically had no influence on the functioning of oral forms of minor languages [Alpatov, 2000, p. 122]. Secondly, despite the above-mentioned tendency in secondary school, the status of ethnic languages in higher school and development of their literary forms was not impeded. National and ethnic higher educational institutions and departments existed and prospered. There was government support for the development of national and ethnic cultures and literature, with due finance.

The Soviet 1958 reform and the subsequent “enlargement” of school education received much criticism in the West, e.g. [Lipset, 1967, p. 187-188; Silver, 1978, p. 189; Kreindler, 1985, p. 355-356, 1989, p. 49; Knowles, 1989,

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<sup>51</sup> In 1927, schooling was conducted in 32 languages, in 1931 - in 70, in 1932 - in 92, in 1934 - in 104 languages.

p. 158; Kirkwood, 1991, p.64]. Sometimes it is estimated almost as evidence of “forced russification” through outwardly democratic measures. But, of course, as V. M. Alpatov asserts, the main cause here was the desire of parents for the benefit of their children, their wish to educate them in a language that would contribute to their free selection of a further educational institution [Alpatov, 2000, p. 107]. It must be borne in mind, that more than 80 % of the population of the RSFSR (and about 50% of the population of the USSR) were Russians, no wonder the greatest number of colleges and universities were Russian-language.

Generally, the ethnic minorities in the Soviet Union, with mandatory education and printing in their languages, were much better off than in most polyethnic countries, where national languages were, and in many cases still remain, at best, languages of domestic and informal inter-ethnic use. According to J. A. Laponce, the degradation of national languages is accompanied by extinction of language speakers, linguistic assimilation, transition from bilingualism to monolingualism in what has earlier been a foreign language, the intermediate stage of “linguistic ghetto,” where a native language is still remembered and sometimes spoken among a few kinsmen, but the possibility of its free use is extremely limited [Laponce, 1987]. All these manifestations were far from the Soviet reality, with ethnic languages enacted as regional languages, with the possibilities of native language education, including higher education, books and periodicals in native languages etc.<sup>52</sup> To put this in perspective, in the United States, dozens of Indian languages disappeared already in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; in Australia from about 250 languages that existed at the time when white settlers arrived, more than 100 died and about 100 are about to disappear [Dixon, 1997, p. 163]. Therefore the labelling of the Soviet linguistic policy as “forced russification” appears quite superficial.

So far from forced russification - imposition of the Russian language or inducement of local populations to use it, there appeared a situation in the Soviet Union, where national schools and languages were supported from the top-down, as a general government course, while from the bottom-up there came a commitment to the transition to teaching one's children in Russian (with the study of the mother tongue as a subject).

With the postulation of the new socialist community – the Soviet people – at the 24<sup>th</sup> CPSU Congress in 1971 – as an ideological, ethic and spiritual

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52      *These aspects of national and language policy are discussed below.*



envelope for the nationalities of the USSR, the reputation of the Russian language as a language of inter-ethnic and international communication still enhanced. The use of the Russian language within one state was deemed necessary for practical convenience. The turkologist A. N. Baskakov wrote: "the use of local languages in all kinds of record management, financial and other reports and official correspondence... is impractical, as it entails duplication of a large volume of information and complexity of the operation in respective spheres of social activity. The use of a number of languages in proceedings of some autonomous republics in the 1930s had not worked and had to be given up" [Baskakov, 1994a, p. 35]. Then, inside the country, with the knowledge of the Russian language one could almost always do without interpreters (at least in official spheres), which certainly facilitated communication. Leaders of Union republics (E. Shevardnadze, Sh. Rashidov and others) spoke in favour of learning Russian - "the language of the brotherhood of all the peoples of the USSR, of the October Revolution, of Lenin" - in addition to native languages.

At the same time, the status of national languages remained high and was guaranteed by the Soviet Constitution. Thus Article 45 of the 1977 Constitution of the USSR provided for the right to educating children in their native language. Article 159 provided that court proceedings should be conducted "in the languages of Union or autonomous republics, autonomous okrugs, autonomous regions, or in the language of the majority of a local population." These language rights of nationalities and ethnic groups were strictly observed.

It can be summarised that, by and large, the leadership of the USSR in their language policy respected national languages and traditions and sought to enhance and develop them, converging the communist ideology therewith, with a view to fostering the new community, the Soviet people. And, given the relatively small number and influence of nationally oriented intellectuals, the language policy on top towards minorities of autonomous republics revealed an effort to preserve minority languages in cultural spheres by any means [Alpatov, 2000, p. 122]. But the objective laws of language functioning were reckoned with and used to advantage. In fact, for a language to persist in time, be used by linguistically different ethnic groups, dominate bilingual situations, structurally affect contact languages, this language should have developed socio-communicative functions, which, in their turn, are determined by the socio-cultural system served by it [Avrorin, 1975]. The Russian language, being the language of the national majority, at the same time served scientific



progress and socialist advance, and so included in its socio-cultural domain and developmental vectors all the other languages of the USSR, the COMECON, socialist-oriented post-colonial states, etc.

A language of international and inter-ethnic communication as it was, Russian did not become a second language for all the Soviet population outside the RSFSR, except for those peoples who were linguistically and culturally affine with Russians - Ukrainians and Belarusians.<sup>53</sup> Officially, Soviet linguists, e.g. K. K. Yudakhin in 1971 at a general meeting of the Kyrgyz Academy of Sciences, V. A. Avrorin in his book of 1975 [Avrorin, 1975, p. 142-143], questioned the fact that the Russian language had really become the second language of the republics or were skeptical of this concept as such, as it was valid only for a part of national intelligentsia; thus we can hardly speak of the imposition of Russian as a second language. The benign situation with the languages of the Union republics of the USSR was indicated by Western observers G. E. Lewis (1972), J. Pool (1978), G. B. Hewitt (1989), quoted in [Alpatov, 2000, p. 108, 115].

In this connection it is interesting to look at census data. According to the materials of the last Soviet census of 1989, even with the Russian language being the language of inter-ethnic communication, about 30% of Bashkirs and Tatars, 35% of Chuvash, 38% of Mordovians etc. within the RSFSR; 35.6% of Latvians, 39.5% of Kazakhs, 43.8% of Ukrainians, 52.9% of Armenians, 72.3% of Turkmen etc. in the Union republics did not have fluency in Russian as the second language [Boldyrev, 1990, p. 37-39]. However, as V. M. Alpatov points out, census data are not so reliable a source. Formulations in them could admit of different interpretations of the terms "native language" and "second language", and answers were often arbitrary and did not reflect the real situation [Alpatov, 2000, p. 108, also see Avrorin, 1975, p. 144; Guboglo, 1979, p.7; Silver, 1978, p. 267-268; Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 217, 223, 236, 237]. For example, if one is to believe the 1979 and 1989 censuses data, the number of Uzbeks and Karakalpaks, who spoke fluent Russian language, in ten years, had decreased almost twofold, from 49.6% to 23.8% and from 41.1% to 20.7% respectively. Also, the decrease in the percentage of those Estonians who know Russian between 1970 and 1979 censuses is unlikely to reflect the actual process, but probably

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53 Generally, Russian was widely used in Ukraine and Byelorussia in the 1980s, contrary to J. Stalin's and G.K. Danilov's predictions of the "overcoming speaking Russian" in urban areas of these republics and despite the top-down support by fiat of the Ukrainian and Belarusian languages. At the same time, the number of publications in Ukrainian and Belarusian was consistently big, which also held true for scientific publications.

socio-political trends. It is very plausible that the Central Asian nations tended to exaggerate their command of Russian in the censuses, and the Baltic ones – to downplay it. In general, the overall number of people capable of communication in Russian was more than the censuses showed [Guboglo, 1979, p. 7].<sup>54</sup>

The proficiency in the Russian language differed greatly by region. According to M. N. Guboglo, in Moldova the estimated number of people, who had not a certain command of the Russian language, was minimal, no more than 5 % of the population [Guboglo, 1979, p. 7], and a similar pattern was observed on the entire territory of the RSFSR, the Ukraine, Belarus and in the Baltic States. Lower degrees of proficiency in Russian were recorded in Kazakhstan and the Caucasus, the lowest degree being in mono-ethnic Armenia.

Thus, in Kazakhstan of the late 1970s urban families talked among themselves in Kazakh, when dealing with their Kazakh colleagues, read the press and literature in their mother tongue [Kopylenko, Saina, 1982]. But when it came to special literature, the majority of Kazakhs, excluding agricultural specialists, preferred to read it in Russian.

In Central Asia, the majority of the rural population with lower levels of education used the vernacular and dialectal forms of native languages and could hardly speak the Russian language [Baskakov, 1994b]. According to the USSR 1989 census, only 20.7 % Karakalpaks, 23.8 % Uzbeks, 27.6 % Turkmen, 35.2 % Kirghiz, mostly urban residents, were fluent in the Russian language [Boldyrev, 1990, p. 37-39]. The male part of the population knew the Russian language from the army, which, in M. N. Guboglo's opinion, was the second most important source of knowledge of the Russian language after school [Guboglo, 1984, p. 79]. However, in general, Central Asian "national high school graduates speak Russian poorly or do not speak it, which hampers their further education in Russian at higher educational institutions, polytechnics and vocational schools" [Baskakov, 1992, p. 29]. V. M. Alpatov sees it as "an endless circle", when the indigenous peoples' mastering of new professions was hampered by their lack of proficiency in the

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54 *The Soviet censuses gave a good deal of information on national language issues, though some data interpretation may not be so obvious. Meanwhile, in Belgium, for example, after 1947, in order to avoid any linguistic conflicts, questions about languages were excluded from censuses altogether, and any reliable statistics on the number of speakers of French and Flemish, bilingualism and other such matters are absent. In Japan, following the equalization of the Ainu in rights with the Japanese, this people was no longer considered in censuses, and since the 1980s quite contradictory data on the number of Ainu - from 15 to 50 thousand - could be found (Alpatov, 2000, p. 108).*

Russian language, and this proficiency was hampered by the concentration of these peoples in traditional agricultural areas [Alpatov, 2000, p. 109].

In the Armenian SSR, the Armenian language prevailed, the same was true about the Georgian language in the Georgian SSR. S. V. Lurie ("Yerevan phenomenon: the emergence of traditional society in the modern capital city") shows that, while before the Revolution Armenians of Tiflis and other cities began to lose their language, after it, Yerevan, which was established in the Soviet time as a cultural center of the Armenians, rapidly developed and became almost a monolingual city. The positions of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian languages were very stable too.

An interesting psycholinguistic behavioural pattern of strongly assimilated ethnic minorities can be observed in the censuses data: the farther away from a traditional national territory, the higher the percentage of those who called their ethnic languages, rather than the titular language of their environment, "native." Thus, according to the data of the 1989 census, among the Orochs, a small Tungus-related people of Khabarovsk Krai, who lived in their traditional areas in the North, just 10.4% called their ethnic language native; in other areas of Khabarovsk Krai the estimate was 14.3%; in other areas of the RSFSR outside of Khabarovsk Krai, the estimate was already 25.8%; in other Soviet republics - 46.9%. Even more strikingly, this phenomenon appears in the case of the Chuvans' – the people genetically close to Yukagirs, which had been partially linguistically assimilated by the Chukchi already by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In Anadyr region, where 60% of Chuvans are concentrated, those calling their ethnic (practically extinct) language native were only 3.7%, whereas in other areas of Chukotka they were 17.8%, and outside of the RSFSR – already 53.5%. A similar anomaly is observed when comparing the urban and rural population. Based on the materials of the 1989 census, for all the peoples of the North the pattern was that those who recognized their ethnic tongue as native were fewer among rural populations than among urban residents. As V. I. Belikov and L.P. Krysin conclude, here the recognition of an ethnic language as native is more likely to mean a symbolic identification with one's ethnic group; it happens more often when one is not in the environment of one's kinsmen [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 168].<sup>55</sup>

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55 Perhaps, the reflections of this phenomenon are observed by (Zamyatin, 2012) in native or titular school preferences in contemporary Russia: "...in Tatarstan there is native language instruction for a few hundred Mari and Udmurt schoolchildren in secondary education, and in Bashkortostan for a few hundred Udmurt schoolchildren in primary school and approximately 3,000 Mari schoolchildren in basic secondary education... The situation for these nationalities is worse in their own titular republics: the 11,000 Mari and

With all the above-mentioned facts in view, it becomes clear that periodic campaigns for the centralized promotion of the Russian language (especially its use in education), which were perceived in the West as a victory of "hard-line" policy towards the nationalities, were primarily due to the overall inadequate level of proficiency in Russian as the language of inter-ethnic communication, in national republics. The Russian language was often taught unsatisfactorily, and it was deemed necessary to take measures to solve that problem.

Even though the role of the Russian language over the post-war years increased, V. I. Belikov and L. P. Krysin testify, that the Soviet Union until the end of its existence was the world leader in national languages that were taught at schools, those languages were 43 in number [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 290]. In higher education, national faculties and departments were opened. Among the languages of instruction at universities in the RSFSR were Russian, Tatar, Bashkir, Udmurt, Buryat, Yakut, Karakalpak, Abkhazian, Komi and others. In national and autonomous republics, higher education was carried out predominantly in titular languages. Outside of national republics, the languages of these republics were taught at specialized university departments. For example, Moscow State Institute of Theatrical Arts (GITIS) had national studios, where young people were trained in different languages of the USSR, and whole troupes were prepared, which became cores of their national theatres [SSSR..., 1983]. National science in research institutes was developing, too, and so did national languages of science.<sup>56</sup>

In the USSR, there was the largest number of languages, in which literature was written and published, largely owing to numerous national philology departments at universities and institutes. In 1934, the USSR Writers Union included 2,500 writers. In March, 1976 they were already 7,833, writing in 76 languages of the USSR [Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, 1969-1978, Soyuz pisatelei SSSR (USSR Writers Union)]. In the 1980s, writers published their books in 77 languages [SSSR..., 1983]. In 1984,

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*19,000 Udmurt schoolchildren in the Republics of Mari El and Udmurtia respectively learn the native language as a subject only."*

<sup>56</sup> Thus, according to the *Global Index of Chemical Publications for 1980*, the Ukrainian language (588 books and articles) was superior to many other languages, among them Dutch and Swedish, while Belarusian (101 articles) took priority over Greek, Norwegian and all the languages of Asia and Africa, except Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Turkish, as well as other languages of the USSR (Laponce, 1987, p. 72). In general, by the number of scientific publications, as reflected in international directories, the Ukrainian language was part of the second ten of the world's languages (*ibid.*, p. 67). Noteworthy is the fact that in the Ukrainian language the *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Cybernetics* was released in Kiev, although in Russian such publications did not appear through the entire Soviet period (Moskovich, 1989), quoted in (Alpatov, 2000, p. 117).

15,149 books were turned out in the languages of the peoples of the USSR in a total edition of 225,915,800 copies, including 2,019 books in the Ukrainian language, 1,940 – in Lithuanian, 1,714 – in Georgian, 1,274 – in Estonian, 1,186 in Lettic, 1,004 in Uzbek etc. [Print, 1985, p. 24]. The majority of national writers wrote in their native language (take the South Ossetian writer N. Dzhusoyty, asserting that "literature outside of its native language is false"), others also wrote in the Russian language (C. Aitmatov, Yu. Rytkeu, F. Iskander, O. Suleimenov, A. Kodar etc.).

To mention but a few RSFSR national writers of eminence, who wrote in their native languages: G. Bashirov, Musa Cälil, Ildar Yuzeev, M. Khabibullin (Tatar), S. Mukanov, M. Karim, N. Nadzhmi (Bashkir), V. Yukhnin, Ya. Rochev (Komi), A. Timonen (Karelian), N. Yakkola (Finnish), K. Abramov (Mordovian), R. Gamzatov (Dagestani), A. Kulakovsky, S. Danilov (Yakut), S. Saryg-ool (Tuvan), D. Kugultinov (Kalmyk), V. Krasnov-Asli, N. Ilbekov (Chuvash), K. Kuliev (Balkar), H. Teunov, A. Shortanov (Kabardian), D. Kostanov (Adygey), M. Mamakayev (Chechen), N. Domozhakov (Khakassian), Yu. Rytkeu (Chukchi), N. Shestalov (Mansi), G. Khodzher (Nanai), V. Sangi (Nivkh). In the Union republics there were such outstanding writers writing in their native languages as G. Mustafin, S. Maulenov, J. Muldagaliev, M. Auezov, A. Nurpeisov, T. Ahtanov, D. Doszhanov, O. Suleimenov (Kazakh), T. Sydykbekov, A. Tokombaev, S. Eraliev, U. Abdukaimov, C. Aitmatov (Kirghiz), Mehdi Hüseyin, Rasul Rza, Elçin, R. Ibrahimbekov (Azerbaijani), F. Pestrak, J. Kolas, J. Bryl, M. Tank, P. Brovka, I. Melezh (Belarusian), A. Gudaitis-Guzyavichyus, T. Tilvitis, I. Avizhyus, E. Mezhelaitis, V. Mykolaitis-Putinas, V. Petkyavichyus, V. Bubnis, M. Sluckis (Lithuanian), I. Kocherha, S. Zhurahovich, Ivan Drach, Yu. Smolich, I. Stadnyuk, O. Gonchar (Ukrainian), S. Shanschiashvili, G. Leonidze, N. Shengelaja, T. Tabidze, G. Chikovani, K. Kaladze, N. Dumbadze (Georgian), B. Shinkuba (Abkhazian), D. Mamsurov, N. Gagloyev (Ossetian), M. Tursun-Zade, F. Mukhammadiev, J. Ikrami, F. Niazi, P. Tolis (Tajik), V. A. Saxe, Valsyunene (Latvian), A. Hint, R. Sirge, P. Kuusberg, E. Vetemaa (Estonian), A. Saghyan, S. Kaputikian, R. Kochar, M. Shatiryan, G. Mahari, G. Matevosyan (Armenian), A. Lupa, L. Deleanu, V. Beshlyage, S. Shlyakhu, I. Druce, G. Meniuc (Moldavian), Aybek, R. Faizi (Uzbek), T. Kaipbergenov (Karakalpak) and many others.

Literature was also published in languages of such minor peoples, as Abaza, Gagauz, Dungan, Kurdish, Koryak, Mansi, Nenets, Khakassian, Khanty, Evenk, Even, Eskimo, Yukaghir, which is still an unattainable goal for



most polyethnic countries. Say, almost all American Indian literature in United States and Canada is written in English, and the Japanese Ainu people hardly have any writer. No wonder that, for example, the identity of the Udehe writer Jhansi Kimonko attracted the attention of Western experts, as in [Imart, 1965, p. 235], quoted in [Alpatov, 2000, p. 131].

Speaking about periodicals, as of March 1, 1976, the USSR Writers Union published 15 literary newspapers in 14 languages of the peoples of the USSR and 86 literary magazines in 45 languages of the peoples of the USSR, including the monthly literary magazine *Friendship of Peoples* [Bolshaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, 1969-1978, Soyuz pisatelei SSSR (USSR Writers Union)]. In 1989, newspapers and journals were published in 56 languages<sup>of the USSR</sup> [Belikov, Krysin, 2001, p. 290]. In the 1980s, 2,377 newspapers were published in the peoples' of the USSR languages, including 1,275 Ukrainian, 204 Uzbek, 172 Kazakh etc. [Print, 1985, p. 110-112].

In general, these can hardly be interpreted otherwise but as evidence of the care for the national heritage of the peoples of the USSR, of nurturing and developing their national languages and cultures. Indeed, the socialist period may truly be called the heyday of the spiritual and creative faculties of the Soviet peoples, and a real golden age for the development of national languages of the USSR, in which humanistic and life-asserting literature was written. While many Western nations tended to eliminate the linguistic and cultural identity of their own and colonial peoples, and now have to restore and even reconstruct them, within the Russian civilization, national languages and cultures have maintained their identity, developed, mutually enriched themselves and gradually raised their status. For its part, Russian has become a peculiar medium of creative polylingual consciousness, in which Russian and national cognitive features have been internalized, and one of the factors of the phylogeny of the nationalities.

It is possible to agree with the opinion of E. E. Bacon (1966), that a similar situation occurred in many countries exposed to the forces of modern industrialization and technology. However, an important feature distinguishes the Soviet linguistic situation. On the one hand, the position of the Russian language strengthened, on the other hand, the country's policies ensures significant progress of nationalities and national languages over the post-revolutionary period [Alpatov, 2000, p. 135]. The Soviet national policy, including language policy, greatly developed the national consciousness of its peoples. This was particularly noticeable in Central Asia, where every Uzbek, unlike during V. V. Bartold's and Ye. D. Polivanov's time, already knew they



were Uzbek, and even their command of the Russian language did not lead to assimilation [Bennigsen, Quelquejay, 1967; Bacon, 1966]. An important role in this belongs the fact that, unlike in the 1920s, for example, the Uzbek language had clear boundaries and linguistic norms [Fierman, 1985]. While there was no such medium of ethnic consolidation as religion in the Soviet era, the development of national languages, in varying degrees, was given state support, and this, regardless of the actual role of these languages in communication, increased their symbolic role in terms of distinguishing "us" from "them" [Alpatov, 2000, p. 135]. So, despite the problems arising from a few script changes and Russian taking over certain functional spheres, it should be stated that the USSR has revealed to the world a sample of democratic and flexible national language policy.

Speaking about the linguistic situation in the Soviet Union, it is impossible not to compare it with national language policies of democratic capitalist countries of not so long ago. For example, the U.S. Congress passed a law on the languages of Native Americans (Indians) (the Native American Languages Act) only in 1990, and later the Senate held a special hearing on the issue of financial support for the program of indigenous languages revival. New Zealand only in 1987 adopted a law on the Maori language (the Māori Language Act), according to which it was declared the official language, and in connection with which a commission was established to develop measures aimed at expanding the Maori language social functions, and improve the conditions of its use as a means of communication. Similar laws came in the 1990s in Egypt, Mexico, Norway, Sweden, Australia. However, Canada, for example, said the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations that its government would not provide the necessary financial assistance to indigenous groups in the use and development of native languages for the implementation of administrative or other official activity on the federal scale, but only within the limits of their own communities.<sup>57</sup> According to the Government of Canada, more than 50 indigenous languages of the country can create huge financial and organizational difficulties, Information Submitter by the Government of Canada, UN. Doc. E / CN, 4/Sub, 2/AC, 4/1990, at 3, 1990, quoted in: [Ilishev, 2000, p. 70].

At present, the Russian Federation, on the whole, follows the practice of the Soviet Union, where the status of the Russian language was the

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<sup>57</sup> Canada is home to many indigenous languages. However, taken together, these are spoken by less than one percent of the population. According to the 2011 census, less than one percent of Canadians (213,485) reported an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue, and less than one percent of Canadians (132,920) reported an Aboriginal language as their home language.

language of inter-ethnic communication, and each republic had one official titular language with a few national and ethnic languages. The linguistic situation in the Russian Federation is based on the linguistic regulation adopted in the late 1980s – early 1990s. There are more than 160 ethnic groups and more than 150 languages in Russia. Unlike in the USSR, there is an article (Article 68) in the Russian Constitution that provides that the Russian language is the official state language throughout the territory of the country. At the same time, the republics within the Russian Federation have the constitutional right to establish their own state language, which is used alongside the state language of the Russian Federation, therefore all the national languages (for national republics and regions) are proclaimed as state. The status of the state language is imparted to more than 30 languages of the titular peoples, including ten Turkic languages: Altai, Bashkir, Chuvash, Karachi-Balkar, Khakas, Kumyk, Nogai, Tartar, Tuvan and Yakut; five Ural languages: Erza, Komi, Mari, Moksha, Udmurt; three Abkhazian-Circassian languages: Abaza, Adyghe, Kabardino-Circassian; two Mongolian languages: Kalmyk, Buryat; a large group of Nakh-Dagestani languages: Chechen, Ingush, Avar, Agul, Azeri, Dargin, Lak, Lezghian, Rutul, Tabasaran, Tat, Tsakhur<sup>58</sup>; one Iranian language: Ossetian.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation contains no direct provision for the right of autonomous districts and prefectures to establish their own state languages, but the entities of the Russian Federation establish the official status of their languages in their own statutes and laws. As of 2013, the official status is imparted to 16 languages: Buryat (the Agin-Buryat District of the Trans-Baikal Region), Veppsian (Karelia); Dolgan (Yakutia), Kazakh (Altai Republic), Karelian (Karelia), Komi-Perm (the Komi-Perm District of the Perm Territory), Khanty (Khanty-Mansiysk), Mansi (the Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous District), Nenets (the Nenets A. D., the Khanty-Mansiysk A. D., the Yamal-Nenets A. D.), Selkup (the Yamal-Nenets A. D.), Chukchi (Yakutia), Finnish (Karelia), Khanty (the Khanty-Mansiysk A. D., the Yamal-Nenets A. D.), Evenki (Yakutia), Even (Yakutia), Yukaghir (Yakutia).<sup>59</sup>

Adhering to the principle of ethnic and linguistic equality, the regional legislations of the Russian Federation, nevertheless, use the established

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58 According to the Constitution of the Republic of Dagestan the state languages on the territory of the republic are Russian and the languages of the peoples of Dagestan (Constitution of the Republic of Dagestan). The written languages of Dagestan are Avar, Agul, Azeri, Dargin, Kumyk, Lak, Lezghian, Nogai, Rutul, Tabasaran, Tat, Tsakhur and Chechen languages. Chapter 1, Article 11

59 [http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Государственные\\_и\\_официальные\\_языки\\_в\\_субъектах\\_Российской\\_Федерации](http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Государственные_и_официальные_языки_в_субъектах_Российской_Федерации)

practice of giving priority to titular ethnic groups, as well as indigenous (autochthonous) ethnic communities or groups living in the area for a long historical period. Thus, the republics of Udmurtia, Tatarstan, Mordovia, Bashkiria have adopted regulatory legal acts and inter-republican agreements aimed at promoting the cultural development of titular language groups who reside outside their respective autonomies. For example, the Republic of Mordovia on its territory caters for the culture and language of the Tatar minority (5% of the population), and the Republic of Tatarstan - the culture and language of Mordovian minority (0.6%) [Stepanov, 2010]. Minorities' languages, including recent new-script (the writing for which was created within the last three decades of the twentieth century), for example, Dolgan, Tofalar, Rutul, Aghul, based on Russian alphabet, are studied in primary school and have educational and literary publications in them, even if there is structural and functional underdevelopment of these languages, scarcity of speakers and the fact that their scope is limited to domestic communication. There are some problems, associated with the implementation of bi- and polylingualism (as outlined, e. g., in [Zamyatin, 2012], the conclusions of the article, though, cannot be viewed as definite), but in general the situation with polyethnic education, both school and higher, in the Russian Federation remains one of the best in the world.

Summarizing the above exposition, we should conclude that the national and language policies of Russia follow the pattern of dynamic fluctuations, dependent, in the first place, on the domestic political conditions and international situation – calm and prosperous times or the times of external / internal threats. These policies fluctuate from liberal laws providing for democratic self-governance of national territorial units, use of national (ethnic) languages in education and administration, institutionalization of and financing structures for the development of national cultures, literatures and languages to such steps as strengthening of the major national language as language of inter-ethnic communication (as well as titular languages of the autonomous republics), return to unifying patriotic ideology and education, civic consolidation, “convergence in a single nation” and etatism. In the second place, there is a dependence on the needs of modernization and technological progress, but this factor, while giving prominence to a single developed national language, also presupposes the development of minor languages based on the practices of translations from / into the H-language and borrowing / enriching terminology thereof.

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## **ЯЗЫК И КОММУНИКАЦИЯ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ ПОЛИКУЛЬТУРНОМ СОЦИУМЕ**

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