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LANGUAGE POLICY IN KARAKALPAKSTAN (1917-1941)

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ABSTRACT

Based on new archival sources and published literature, the article covers an excursion on the transition to romanization in 1926-1940 in Karakalpakstan, shows the reasons and consequences of the reform of the Karakalpak language writing. The most important task of national-autonomous construction was the adaptation of the bodies of the created state power and their apparatus to local national conditions. To solve it, it was necessary in a short time to translate the office work into the national language and involve representatives of the "indigenous" nationality in the apparatus. If in the 1927/1928 academic year in all indigenous schools teaching was carried out in two alphabets, then in the 1928/1929 academic year it was completely conducted in the new alphabet.

KEYWORDS: *Writing, Language, Alphabet, "Yanalif", Romanization, Dialects, Nationalities, Elimination Of Illiteracy, Spelling, Karakalpak Autonomous Region, Pan-Turkists, Pan-Islamists, Jadids, Cyrillic.*

INTRODUCTION

In the twentieth century, the solution of such problems as the practical implementation of the equality of the Karakalpak people, their language, the restoration of the national statehood served by the national language, the development of the national culture based on the Karakalpak language and, accordingly, the provision of the necessary conditions for this: creation of the alphabet, teaching in the Karakalpak language, the organization of the development of science and culture in the native language, the widespread use of the Karakalpak language in the spheres of mass communication (print, radio broadcasting, television, cinema), as well as in official correspondence and office work.

THE MAIN FINDINGS AND RESEARCH

At the beginning of the 1920s, a policy was introduced everywhere for the “indigenization” of all party and state structures, that is, for the widest possible involvement of the local population in administrative activities. In Karakalpakstan, attempts were made to translate office work at the republican and local levels exclusively into national languages. It was assumed that the Russian population of the national republics would gradually master the local languages, and the party-state functionaries were simply obliged to do this as soon as possible. Resolutions of this kind have been adopted more than once, but, with rare individual exceptions, the matter did not come to their implementation.

Indigenization “provided for the expansion of education and training of managers, business executives and the intelligentsia among the indigenous nationalities in the republics.” In each national territory, the language of the titular nationality became the official state language. National elites were educated and promoted to leadership positions in party organs, government, industry, and educational institutions in each national territory.

In addition, the ethnolinguistic policy in the Soviet state is considered, in turn, in isolation from the policy of indigenization, although the connection between the first and the second is quite clear, which is clearly seen from the documents of that era. So, at the IV secret meeting of the RCP (*Russian Communist Party*) (b), the need for “systematic and unswerving work to nationalize state and party institutions in the republics and regions in the sense of gradually introducing local languages into office work, with the obligation of responsible workers to study local languages” was emphasized [1, p. 284].

Thus, an equally important task of indigenization was the cultivation of national languages at the level of the administrative elites of the republics. Moreover, it was understood that for this it would be enough for the managerial elite to master the national language, whose representatives do not have to be “nationals”.

A comprehensive analysis of the indigenous policy and ethnolinguistic policy in the context of the general ideological course of the Soviet Union makes it possible to more clearly demonstrate the role of ethnicity in the practice of constructing soviet identities by the ruling elite.

The most important task of national-autonomous construction was the adaptation of the bodies of the created state power and their apparatus to local national conditions. To solve it, it was necessary in a short time to translate the office work into the national language and involve representatives of the “indigenous” nationality in the apparatus. It is not surprising that the principles of the indigenous policy were used not only in the Soviet state building, but also formed the basis of the cadre policy of the ruling party.

As already noted, the policy of indigenization was very closely related to the ethnolinguistic policy of the Soviet state. The creation of new alphabets for nations and nationalities that previously “did not have” it was largely due to the tasks of promoting the ideas of socialism. The alphabet had to be extremely functional. In this regard, in the discourse of national and cultural construction, the problem of introducing such an alphabet, with the help of which it would be possible to conduct ideological propaganda most effectively, has acquired a special urgency.

Having strengthened, the Soviet regime could afford to experiment with the national language, not being very concerned about preserving the “national form” and striving to produce “socialist content” as quickly and efficiently as possible. Ethnic culture and tradition, which due to political expediency had to be left / preserved, acted as “raw material”, which was actively designed and from which everything that did not fit into the framework of Marxist-Leninist ideology was cut off.

Thus, the indigenization and ethnolinguistic policy of the Soviet state, both at the central and local levels, were the practices with the help of which the official authorities built a “positive”, in the sense of an ideologically acceptable “national” image.

On June 16, 1927, the Executive Bureau of the All-Russian Central Committee of the New Turkic Alphabet, in order to train workers to agitate the idea of romanizing the alphabet, organized a monthly course in Moscow to train instructors-agitators, where 2 places were allocated for Karakalpakstan. According to the program of the course, lectures were to be held on the following topics: history of writing, history of Arabic and Latin writing, pre-Islamic writing of the Turkic peoples, ideas of writing reform in connection with the social development of the Turks [2, pp. 20-23]. The persons sent to these courses must be well-literate and fluent in Russian, since the courses were taught in Russian. The seconded should be one of the teachers loyal to the reform. When choosing candidates, it was necessary to take into account that the cadets, upon returning to the field, should be the main agents of reform to the masses as agitators, and therefore they should have been members or candidates of the AUCP (*All-Union Communist Party*) (b) with preparation for broad public work.

On June 28, 1927, the publishing plan of the All-Russian Central Committee of the NTA (*New Turkic alphabet*) was approved for textbooks in the new Turkic alphabet, where it was planned to prepare and publish a Primer for adult schools of the 1st grade (6 pp.), An Arithmetic Problem Book (8 pp. / 1), “Book for reading” 1-year study (8 p / 1), “Cutting alphabet” (1 p / 1), “Metric measures” (2 p / 1) [3, p. 36]. In April 1928, the Chairman of the All-Russian Central Committee of the NTA Agamaly-oglu stated that “the business of conducting and introducing a new Turkic alphabet, started by all the Turkic-Tatar peoples of the Soviet republics, is one of the big factors in the blow to the obsolete Arabic script and in its further final destruction” ... Strengthening the publication of both textbooks and other literatures in the new Turkic alphabet, thereby the republics accelerate the elimination of the Arabic alphabet. On the funds allocated both from the Central Committee of the NTA and from the budgets of the republics, the printing of textbooks, fiction and political literature in the Arabic alphabet was in no way allowed for the business of the new Turkic alphabet [4, p. 41].

In order to prepare and develop a master plan for the implementation of a new Turkic alphabet, Moscow demanded the following information from Karakalpakstan:

1. The number of the local population with its distribution by dialects and nationalities;
2. The number of literate population separately in the Arabic alphabet, separately in the new romanized alphabet;
3. The number of students and groups in local schools with their distribution to students in the old Arabic alphabet and the new romanized alphabet;

4. The number of teachers studying in schools with their distribution in the leading classes in the old Arabic and new romanized alphabets;
5. The number of centers for the elimination of illiteracy among the adult population with their distribution in the leading classes in the old Arabic and new romanized alphabet;
6. The number of reading rooms [5, p. 27].

The first results of the transition to romanization were summed up at a meeting of the expanded Presidium of the All-Russian Central Committee of the NTA, held in Makhachkala (July 1-5, 1929). In the reporting report of the Kazakh Central Committee of the NTA (rapporteur Kashimbekov) (Karakalpak Autonomous Region was part of the Kazakh ASSR (*Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic*) - D.K.) it was noted that the agitation work in the republic ended in 1927, and in 1928 the practical introduction of the alphabet into the masses began. If in the 1927/1928 academic year in all indigenous schools teaching was carried out in two alphabets, then in the 1928/1929 academic year it was completely conducted in the new alphabet. 91,537 teachers and instructors were trained in retraining courses, educational programs and Soviet-trade union schools. Educational institutions were provided with textbooks in the new alphabet in the 1928/1929 academic year by 80%. Half of the newspapers and magazines were published in the new alphabet; the main obstacle in the publishing business was the lack of equipment in the printing house. The government of Kazakhstan intended to finally switch to the new alphabet before January 1, 1930 [6, p. 88].

The 1929/1930 academic year according to the general plan of Moscow should have been decisive for the introduction of the new alphabet. According to the decree of the 1st session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee U1 convocation and the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR dated February 26, 1929, all state and public institutions were to switch to the new alphabet. By the tenth anniversary of Kazakhstan, the new alphabet was supposed to win a final victory over the old one. To achieve this goal, the government of Kazakhstan decided: to fully adapt the state apparatus to the new alphabet; the publishing plan is 100% fulfilled in the new alphabet; periodicals should be translated by 50% [7, p.104].

Further events on the introduction of the new alphabet in Karakalpakstan developed within the Russian Federation, which our region directly entered in June 1930.

The historical experience of romanization in 1927-1930 in Karakalpakstan is of no small practical and scientific importance at the present stage.

REFERENCES

- [1] Secrets of the national policy of the APSU. Moscow, 1992, p. 284.
- [2] Central State Archives of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, f.65, op.1, d.1, pp.20-23, 27, 36, 41, 88, 104.