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The main issues connected to teaching the Abkhazian and Ossetian languages between the 20s and 50s of the XX century¹

Abstract

The development of the Abkhazian and Ossetian languages between the 20s and 50s of the 20th century is of vital importance from linguistic, political, ideological, and didactic points of view. Noteworthy is the fact that in this period, the Abkhaz and Ossetian languages were evolving through the use of alphabets of different languages.

In particular, it should be noted that from the beginning of the 20th century the Abkhaz and Ossetian languages were developing on the basis of the Russian alphabet. Afterwards, the written Ossetian (1923) and Abkhazian languages (1926) were based on the Latin alphabet, which is connected to the activities of Nicholas Marr. From 1938 there were more changes to the alphabet for both languages and the Russian alphabet was used for the Ossetian language in North Ossetia whereas the alphabets for the Ossetian and Abkhazian languages in South Ossetia and Abkhazia were based on the Georgian alphabet. In 1954, the Russian alphabet replaced the Georgian alphabet in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Recognition of Nicolas Marr's "Iapetus theory" in the Soviet Union led to the first changes and Latinization of the Ossetian and Abkhazian alphabets. It should be noted that from the 20s of the 20th century, the writing system of Turkic languages of Central Asian countries was also based on the Latin script.

The alphabet change is a complicated and painful issue that reflected on the educational process of Abkhazian and Ossetian languages, as well as on the literature development on these languages. The paper deals with the philological, political and pedagogical aspects of the above-mentioned issues.

Keywords: *Abkhazian language, Ossetian language, bilingual education, Soviet Union, Nikolas Marr theory*

Georgia is a multicultural and multiethnic country. Abkhazians and Ossetians whose linguistic and cultural development was taking place in this country are to be mentioned in this respect. The end of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century was characterized by many important political, social, cultural, educational and pedagogical aspects for Georgia. The country's ancient educational and literary traditions were focused on learning and teaching the languages of ethnic minorities, amongst them, the Abkhazian and Ossetian languages.

From the laws adopted during the First Republic of Georgia (1918-1921) it is evident that ethnic minorities living in Georgia besides speaking the official language, were given the opportunity to study,

¹*This research was supported by the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation (SRNSF) (grant number PhD_F_17_175). The project title is: Teaching Abkhazian and Ossetian Languages: History and Contemporary Situation.*

make official proceedings and even deliver a speech in their native language in the Parliament of Georgia (the law of October 1, 1918 of the Republic of Georgia "State language" and the law of 15 October 1918 "the use of the language"). Later, when Georgia was forced to become part of the Soviet Union (from February 25, 1921) two autonomous units in the territory of the country were created.

On March 4, 1921, the Soviet Socialist Republic of Abkhazia (SSRA) was established by the Soviet Union, and in 1931 it was transformed into an autonomous republic referred to as the autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Abkhazia.

In 1922 the Autonomous District of South Ossetia was created, which was supposed to be subordinated to the central government of Georgia.

The Abkhaz and Ossetian languages belong to different families of languages, but their development, including the development of Abkhazian and Ossetian alphabets, was happening in parallel with each other and in harmony with common political processes of the period. It is important to distinguish and highlight the main trends that determined the teaching of Abkhazian and Ossetian languages.

The main events of learning and teaching of Abkhazian and Ossetian languages will be reviewed within the scope of this article. The main issues will be a history of writing alphabets in Abkhazian and Ossetian languages, political linguistics, pedagogical and other aspects of alphabetical changes, history of teaching Ossetian and Abkhaz languages and pedagogical and methodical issues.

We must emphasize the fact, that the presented research is the first try of a classified and synthetic study regarding Abkhazian and Ossetian languages. Research methodology is based on bilingual teaching methodology on the one hand, and on the other hand, on the main trends of scientific, historical and pedagogical sciences, including the views expressed by Georgian, Abkhaz, Ossetian and Russian scientists.

The Abkhazian language is the language of the Abkhazian-Adyghe group, the family of Ibero-Caucasian languages. The scientific exploration of this language began at the end of the nineteenth century. A Russian scientist Peter Uslar created the alphabet in 1862 based on the Russian graphics. At the same time, a Russian scientist, Ivane Bartolomayi (1813 - 1870), a member of the Petersburg Academy, created and published the Abkhazian alphabet based on the Georgian script, though the teaching of the Abkhazian language through the Georgian script **was** soon stopped.

The next stage of the development of the Abkhazian language was already in the Soviet Union. The issues were solved according to Soviet ideology, including the development of the Abkhazian alphabet and the teaching of the Abkhazian language.

The Ossetian language belongs to the Northern group of Indo-European languages. Ossetians are ethnogenetically related to Scythians, Sarmatians and Alanians. Although, due to the long life in the Caucasus, the Ossetian language was influenced by the Ibero-Caucasian family, it still maintained the linguistic characteristics of the Old Iranian language.

The first script of the Ossetian language was made in Greek symbols (Abaev, 1949). By the end of the eighteenth century, Gayoz Rector (1746 - 1821) together with Pavel Genacurov created the Ossetian alphabet on the basis of the Slavic ecclesiastical font. In 1798 Gayoz Rector and Genacurov translated a "short catechism" from Russian into the Ossetian language.

At the same time, the Ossetian alphabet was developed on the basis of the Georgian script. John Yalguzidze (1775 - 1830), a famous bibliophile, created the Ossetian alphabet according to the Georgian script, translated theological books into the Ossetian language and published them. The first manuscript was published in 1802. In 1844, the Ossetian script of the old Slavic alphabet was created by French scientist Andreas Schreen.

The teaching of the Ossetian language was happening in parallel to South and North Ossetia which spoke one and the same language. Consequently, educational issues should have been similar, but according to political and social issues, there were some differing features in terms of the teaching of the Ossetian language.

According to several sources, in South Ossetia, Ossetians studied literature in Georgian, Ossetian and Greek languages. Information about these issues were provided by Z. Chichinadze. He mentioned that "Ossetians were

taught how to read and write in Georgian, Ossetian, Greek, and Assyrian and Roman ... Ossetian was the language of instruction for ecclesiastic and church affairs; great Ossetian kings and nobles taught in this alphabet which drew the Ossetians and Georgians nearer." (Chichinadze 1913: 101). According to the information by Z. Chichinadze, the following kings took care of the education of Ossetians: Bagrat IV ((1018 - 1072), who was married to the Ossetian king's daughter, Borena; David the Builder (1073 - 1125). Teimuraz I, known as Teimuraz, King of Kakheti (1589 - 1663) found shelter in Ossetia in 1640, as well as King Archil (1647 - 1713) (Chichinadze 1913:14).

The next stage of the education of Ossetians was the establishment of the Ossetian theological commission in which Georgian clergy were also included. The Commission was created under the leadership of Archimandrite Pakhom in Mozdok in 1743, and in 1814 was moved from Mozdok to Tbilisi. Schools were opened and local population was educated by priests. As it is known, the first theological school was opened in Mozdok in 1766, but the decision to open it had been in existence since 1753.

During the Tsarist autocracy in Russia, a two-way tendency was observed regarding the teaching of the Ossetian language: regional policy and centrist policy (see 1993: 45). These issues were largely reflected on the educational policy, including the education of Ossetians and the teaching of the Ossetian language. If the regional policy implied the support for socio-political, cultural and educational initiatives in the region as well as taking decisions based on the interests of the region, the center-oriented policy fought for the unification of all the processes, according to the Center's interests.

The first ecclesiastical Schools for South Ossetians were opened in 1828 in Java, Ceselat and Bekmar. It is known that in 1864, 140 children studied in the School of Religions (Bepiev, 2008).

The issue of teaching the Ossetian language at the Seminary of Tbilisi is to be discussed separately. This issue remained unknown to the scholars interested in the teaching of the Ossetian language for a long time, because during the Soviet Union these sources were not actively used in scientific circulation. However, the materials regarding teaching Ossetian became available after the investigation of the history of Tbilisi Theological Seminary (Gamakharia, 2006: 133)

The Ossetian language was taught by a well-known Georgian writer and public figure Daniel Chankadze (1830 - 1860) at Tbilisi Theological Seminary. "He produced the Georgian-Ossetian and Ossetian-Georgian dictionary, which was published by Shifnner, collected Ossetian proverbs and folk stories. It should be noted that the Georgians educated in this seminary were well aware of the Ossetian language and wrote letters to each other in this language" (Bepiev, 2008).

It should also be mentioned that, in the Java region and Ksani Gorge, religious schools for Ossetian children were opened in 1826. By 1864 9 theological schools had been opened. In Tskhinvali, elementary schools were opened already in the second half of the 19th century. By the initiative of Anna Amlakhvari, a boarding school where reading, theology and agriculture were taught, was opened in 1875.

From 1864 to 1990, 24 schools functioned in South Ossetia. Along with theological schools, secular schools called Ministry schools, were also opened. The first school of this type was opened in Tskhinvali in 1881. By 1915, there were now 20 secular schools. A primary school was opened in Java, on the basis of the school which was opened in 1826. In 1907 the Ossetian evening school was opened in Tbilisi, which was later led by a famous linguist, Academician Vasil Abayev. In 1913 a primary school for Ossetian children was opened Tbilisi.

The issue of teaching the Ossetian language was first raised in the North Caucasus in 1749 - 1752, during the Russian - Ossetian negotiations followed by the unification of North Ossetia with Russia in 1774. During one of the negotiations between the Russians - Ossetians in St. Petersburg, a decision was made about the establishment of an Ossetian school in Mozdok.

From the 20s of the 19th century the process of the establishment of Ossetian schools in North Ossetia began. In 1836 the Vladikavkaz theological school opened the program of school education, because the main

mission of the theological school was preparation of the clergy who could work as teachers. In 1847, after the establishment of the Caucasian "Okruq" institution, the Ossetian language teaching moved up to a new stage although this decision was not implemented in practice, and by 1860, there were 7 Russian preschool schools in North Ossetia in which 107 children studied in Russian "(Kambalov, 2007).

From 1860 the education issues in North Ossetia were led by the "Society for the Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus". The main goal of this society was to integrate the goals of secular and religious education, and then to expand activities and open primary schools. Consequently, in 1864 - 1867, the number of schools reached 30. "Separate school buildings were constructed and the educational process was financially supported [History of the autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of North Ossetia 1959: 180], although the language of instruction was solely Russian (Kambalov 2007).

From the 70s of the 19th century, the Russian education policy continued to change from the centralized policy to regionalism and there were some changes regarding the education of Ossetians. Accordingly, the Ossetian language was taught together with Russian in theological schools, but in 1884 the policy changed and the parish schools moved under the authority of the theological department, which had an impact on the teaching of the Ossetian language (Gabeev 1940: 18). Secular schools (called "Ministry" schools) in North Ossetia were created in Muslim settlements in the late 19th century. The main reason for this was the impossibility of teaching the Muslim population by Christian methodology.

By 1917, there were 52 church and 35 public schools in North Ossetia. At the beginning of the 20th century, there was a number of educational institutions working in Vladikavkaz: two boys and two girl's gymnasiums, two schools, Pedagogical Seminary, Pedagogical Institute and the Cadets Corps. In the above mentioned institutions the language of tuition was Russian; Ossetian was not taught at all. "In Ardon Theological School, which was created in 1887 and first converted into a religious mission seminary in 1895, and in 1909 was transformed into a regular seminary, the Ossetian language was taught as a mandatory subject" (Kambalov 2007).

The issue of nationalization of schools among the Ossetian population in North Ossetia began in the second half of the 19th century. It should be noted that both the tuition of the Ossetian language and the learning of the Ossetian language were related to one and the same educational policy. Consequently, the practical expression of the principles of Russification was not a primitive prohibition of the native language, but the total absence of support for teaching it. The imperial politics in the field of education was the "support of educational protectionism" (Blarov 1999, p. 138). At the beginning of the 20th century, it became possible to learn the Ossetian language as a compulsory subject, but only for 2 years. It should also be noted that the learning processes, including the lack of methodical material and textbooks were indicated as acute (Kambalov 2007).

The teaching of the Abkhaz language can be dated from 1810 when the Abkhazian Province was still independent. By the initiative of Iaone Ioseliani, a teacher in the village of Likhni, a theological school was to be established at the residence of the Governor of Abkhazia, where Abkhazian children would be educated in their native language. The idea was supported by the Abkhazian government, however, the Russian authorities refused to create such a school (Gvantseladze 2010).

In 1851, following the decision of the Russian Church Synod, an Abkhazian theological school was open under the leadership and supervision of Alexander Okropiridze. He was a teacher in the village of Likhni, where a school was opened in 1852. Among the courses taught at the school were the Russian and Georgian languages (both secular and liturgical languages), correct writing in Russian and Georgian, maths, grammar of Russian and Georgian, glossary, geography and exercises in the Abkhazian language (Gamakharia, 2006, pp. 11-17).

This school existed until 1855. It is important to ask the following question: Which language basics were the basis for teaching the Abkhazian language in Likhni theological school? As is known, the alphabets by Peter

Uslar and Ivan Bartolomei were not yet created. In our opinion, neither Arabic nor Latin alphabets were used for the Abkhazian language.

From the 1860s a new wave of the Abkhazian language started. As we have already mentioned, in 1862 Peter Uslar created the alphabet of Abkhazian based on the Russian script. At the same time, in the same year, a commission, initiated by the Society for Restoration of Orthodox Christianity of the Caucasus, was set up in Tbilisi to develop the Abkhazian manual. The chairman of the Commission was General Ivan Bartolomei, Correspondent Member of the Petersburg Academy, Archaeologist and Numismatist, who served in the Caucasus, specifically in Abkhazia and Tbilisi, from 1850. The alphabet created by Bartolomei was not in use. "Uslar denounced the commission to the authorities, which was why The Bartolomei Commission was forced to use P. Uslar's script based on Kirilica" (Gvantseladze 2012).

In the 70s of the 19th century, Abkhazian villages were taught in Abkhazian, but in 1884 teaching in the Abkhazian language was abolished and the language of instruction was only Russian. "There was definitely a progressive phenomenon from the middle of the 19th century in establishing parish and secular schools in several Abkhazian villages where Abkhazian children were able to obtain primary education, but the language of instruction in these schools was Russian: Abkhazian was only an auxiliary language employed to facilitate learning the Russian language ... Since the creation of the Abkhazian script by Uslar, the Abkhazian language was rarely used in education in the 20th century. In 1864, when Russia finally conquered the Province of Abkhazia, the Russian authorities tried to organize teaching in the Abkhazian language and in 1865, a year after the first Abkhazian manual was published, schools were opened for Abkhaz children in several Abkhazian villages, in which, "although the Abkhazian language was also taught, the language of instruction was in Russian", (Gvantseladze 2010).

From the 60s of the 19th century the active educational movement started in Georgia, the Society for the Spreading of Literacy among Georgians was founded, methodical and educational manuals were created, among them was "Dedaena" (Mother Tongue) by Iakob Gogebashvili, published in 1876. In addition, the following important textbooks were published: "The Georgian Language Alphabet and First Reading Book for children" (1868), "The gateway to the nature" (1868) and "Ruskoe Slovo" (1887). The teaching of the Abkhazian language was also influenced by these educational processes. "The Abkhazian alphabet" by A. Chachua followed the pedagogical principles created by Gogebashvili in the beginning of the 20th century and was published in 1909. According to Iakob Gogebashvili, a scholar and teacher, teaching in the Abkhazian language was necessary and obligatory. In this period the idea regarding the creation of literature in the Abkhaz language was put forward and together with the issues of teaching and learning the Abkhazian language and implementing courses of ecclesiastic studies.

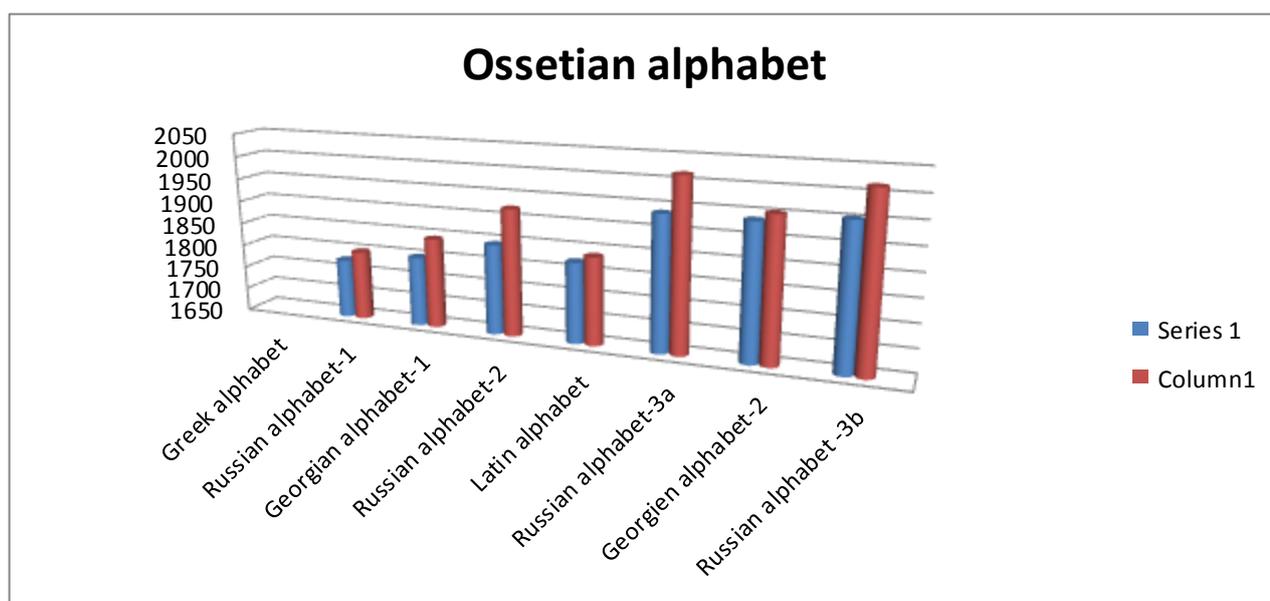
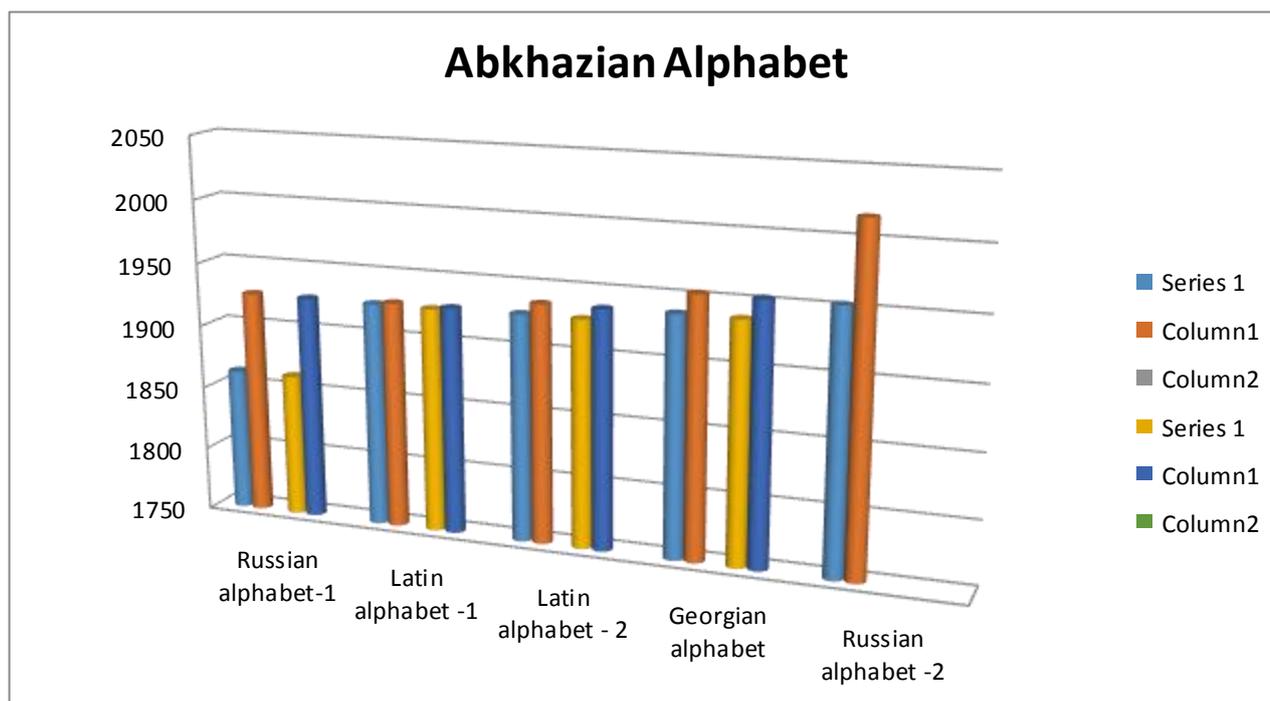
In 1915, a Pedagogical Seminary was established in Sukhumi, where a well-known activist and public figure Dimitry Gulia was actively involved. At the Seminary a handwritten literary journal "Sharpesdva" was founded in 1919 and the newspaper "Apsni" in Abkhazian was published in the same year.

Such was the experience of teaching Abkhazian and Ossetian languages in the 20s of the 20th century, when the process of frequent change of both alphabets began.

The 20s - 50s of the 20th century in the development of Abkhazian and Ossetian languages is of vital importance from linguistic, political, ideological and pedagogical points of view. In this period the Abkhazian and Ossetian languages developed using alphabets of different languages: "Language Policy is a system of various events and legislative acts, based on the countries / governments and society institutions and which reflect specific social-linguistic goals. This may include maintenance or change of existing functional-language norms, supporting any language, popularization, etc." (Gabunia 2017, p. 47).

If both alphabets were based on the origin of the Russian script in the early 20th century, the process of Latinization of the alphabet began in the 20s of the 20th century, resulting from the ideological influence of the Soviet Union. In 1923 the Ossetian language, and in 1926 the Abkhazian language were based on the Latin alphabet which is connected to the name of Nikolas Marr. Since 1938 the alphabet has been changed for both languages and the Russian alphabet was introduced for the Ossetian language in North Ossetia, and for the Ossetian and Abkhazian languages in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

In 1954, the Russian alphabet was again replaced by the Georgian alphabet in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The discussed issues can be expressed as follows:



The recognition of "Japhetic theory" by Nikolas Marr's in the Soviet space caused the first changes and Latinization of the Ossetian and Abkhazian alphabets. It should be noted that the Latin alphabet was based on the writings of Turcic languages of Central Asia since the 20th century.

A change of alphabets is a painful and challenging process which had an influence over the educational processes connected with the Abkhazian and Ossetian languages, as well as over the literary process and development of these languages. In this regard it is important to observe the teaching and learning as well as recognizing pedagogical and methodological issues of both the Abkhazian and Ossetian languages and singling out common trends.

The Soviet Union, which was a multiethnic and multicultural state, involved many languages and cultures with dominant Russian and / or Soviet culture. In the Soviet Union, Russian was also granted the status of the second language. For decades, the ideological influence of the Russian language and culture led to the development of the Soviet culture, which was entirely Russian.

At the same time, the Russian language became the essential / mandatory and elite language. The multilateral and compulsory status of the Russian language brought a great ideological impact on the majority of peoples living in the Soviet Union and the formation of their identity with Russian language and culture. "Russians, Armenians, Azerbaijanis, Abkhazians, Ossetians, Greeks, Kurds and others became part of the Russian political and linguistic community" (Tabatadze, 2016).

It should be noted that after the foundation of the Soviet Union, certain terms and obligations were established regarding teaching of the national languages, but the introduction of the teaching of the Ossetian language lacked adequate learning and methodical resources, as well as qualified teachers and well-developed curriculum programs. Also, the Russian language remained the main language. At the second congress of Ossetian schools teachers, the issue of preparation of the relevant field specialists at the Vladikavkaz Teaching Institute of the Ossetian language was raised. Five-week methodical pedagogic courses were created for the Ossetian language teachers. The preparation of the teachers started in August 1920 under the supervision of the Public Education Department of the Tergi Public education supervision Party. Consequently, in the 20s of the 20th century, the development of the Ossetian language began, and the preparation for the establishment of the National School based on the Ossetian language base. The foundation was laid regarding the process of staff training and textbooks. In addition, the base for the foundation of printing houses was established.

The alphabet created by C. Guriaev and based on the Iron dialect, was published in 1923 whereas the Alphabet created by M. Gardanov was based on the Digor Dialect. 25 manuals were written, 20 collections for literature lessons, two folk collections and 3 scientific research were developed.

In 1922 – 1924 In Vladikavkaz there were 21 schools at the first stage of education and 6 schools at the second stage of education. The academic process included ten languages: Russian, Ossetian, Armenian, Persian, Georgian, Hebrew, Tatar, German, Greek and Polish employing corresponding alphabets (Magidov 1979: 54). This culminated in the decisions of the Central Committee of the 8th (1919) and 10th (1921) Congresses. In other schools, mainly in villages and peripheries, the language of instruction was Russian, rarely - Ossetian.

The teaching of Ossetian in South Ossetia was widely associated with the availability of learning materials, though it should be noted that the issue of teaching the Ossetian language had a great importance in Tskhinvali State Pedagogical Institute founded in 1932, with the Faculty of Agrobiology and later addition of the Department of Philology, with the sub-departments of Georgian, Russian and Ossetian philology.

The learning and teaching process of Ossetian and Abkhazian languages is deeply connected with Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, where, starting from the 20s of the 20th century, there were scientific studies of these languages, singling out grammatical and linguistic categories and teaching of the Ossetian and Abkhazian languages.

The issue of changes in Ossetian and Abkhazian alphabets had some influence on the teaching of these languages. Observation of school textbooks, scientific works and original or translated literary publications revealed that tone and the same book, textbook or research was often printed in several alphabets, namely using Latin and Georgian fonts. Also, school textbooks were published in a number of scripts, which naturally

complicated the study of this language for schoolchildren, and also made it difficult to create or translate literature in this language.

Russian alphabetization was the next stage in teaching Abkhaz and Ossetian languages. After the introduction of the Russian alphabet, the Abkhazian and Ossetian scripts were based on the Russian Alphabets.

When discussing the Abkhazian language and issues regarding bilingual education and pedagogical and methodical issues, it is important to note the difference between the teaching of the Abkhazian language and the reform of school education in Abkhazia in the 30s of the 20th century. In particular, the issue of transferring the Abkhazian alphabet into the Georgian alphabet after rejecting the theory by Nikolas Marr was carried out by contemporary Abkhazian scientists due to Stalin's Georgian origin.

Since 1937 - 38, after the change of alphabet of the Abkhazian and Ossetian script from the Latin alphabet into the Georgian, the basic language of Abkhazian and Ossetian schools became Georgian instead of Russian. In this regard, Dimitri Gulia, the founder of Abkhazian literature, wrote: "This event will definitely promote and strengthen the entire Abkhazian culture, because the Georgian alphabet is the most appropriate and complete version for the Abkhazian language." (Gulia, 1937). The issue of introducing the Georgian alphabet was discussed on 4 - 5 December 1937 at the N. Marr Research Institute in Sukhumi with the participation of Abkhazian, Georgian and Russian scientists. At the meeting a famous Abkhazian scientist and public figure B. Bghazhba noted that "this alphabet perfectly expresses the entire sound system of the Abkhazian literary language" (Bghazhba, 1987: 19).

The reform of Abkhazian and Ossetian languages was completed in 1938. It was decided that the Ossetian language writing in North Ossetia had to be based on the Russian script and in South Ossetia on the Georgian language. In February 1938, the Central Executive Committee of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia adopted a resolution on the transfer of the Abkhazian script into the Georgian graphic system. "The reason for this does not lie either in Stalin's and L. Beria's ethnicity and their patriotism, or in any specific anti-Abkhazian direction and, especially, in the attempt made by Georgians to abolish Abkhazian ethno cultural identity, but in linguistic-historic circumstances, which reveal that among the languages of the republics of the Soviet Union, only Georgian was diametrically different from "kirilica" regarding its alphabet. Obviously, the Kremlin would not either neutralize this Georgian specific feature in its decision or make a separate decision for Georgia" (Izoria, 2015: 28).

The following decisions were adopted by the Central Committee of the Soviet Union and the Politbureau in 1937 – 1938: "About Reorganization, Liquidation and Transformation of Artificially created districts and Village Councils and Reorganization of National Schools" and "About the Compulsory learning of the Russian Language in Schools of National Republics and Districts ". In the first resolution, which was adopted on 24 January 1937 by the Communist "Orgburo" and on December 17, 1937 adopted by the Politbureau "hostile elements working in the peoples' commissariats of the Soviet Republics and Autonomous Republics who establish Special National Schools (German, Finnish, Polish, Latvian, Greek, Estonian, Chinese and others) and transformed them into the places in which children were subject to the "bourgeois-nationalists influence".

It was mentioned in the resolution

"a) special national schools (German, Finnish, Polish, Latvian, Estonian and others) will be transformed into ordinary types of Soviet schools. National departments at regular Soviet schools should be eliminated.

b) Reorganization will be done as follows: "It is necessary that special national schools be converted into ordinary schools through introducing curricula and academic plans of Russian type Soviet schools, the language of instruction should be Russian or a language of a republic ..."

These measures were to be carried out before 1 August 1938 (Lezhava, 1997: 112). In our view, this issue is directly related to Stalin's condemnation of the theory of Nikolas Marr, because, besides Abkhazian and Ossetian languages, studying in other languages was also abolished.

Apparently, in the 30s of the Soviet era, teaching in national languages was prohibited in secondary schools. In spite of this, until 1945 the teaching of Abkhazian and Ossetian languages did not completely stop.

In regard to the teaching of the Abkhazian language it is also worth mentioning that the political aspects of the given issue are exemplified in the regulations issued by the local Abkhazian Education Commissioner, and published in the letter written by the teachers (see G. Lezhava, D. Jojua, T. Gvantseladze, L. Izoria, Bangage, Lakoba and others).

In the discussed model the Russian language was replaced by Georgian at the initial stage of school education. In paragraph b of the Decree it is stated that schools should be converted into the usual type of the Soviet schools and the language of instruction was indicated to be the language of the republic or Russian. Consequently, Abkhazian and Ossetian schools should be converted into Georgian schools or Russian schools. In North Ossetia, which was part of the Russian Federation, schools became Russian, but the Georgian language had to be closer to Abkhazian and Ossetian people living in the Republic of Georgia, whose native language alphabet was based on the Georgian language. There is a sharp contrast regarding this issue between the opinions of the Abkhazian and Georgian scholars. According to the Abkhazian scholars, it was an imposition of the Georgian culture upon the Abkhazians and restriction of the Abkhazian language and literature. According to the Georgian scientists, the teaching in the Georgian language was not unacceptable for the Abkhazian population and pedagogical, scientific and intellectual circles. According to the opinion of the school teachers, head teachers and the representatives of the regional divisions (B. Katsia, N. Geria, A. Marghania, M. Bouava etc.), the transfer of Abkhazian schools into Georgian was entirely acceptable (see Papaskiri, 2007: 144- 145).

Due to the transfer of Abkhazian schools into Georgian, there was a Special Commission for the preparation of the school reform created by the District Committee of the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic in January 9, 1945, under the leadership of M. Delba, Chairman of the Council of Ministers. After two months of work, March 12, 1945, the Commission submitted its conclusion according to which an important part of the Abkhazian population is fluent in the Georgian language. The reason for this is the lexical closeness of the Georgian and Abkhazian languages and the unified alphabetical system. On 13 March 1945, the District Committee of the Abkhazian Communist Party of Georgia adopted a decree, according to which, in 1945 - 1946 the language of instruction in Abkhazian schools had to be Georgian. On 13 June 1945, this resolution was approved by the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia.

For the history of the development of the issue, it should also be noted that on February 25, 1947 three researchers in the same research institute (N. Marr Abkhazian Scientific Research Institute), candidates of Philological sciences K. Shakril, B. Shinkuba, candidate of Historical Sciences addressed the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with a protest letter. This letter is important due to its political, ideological, national as well as pedagogical aspects.

Specifically, the address states that a part of the authors and Abkhazian people want to the Abkhazian language to be made a language of instruction, to remove the Georgian language and add the Russian language. It should also be noted that in 1967, in the letter of protest of the Abkhazian youth there was a demand for the introduction of teaching in Abkhazian (for more details see Lejava 1997, Papaskiri 2007).

The replacement of the Russian language by the Georgian was determined by the 1937 resolution. As revealed by the studies, this did not cause and should not have caused the reduction of the number of hours Abkhazian and Ossetian languages were taught.

The replacement of the Russian language is directly related to the change of the Abkhazian and Ossetian script from Latin into Georgian, which, in turn, was condemned by Nikolas Marr's theory.

We think it is important to remember the memoirs of Kandid Charkviani, secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia in 1938 - 1952. It was the period when the Abkhazian and Ossetian scripts were transferred from the Latin alphabet and when the Russian language was replaced by Georgian. K. Charkviani noted in one of the interviews: "There is a misunderstanding on the issue of schools; we have not taken the Abkhazian language anywhere. The Abkhazian language is still there, the issue concerns

only the primary education. The primary school was Abkhazian, but not fully, because some courses were taught in Russian, because there was no terminology, no textbooks, and no teachers.

So, in fact, it was a Russian school. This was initiated by a group of Abkhazian intellectuals who addressed the Central Committee with the request to replace Russian by Georgian in schools. .. but by this the Abkhazian language and literature was not limited at all, because the classes and hours remained as they were. As for the Georgian school, where the Abkhazian children would learn - they would also have similar conditions to study the Abkhazian language and literature. Such was the attitude. But now they have changed everything and it looks as if we had cancelled the Secondary school. How could we have cancelled something which did not exist? There was no Abkhazian high school. If anyone complains about something, I think it can be only one thing, namely that we replaced the language of instruction into Georgian and not in every school. Only in schools where the Georgian language was more popular (Charkviani, 2013: 47-48).

It should be noted as a conclusion that in the 20 - 50s of the 20th century, the teaching of Abkhazian and Ossetian languages was associated with the Soviet ideological issues, including similar processes of alphabet changes, which complicated both pedagogical and methodological processes of the language learning and created preconditions for political confrontation and finally, became a reason for political confrontation. In addition, in the same period, there were processes of alphabetization of the population and changes in primary and secondary education. However, using the example of teaching of Abkhazian and Ossetian languages it can be claimed that it was the support of the Russian-speaking education and national differentiation of schools was conditional.

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