

TEIMURAZ GVANTSELADZE
SOFIKO CHAAVA



*Abkhazian language
in past,
present and...*

TEIMURAZ GVANTSELADZE & SOFIKO CHAAVA

**ABKHAZIAN LANGUAGE -
PAST, PRESENT AND...**

(Ecolinguistic and sociolinguistic analysis)

*The present work is the final product of a project funded by the **Shota Rustaveli Science Foundation**. It consists of 2 parts: based on historical and archival materials.*

***First part** analyzes the causes of the catastrophic changing of the ecological state, function area and usage sphere of the Abkhazian language in the context of the language policy of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union; It shows what ecological transformations have taken place in the phonological and grammatical structure of the language, especially in the vocabulary.*

*The **second part** presents the decoded texts of the audio and video materials obtained by the project participants, reflecting the attitude of the representatives of the Abkhazian and Georgian communities towards the state of the Abkhazian language and its fate. These records are accompanied by comments.*

Based on the documents and arguments the book refutes the accusations made in the Abkhazian separatist literature about the “persecution” of the Abkhazian language by Georgians.

The book is accompanied by several important documents related to the research topic.

Dedicated to the 110th anniversary of the birth
of the outstanding researcher of the Abkhaz language,
academician Ketevan Lomtadze

PART I.

ECOLINGUISTIC AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC ASPECTS OF THE FUNCTIONING OF THE ABKHAZIAN LANGUAGE¹⁰⁵

UNTIL THE 60s OF THE 19TH CENTURY

(brief overview)

The ancestors of the present-day Abkhazians (Apswas) together with the Abaza tribes were an organic part of the united Apswa-Abaza peoples until the 16th century and inhabited in the western part of the North Caucasus, on the territory of the present-day Republics of Karachaevo-Cherkessia and Kabardino-Balkaria, as well as in the south-east of the Krasnodar Krai, where they were directly neighbored on the one hand, by the Circassians and Ubykhs, on the other hand, by Karachays and Balkars. Consequently, the Apswa-Abaza language functioned in long contact with the Circassian, Ubykh and Karachay-Balkar languages, which is mirrored in the vocabulary of the Abkhazian and Abaza languages and in part in the Abaza phonological system. During this period, the Apswa-Abaza language did not undergo any influence from the language policy of any state.

The expansion of the Apswa tribes towards modern Abkhazia began in the 16th century. First, they settled in the upper reaches of the Psou, Bzip and Gumista rivers, then in the Kodori and Tsebeli gorges, and then they moved to the coastal plains, as a result of what one group of Georgians migrated from most part of present-day Abkhazia's territory towards present Gali district, Svaneti and Samegrelo, while another group of Georgians remained on the spot and merged with the Apwas. First they lost their mother

105. The author of the first part of the work is T. Gvantseladze.

tongue and moved to the language of the newcomers, and then changed their ethnic identity. Thus, the Georgians became an integral part of the newcomers. Due to this, the language of the newcomers and its ecological environment changed significantly:

1. If before the 16th century the Apswa-Abaza language was a unified, continuous continuum, from that time one part of it was broken off the earlier territory, **i.e. the linguistic-territorial integrity was violated**;
2. After the migration of Apswas from **historically and ecologically natural geographical and socio-cultural environments, their language had to continue to exist in another unnatural geographical space**, that resulted the loss of vitality of hundreds of lexical entries and idioms reflecting the early habitat and natural geographical-ecological and socio-cultural environment. This was a pivotal trauma for the language;
3. In the 16-18th cc. the following **dialects were finally formulated: Abzhua, Bzip and Jik (Sadz)**. The embryos of these dialects probably existed even before the Apswas left their original homeland.
4. The new dialects acquired the **Megrelian vocabulary** in the form of **substratum**: the names of the plants of the subtropical zone, the words related to Christianity, culture, capital construction, literature, seafaring, fisheries, agriculture and other fields;
5. Three phonemes were lost and two characteristic consonants appeared in the Bzip dialect. This was a significant loss of the phonological system;
6. In the North Caucasus, the Apswa-Abaza language has **equal social status** along with the unwritten Circassian, Ubykh and Karachay-Balkar languages. In the new environment, it appeared under the natural influence of prestigious Georgian literary language with centuries-old literary tradition and Megrelian dialect, and this influence was reflected in the borrowing of a large vocabulary related to culture, religion and economic activities. The Georgian language served as the language of official proceedings, culture and religion among Abkhazians until the 20th century (S. Janashia, 1985). In the 18th century, there were precedents for the prevalent of the Turkish language;
7. The ethnic situation in the territory of present-day Abkhazia has changed radically and to the detriment of the Kartvelian linguistic-ethnic continuum; instead, Abkhazians have merged with Georgian social, economic, cultural and religious systems, as is evident in the borrowed Georgian vocabulary in the Abkhazian language;

8. The domination of Apswas settled in Georgian villages and the apswaization of autochthonous Georgians began: most Georgians left their native villages, while the Georgians stayed on the place turned into a minority and first their language and finally their ethnic identity changed. This is evidenced by the fact that today almost 2/3 of Abkhazians have Georgian surnames, and most of their villages have names of Kartvelian origin;
9. In the North Caucasus, the Apswas and Abazas had a simple system of surnames: the surnames of the morphological model Law, Paz without a affix are still preserved among the Abazas; cf. vestige surnames of the same model in Abkhazia: Q'ayt'an, Trapš ... In the new homeland, Abkhazians adopted dozens of Kartvelian surnames, as well as the morphological model of suffixal Kartvelian surnames; cf. Abkhazian suffixoid ipa "his son" and surnames derived from it: Inal-ifa, Dadal-ifa ...;
10. When the Apswa people settled in the new place, there was a toponymic space marked with Kartvelian geographical names. Onomastic adaptation of this area began: 1. Georgian toponyms which had vague etymology for Abkhazians were adapted phonetically: **K'odori** > **K'udrə**, **Luxuni** > **Ləxnə** ...; 2. Some of the toponyms were translated into Abkhazian: **Mafaš c'q'ari** "King's water" > **Ah idzəx**~ "Lord's water" ...; 3. Another group was derived by means of Abkhazian morphemes and changed phonetically as well: **čala** > ***čalaw** > **čəlaw** > **člow**, **sabulio** > **asabulej**, **ilori** > ***ajlar** > ***ajlər** > **elər**...;
11. In the new place, the Abkhazian language was used only in everyday mono-ethnic environment;
12. Interethnic marriages between Abkhazians and Ubykh-Circassians were not uncommon in the north-western part of Abkhazia. Ubykh and Circassian mothers and grandmothers taught children their languages, as well;
13. Sunni Islam was disseminated from Ottoman empire to Abkhazia, Muslims used Arabic in religious service, they spoke to Turks in Turkish, and newborns were given Turkish and Arabic names;
14. By the middle of the 18th century, many Abkhazians knew both the Georgian literary language and Megrelian dialect: the official texts, personal letters and epitaphs of Abkhazian aristocrats were written in Georgian. Georgian was used as the language of the liturgy in Christian churches;
15. Knowledge of Megrelian was widespread among Abkhazians living in eastern and south-eastern Abkhazia and was due to 3 reasons:

- Most of these Abkhazians were of Georgian, in particular, Megrelian by origin, which is indicated by the surnames of their current descendants;
- Abkhazians needed Megrelians to communicate with Megrelian relatives;
- Megrelian was used for business communication with the population of Georgian villages.

Thus, the relocation of the habitation by the Abkhazian ancestors was chronologically the first radical ecological change in the history of the Abkhaz-Abaza language, which left a considerable mark on the language ecology, but did not endanger the existence of the remaining Abkhazian and Abaza parts.

Between the 16th and 18th centuries, the Georgian population gradually became a minority on the territory of present-day Abkhazia; Apswa settlements increased intensively and by the end of the 19th century it created a continuous line from the valleys of the Psou, Bzip and Gumista rivers to the south-east. At different times transitional Apswa-Georgian zone was different areas. For example, foreign authors name the borders of Samegrelo-Abkhazia nearby the Kodori river. Similarly it is also indicated on European maps of the same period. The transitional zone has gradually shifted towards south-east. Information from G. Rosen (1846) and A. Tsagareli (1880) shows that between 1846 and 1880 the Abkhazian language strengthened its position between the rivers Eristskari and Okhuri, and from Okhuri to Galidzga rivers it was already the dominant language. It is obvious that in the 19th c. formation process of bilingualism continued between Okhur-Eristskar-Galidzga differently: Megrelian was rapidly losing its territory and was replaced by Abkhazian, but to the right of Galidzga, in the area of present-day Ochamchire district, Megrelian functioned as *Lingua franca* and Abkhazian men knew Megrelian en masse throughout the 19th century and even in the 70-80s of the 20th century.

As for the western border of the Abkhazian language dissemination according to F. Tornau, by the beginning of the 19th century, it passed the Psou river, between the Sochi and Khosta rivers, where there was a transitional zone for the dissemination of Abkhazian and Ubykh languages.

In the 19th century, there were Great and Minor Abkhazia: Great Abkhazia covered the area from the Bzipi river to Galidzga one, sometimes to Eristskari, and Minor Abkhazia, or Jiketi - from the Bzipi river to the interfluves of Sochi-Khosta rivers.

From 1810 to 1864, the Abkhazian principality formally maintained its independence and was considered under Russian protection. During this period, the Abkhazian language was continuously disseminated from the Psou river to the Galidzga

one. It should be noted that the Chancellery of the Abkhazian prince used literary Georgian before the Russian occupation of Abkhazia in 1864, but if need be Turkish was used, as well. Children in the families of Abkhazian aristocrats were raised on the basis of Georgian books - “Life of Georgia”, “The knight in the panther’s skin” and others (S. Janashia, 1985).

On May 21, 1864, a completely new and tragic stage in the history of Abkhazia began: three mass deportations of the Abkhazian people, or muhajiring, and the implementation of an aggressive language policy towards the remaining Abkhazians.

MASS DEPORTATIONS OF ABKHAZIANS AND THE STATUS OF “GUILTY PEOPLE” IN THE ECOLINGUISTIC AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC CONTEXT

On May 21, 1864, the struggle of the Ubykhs, Circassians, and groups of Abkhazians (Abkhazians from Jiketi, Aibga, Ahchips, and Pshu) residing on the territory of present-day Gagra district to maintain independence sustained a defeat. The empire forced them to emigrate to Ottoman Turkey. They were taken to the seashore and deported to Turkey, while their villages were burned and lands were prepared for the settlement of Russian colonists. About 20,000 Abkhazians were deported to Ottoman Turkey. It was great ecological catastrophe of ethnic-demographic-linguistic nature, which started a series of catastrophes carried out by Russia in Abkhazia.

As a result of this action, the micro-discourse variants of the Abkhazian language disappeared from the linguistic map of Abkhazia forever: Ottoman Empire settled scatteredly the members of the Jiketi, Aibga, Ahchips and Pshu sub-ethnic groups in a completely foreign ecological environment – among the large number of peoples of different languages. Currently, most of these four groups no longer speak their mother tongue, some have become Turkish, some have become Arabic, some have lost their language, but have retained their ethnic identity.

Prior to the abolition of the Abkhazian principality and occupation, the Abkhazian people were considered by the Russian authorities to be an unreliable population. Naturally, the Abkhazians who remained on the spot could not perceive the conquest of Abkhazia with satisfaction. Dissatisfaction exploded in 1866 when Russian officers

insulted the dignity of the hosts in the village Likhni. The Abkhazians started rebellion, which quickly covered whole Abkhazia, but it was put down by the military forces of the empire. The Russian authorities took advantage of this fact: Russian officials went from village to village, forcing the Abkhazian population to join the list of those wishing to be deported to the Ottoman Empire. The focus was on Jiketi, Bzipi, Guma, Tsebeli, and Dali, which can be clearly seen from the specially compiled lists (Khorava, 2004).

The mass expulsion of thousands of Abkhazians from Abkhazia in 1867 was an inhumane act that undermined the integrity of the Abkhazian people and created a dangerous rift in their identity. In total, in April-June 1867, 20,000 Abkhazians were expelled from Abkhazia to Ottoman Empire, as a result of which Dali and Tsebeli were depopulated, the population was dangerously reduced in Jiketi, Bzipi, Guma, and partly in Abzhua. Like in 1864, the Muhajirs were again scattered by Ottoman government in various parts of the vast empire. As a result of this ecological catastrophe, the ethnic and linguistic situation of Abkhazia has changed significantly:

- Two empty „black holes“ appeared in Dali and Tsebeli;
- The continuous chain of the Abkhazian language dissemination from the Khosta river to the Okhuri one broke;
- Discourse micro-variants of Dali and Tsebeli completely disappeared from the natural environment and were thrown away into small parts in the territory of another empire;
- Abkhazian Muhajirs were in danger of losing both their mother tongue and ethnic identity in the environment of the languages of multimillion peoples in Ottoman Empire: Turkish, Arabic, Assyrian, Bulgarian, Serbo-Croatian;
- The Russian government began to settle Russian and other colonists on land vacated by Abkhazians, which led to multilingualism in Abkhazia;
- The Russian language became the language of interethnic communication and posed a real threat to both the natural integrity of the Abkhazian language and its future.

Similar processes took on a large scale after the Russo-Turkish (Ottoman) War of 1877-1878. During the war, part of the Abkhazians supported the Turkish landings with weapons. The Russian government, victorious in the war, blamed for betrayal on almost the entire Abkhazian population (with the exception of those living between Galidzga and Okhuri) and categorically demanded them to be deported to the Ottoman Empire. This third muhajiring of Abkhazians became practically the most devastating catastrophe in

the history of the Abkhazian people: in 1878-1880 the seaside, most of the foothills, the central part of the region were completely depopulated from Abkhazians. If in 1867 two small “black holes” depopulated from the population emerged in Abkhazia, most of the Abkhazian settlement still is empty. Now two small Abkhazian reservations emerged in Abkhazia: Bzipi and Abzhwa, between which there was a 60-kilometer uninhabited line from the Kodori river to the Aapsta one.

According to historian Temur Achugba, all cases of deportation clearly show the cooperation of traditionally hostile states - Russia and Turkey. These empires dealt the territory and population of Abkhazia between each other. Russia owned the land of the exiles, and Turkey - deported population. If Tsarist Russia solved the problem of colonization by evicting Caucasians, Turkey needed IDPs from Abkhazia and other parts of the Caucasus as “cannon fodders”. Most of the highlanders died before the deportation, on the road and in the new settlements. Deportees died from violence, famine, cold, and epidemics (Achugba, 2010). Supposedly, at least 50,000 Abkhazians had to emigrate, to muhajir and half of them died. In this way, the deal between Russia and Turkey resulted the genocide of the Abkhazian people, halving the life forces of these people and linguistic catastrophe. In fact, this was a crime against humanity.

During the third muhajiring, the Muhajirs were again settled scatteredly throughout the Ottoman Empire, although some were able to establish mono-ethnic-monolingual villages as well. There were more frequent cases when Caucasian Muhajirs were settled in the villages inhabited by members of other ethnic groups. Thus mingled villages emerged consisting of more than one ethnic element.

As for the unpopulated territory left in Abkhazia after the expulsion of the Muhajirs, the state gave the large lots of land to Russian officials, generals, officers, former soldiers, landlords (including some Abkhazian princes), merchants, and others for free or at a symbolic price. The state brought Russian and Ukrainian peasants, Armenians and Greeks - from the Ottoman Empire, Germans, Bulgarians, Estonians and Moldovans - from other countries. The first colonist villages emerged in Minor Abkhazia: Pervinka “the first” was named the village that was settled by Greeks brought from Turkey in 1868, Moldavanka, Vesioloe - villages of Moldovans brought from Bessarabia in 1869 and Pilenkovo named after a Russian general Dmitriy Pilenko, Visokaia – village of Ukrainians. In the following years the number of colonists increased, and after 1880 the number of colonial villages was equal to the number of Abkhazian ones. This radically changed the linguistic situation in Abkhazia to the detriment of the Abkhazian language: it was no longer the language of the majority of the population.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Caucasus Army, **Mikhail Romanov**, issued an order (N559) on April 18, 1867, according to which the Abkhazians who were emigrating to Turkey were banned from selling land in order to transfer land to the state treasury. The government intended to set up a land fund, which would be used to transfer land to reliable people and change the ethnic situation, which would also affect the language situation.

According to the letter sent by the head of the Sokhumi department **P. Arakin** on April 24, 1878 to viceroy the **Sokhumi branch** of the Caucasus Military District **was divided into 4 districts**, which was equal to the **segregation of the population**:

Precinct I was the area from Enguri to Galidzga, inhabited by “loyal residents of government”, Georgians and Abkhazians;

Precinct II covered the area from Galidzga to Kodori, population of which was in special conditions “due to treason”;

Precinct III covered uninhabited space from Kodori to Gumista together with Sokhumi and Tsebeli gorge;

Precinct IV covered the remaining uninhabited space, i.e. the population of Jiketi together with Gudauta district’s population.

Under the motive of controlling uninhabited areas the military guarding spots were set up in Dranda, Sokhumi, Psirtska, on the right bank of the Bzipi river. In fact, these measures were aimed at limiting and isolating contacts between two “guilty and traitorous” groups of Abkhazians – Abzhwas and Bzips. It is obvious, P. Arakin’s proposal deliberated the further fragmentation of the Abkhazian population – to reward immediately with plots of land the residents of Samurzaqano (including both Georgians and Abkhazians) and all the Abkhazians who remained in the Russian army. This part of the document refutes the “assertion” of the Abkhazian authors that as if the Georgians took the advantage of the muhajiring of Abkhazians and seized the Abkhazian lands: In fact, the government was interested in the confrontation of Abkhazians.

P. Arakin was the first high-ranking official who formally accused Abkhazian people of treason, regardless of gender, age, or physical ability. He wrote: “... *I considered that without any official investigation we would find the entire population of the insurgent areas guilty and participant in the betrayal ...*”. The main punitive measures P. Arakin named the **restriction of land ownership rights for any Abkhazian and regrouping of Abkhazians (settlement into groups)**. The second measure involved the following: Abkhazians should be settled into small groups in the surrounding of residents brought

from Russia and other countries. P. Arakin's plan was put into motion and ended by the fact that **on May 31, 1880, when Emperor Alexander II personally sentenced the Abkhazian people to the status of a guilty people.**

Under these conditions, a large number of Muhajirs were secretly returned, which did not really change the condition of the Abkhazian people. Since 1878, there has been an intensive mass settlement of colonists of different nationalities in areas depopulated from the Abkhazian population. This led to a sharp decrease a number of Abkhazians in the population of Abkhazia.

What results did the mass deportations in 1867 and 1878-1880 bring to the Abkhazian language?

The answers to this question thus:

1. Eventually the natural state of the Abkhazian language was destroyed: it lost a continuous linguistic space. The former united, continuous line stretched from the Okhuri river to Khosta one was broken and two "islands" remained: in the form of the **Abzhwa-Samurzaqano** and **Bzipi** dialects;
2. Several rings have fallen out from the linguistic body forever: the dialect of Jikis (Sadzes), Ahchips, Aibga, Pshu, Guma, Tsebeli, and Dali subdialects totally, as well as great parts of the Abzhua and Bzipi dialects;
3. Discourses that disappeared from Abkhazia were dispersed in distant countries: Turkey, Syria, Jordan ... In the environment of the languages of the multi-inhabitants of these countries, the Abkhazian language, presented as small vulnerable parts, had no prospects for development;
4. Both dialects remained in Abkhazia were **isolated from each other** in a narrow geographical and ecolinguistic space, **naturally transitional Guma subdialect** between them, disappeared. The discourses of Muhajirs were broken off their former natural environment;
5. The multilingual masses invaded the country posed a **real threat of extinction to both the Abkhazian language and languages of the non-Russian colonists** under the aggressive policy of russification. Russian became the only dominant language.

**WRITTEN GRAPHICS OF THE ABKHAZIAN
LANGUAGE AND THE GOALS AND
CONSEQUENCES OF ITS MULTIPLE CHANGES**

The Abkhazian script did not exist until the 60s of the 19th century. Moreover, science does not yet have any information on any case if anyone tried to create a script for the Abkhazian language until the 1860s. Abkhazians mostly wrote in Georgian when needed.

From the very beginning, the issue of creating an alphabet for the Abkhazian language was closely linked to the political interests and plans of the Russian Empire in Georgia: high-ranking officials and ideologues of the empire (P. Zubov, P. Uslar, E. Weidenbaum ...) did not hide that their main goal was to separate Abkhazians from Georgian literature and culture, to alienate two peoples from each other and russificate.

General P. Uslar began to investigate the Abkhazian language in 1861. According to Prof. Kh. Bgazba, the Abkhazian script created by the general was aimed at russifying of Abkhazians, although this act was progressive (Bgazba, 1967). On the basis of the system created by Acad. A.J. **Sjögren**, for the Ossetian language, P. Uslar formed so-called Caucasian-Georgian alphabet with 35 letters, which was to become the basis for all other scripts in the Caucasus. For the Abkhazian language he used 25 letters of the Russian alphabet denoting 19 consonants and 5 vowels. He changed the contour of 7 Russian graphemes to convey specific Abkhazian phonemes; borrowed 3 letters from the Greek alphabet; used 6 letters from the Latin writing system; borrowed 3 letters from Georgian: ჯ, ნ, ქ and added a diacritical mark to the same ნ letter to denote the whistling-hushing consonant of the Bzipi dialect of the Abkhazian language (Bgazba, 1967). In addition, P. Uslar placed a sign of vowel shortness on the top of 6 letters, on one letter - mark of stress, and a cedilla on the lower right of the other 5 letters. In the Abkhazian script created in this way, there were 55 graphemes, i.e. one letter denoting each sound.

In the grammar of the Abkhazian language compiled by P. Uslar was re-printed in 1887, the editor M. Zavadsky made changes to the transcription system. He changed the Uslar's rule of denoting 12 phonemes: he removed cedilla from all the letters and put an apostrophe on the letters instead; Georgian ნ, ქ letters replaced by changed Russian letters, and introduced the Serbian у letter to denote J sound; from the Latin writing

system he borrowed უ grapheme to denote an intensive Ɔ consonant... M. Zavadsky's changes violated P. Uslar's system and made it more eclectic as it consisted of signs created by V. Miller, P. Uslar and M. Zavadsky on the basis of different from each other principle.

In the beginning of 1861, General I. Bartolomei addressed to the viceroy of the Caucasus, asking for permission to compile alphabetic textbooks for the non-written languages of the Caucasus, and to set up commission for this purpose. The viceroy gave his consent and I. Bartholomei created a commission under the auspices of the Society for the Restoration of Orthodox Christianity in the Caucasus with the membership of D. Purtseladze and V. Trirogov. The commission was assisted by Abkhazians who are well-skilled in the Abkhazian language: K. Sharvashidze, G. Sharvashidze, H. Margania, I. Gegia and a Georgian who knew the Abkhazian language G. Kurtsikidze. The text of the alphabetical textbook of the Abkhazian language compiled by the commission was inspected by K. Sharvashidze in 1863, and by G. Sharvashidze in 1864. At their suggestion, an Abzhwa dialect with a simpler phonetic system was chosen for the Abkhazian text. The book uses the Uslar's script except for 3 letters.

Ecolinguistically important is the fact that in the script compiled by the I. Bartolomei's commission, the letters left for part of the Bzipi phonemes, partly preserved the ecological balance of the Bzipi dialect, but at the same time it violated the natural outward form of the Abzhwa dialect – the sounds superfluous for the dialect were added. P. Uslar's phonological system of Bzipi would cause the Abzhwa people problems in the study process - most of the Abzhwas did not understand the specific Bzipi phonemes and they'd find it difficult to pronounce them accurately. The dilemma could not be solved by choosing an Abzhwa phonemic system as the basis of literary language. In this case, the Bzipi dialect suffered serious environmental damage: Bzipi students were instructed by their teachers that they should overcome the innate habit of using specific Bzipi phonemes in oral speech. **This pressure which continues to this day, disrupted the natural appearance of the Bzipi dialect**, which was reflected in the following fact: in the studies of prominent abkhazologists it was unanimously noted the existence of all 9 specific sounds throughout the western disseminating zone of the Bzipi dialect. But in the 70s and 80s of the 20th c. it was easy to notice that even in the Othara subdialect, which had previously been characterized by the widespread use of these phonemes, the positions of these 9 sounds was already violated, and this made some kind of difference: they were rarely heard in the discourse of young and middle-aged people, the second half of middle-aged and the elderly people used these sounds

systematically. This situation was the result of the fact that the script did not and does not currently reflect the Bzipi phonemes.

In the K. Machavariani and D. Gulia's alphabetical textbook of the Abkhazian language published in 1892 there was given most of the P. Uslar's letters altered by M. Zavadsky, although the induction of 3 sounds was specified, one letter denoting one characteristic phoneme of the Bzipi dialect was removed, but the authors left unchanged the graphemes denoting the featured sounds of the front dental-alveolar sounds of the same dialect (Bgazba, 1967). In the foreword to this publication, the authors stated: "*The purpose of our alphabet is to make Abkhazian children interested in reading and writing and to make it easier for them to learn Russian.*" This statement clearly indicates that the book was written and published in the light of the political situation at the time. Otherwise it could not be published!

In 1906, in consultation with G.L. Masing, Professor of Yuryev University (Tartu, Estonia) S.Ashwkhwatsaa created the script that coincided with the main aspects of M. Zavadsky's variant and reflected the features of the Bzipi dialect. It contained the corresponding graphemes of 77 sounds.

The version compiled and published in 1909 by the Translation Committee established in 1906 in Abkhazia to translate the Bible into Abkhazian also differed slightly from the M. Zavadsky's version.

In A. Chochua's "*Abkhazian Alphabet*", the graphemes denoting the whistling-hushing phonemes of the Bzipi dialect were finally removed, and the half-circle on the letter marked the palatalization of some phonemes (Bgazba, 1967).

The A.Chochua's alphabet of 1909 ended the **first period** of changes of the Uslar's script, the **key achievements of which were the creation of the script and Abkhazian literary language** and the partial introduction of the rule of graphic marking of sounds when **most phonemes are marked by means of a single grapheme**. There were also shortcomings in the named period, namely:

- Of the scripts disseminated in the Caucasus (Georgian, Armenian, Ajam version of Arabic and Cyrillic), **Cyrillic was selected**, which was not better than Georgian or Armenian scripts in terms of the quantity of phonemes and graphemes common with the Abkhazian language. Out of the 39 letters of the **modern lay** (*mkhedruli script*) of the **Georgian** alphabet in force at that time, **almost all** of them fitted the Abkhazian language. Also of the 39 letters of the Armenian alphabet could be used **36 letters** for Abkhazian, **only 24 letters** out of the 28 graphemes of the Arabic script

system could be used, and of the 37 letters in Cyrillic in 1861, P. Uslar used **only 24 graphemes**;

- The creation of writing was a politicized and ideological issue from the beginning. Its purpose was to support the russifying of Abkhazians;
- Phonologically more complex Bzipi dialect was selected as the basic dialect of the Abkhazian literary language;
- The problem could not overcome to denote some phonemes by means of two letters, i.e. digraphs, which is a constant problem to this day (the exception was N. Marr's variant);
- It was a shortcoming in copying the system of capital and small letters under the influence of Cyrillic against the background of the Abkhazian complex phonological system, which increases the number of 64 graphemes to 128 entries. The goal is easy to understand: to disseminate the rules of Russian orthography among Abkhazian students and thus to implant a psychological factor contributing to russification;
- All variants of the script violated the ecosystem of one of or both dialects of the Abkhazian language;
- It was a shortcoming a frequent clarifications and changes in the written versions, which prevented the acquaintance with the scarce literature published in the Abkhazian language during this period.

The second period of the script changing covers 1926-1937 years, when the mass process of latinization of the scripts of the majority of the peoples of the Soviet Union was underway. This process actually affected 50 of the 72 written languages and almost all previously non-written languages. In our view, latinization was in fact a tactical step aimed at abolishing, on the one hand, the Arabic and Uyghur scripts closely associated with Islam and Lamaism (Buddhism) and used in some languages of the Soviet Union, and on the other hand, at unifying all the scripts in the empire into one Latin system and at the next stage at transferring them to Russian graphics. On March 1, 1926, the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee (CEC) of the Transcaucasian SFSR adopted a resolution on the mandatory introduction of a new Latinized alphabet. Apparently, the decree referred to the Azerbaijani, Talysh, Abkhazian and Ossetian languages (Isayev, 1978; Gvantseladze, 2011).

The **first version** of the Latinized script for the Abkhazian language was compiled by **Nikolay Marr**, whose **so-called analytic alphabet** contained 65 graphemes, i.e. **there was no digraph in this variant**. This script had **one major drawback**: the base

letters had more than one diacritical mark on the right, bottom, or top, causing teachers to complain that students had difficulty remembering so many signs. This factor decided the fate of this script and it was substituted by **unified Latin script** used in 1928-1937 and compiled by Prof. **N. Yakovlev**, Prof. **E. Polivanov**, writer **S. Chanba** and linguist **A. Hashba** that included 49 graphemes, but it was **slightly simpler** than N. Marr's analytic alphabet. At first it had capital letters, which doubled the number of letters. This drawback was soon eliminated.

From 1936, a **mass russification process** began throughout the Soviet Union, which was manifested in the intensifying and compulsory teaching of the Russian language and mass transferring of new-written languages to Russian graphics (cyrillization). The process began on June 16, 1935, when Presidium of National Council of CEC of the USSR assessed the work of the **Union Central Committee of the New Alphabet** at CEC USSR and destructive nature of **latinization**. The most drawback was the transliteration of those languages into the Latin script that had previously been **based on Cyrillic**, namely Udmurt, Komi, Yakut, Ossetian, Kalmyk, Abkhazian, and so on. (Isayev, 1978; Gvantseladze, 2011). During the criticism, no one remembered that in 1929-1930, concrete projects had already been ready for the latinization of the Russian language itself, and latinization was considered to be a progressive campaign.

Cyrillization process implied the converting of the latinized languages of minority peoples into the graphics that was the basis of the language of the title people of the respective allied republic. For example, in Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan, Azeri and Uzbek languages were converted from Latin to Russian graphics, which was automatically followed by the convert of Talysh and Karakalpak scripts to Cyrillic. Based on this practice in Georgia Abkhazian and Ossetian languages were automatically converted to Georgian graphics in 1938. Thus, for Abkhazians, the converting process to the modern lay (mkhedruli alphabet) version of the Georgian script was by no means the arbitrariness of Georgian high-ranking officials and an attempt to georgianize the Abkhazian and Ossetian peoples, as some state. These accusations may seem fair to anyone if they assess the concrete fact only under the aspect of the Abkhazian and Ossetian languages, but we must take into account the ongoing processes in all the republics and autonomies of the Soviet Union, which gives the following picture:

- The key goal of the Soviet regime was to russify the entire non-Russian population and to form so-called United Soviet people. Mass cyrillization would have contributed to the accelerated success of this process in Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and

Turkmenistan: Russian script and through it the Russian language would be disseminated widely in 7 of the 11 allied republics. Converting of Abkhazian and Ossetian into Georgian graphics would not have been a great loss for the Empire, as the Empire attacked the Georgian language, as well as evidenced by numerous facts: in large Georgian institutions, official work was conducted only in Russian, minorities without autonomy contacted Tbilisi in this language, etc.;

- This exception was a **mine of slow action against Georgia**, and the empire would soon find an excuse to take advantage of this fact, which had already happened in 1954 and 1956;
- **The convert of Abkhazian and Ossetian languages to Georgian graphics was controlled by Moscow and its structures.** For example, according to 5 documents preserved in the **archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia**, many institutions of different ranks of the **Abkhazian ASSR, Georgian SSR, Russian SFSR and USSR** actively participated in the introducing process of Georgian graphics for the Abkhazian language. One of them - **Central Committee of the New Alphabet** at the CEC of USSR had the special function, which was the **main planner and supervisor higher structure of the language policy** to be implemented throughout the empire. The Committee had branches in all allied and autonomous republics (in Abkhazia the Committee of New Alphabet was headed by the People's Commissar for Education **D. Chagava**). It was responsible for controlling the orthography, terminology, script, and language development of **all languages**. In addition, there was a **technographic sector in this committee, without permission of which no letter could be introduced into the writing of any language**;
- **Representatives of Central Committee of New Alphabet** participated at the meeting held in Sokhumi on December 4-5, 1937 where the issue of converting the Abkhazian script to Georgian graphics was discussed and approved the project by **D. Gulia, S. Janashia A. Shanidze**. Attendance of the Muscovites at this meeting proves that **Moscow was in the know and everything was done in agreement with Central Committee of New Alphabet**, otherwise the Muscovites would have raised the alarm during the meeting, which did not happen (all the meeting transcripts are attached to the present book);

- According to the meeting minutes kept in Acad. S. Janashia's personal archive, 33 people participated in the meeting, 20 of them were Abkhazians. In their 22 speeches none of the Abkhazian participants protested against the unacceptability of the Georgian graphics.

The Abkhazian script converted to Georgian graphics was actively used: textbooks, fiction, political and economic literature, newspapers... were printed. In 1938-1954, a total of more than 300 printed products were published.

In the Abkhazian script converted to Georgian graphics, all 33 letters of the modern lay (*mkhedruli alphabet*) version of the Georgian alphabet were used, to which 4 letters were added removed in the 19th century (ა ჴ ჵ ჶ), as well as 2 diacritical marks (ო ო) taken from the scientific transcription. This script had **two drawbacks**:

- Digraphs were used to denote 20 featured Abkhazian phonemes;
- Consonant labialization was marked in two ways.

The **third period of the script changing continues** from 1954 spring until today, when the **with minor changes Abkhazian script returned to the A. Chochua's version created in 1909 on the basis of the M. Zavadsky's alphabet** and which had the same shortcomings.

When in 1861 P. Uslar intended to create a script for Abkhazian and other non-written Caucasian languages, he wrote:

"[Literacy] ... should prepare and predispose highlanders to learn Russian and get acquainted with Russian education. It is clear that both goals can be achieved only when the Russian script is accepted as the basis of the highlanders' scripts " (Uslar, Annex, 1887, p. 15).

P. Uslar believed that the Georgian script should have been abolished and replaced by the Russian alphabet. Therefore, he would not agree to the use of the Georgian alphabet for any other Caucasian language in no case. The reason was clear: all Caucasian peoples must sooner or later become accustomed to the Russian script, and finally become loyal slaves of the empire. These goals remained unchanged during all the changes that had been implemented in the Abkhazian script, and even latinization, despite its false neutrality, was a temporary tactical maneuver to disguise the real goal and to show as if the empire did not want to russify the peoples, but to raise the education and culture level. The same can be said about the 16-year functioning period of the Abkhazian script on Georgian graphics, when exceptions were made in the cyrillization process only in

Georgia (and in Armenia), thus mines of low action were put in Georgian-Abkhazian and Georgian-Ossetian relations.

It is rare in the world a language the script of which has changed so many times during 133 years (1861-1994) and in almost all cases the issue has been resolved on political motives! **The 9-time changing of the graphic basis for the writing of the Abkhazian literary language first of all affected the Abkhazian generations:** in 1926, 1928, 1938, 1954 a sudden shift from one script to another one stressed Abkhazian students, teachers, all literates, as they had to forget already studied script/scripts and teach again another, very different variant. There is no doubt that such radical changes would lead to a **massive loss of learning interest of Abkhazian students and fall of knowledge quality.**

A logical question arises: why do our Abkhazian colleagues consider the introduction of the Georgian graphics in 1938 as an anti-Abkhazian step and silently ignore the actions of 1926, 1928 and 1954? In all four cases, the expected negative impact of these actions on the psyche and knowledge level of students and older generations was not taken into account!

ABKHAZIAN LANGUAGE IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

§1. The language of education in the last stages of the existence of the Russian Empire

Until the 19th century, there were no educational institutions on the territory of Abkhazia. The interested population, in particular the aristocracy and the clergy, learned to read and write at home: Christians - in Georgian, and Muslims - in Georgian and Arabic. The first initiator of the introduction of the Abkhazian language in the teaching process was the Bishop of Abkhazia in 1862-1869, St. Alexandre Okropiridze. He made up the curriculum of the Likhni school, which included practical training in the Abkhazian language together with Russian and Georgian. It was the first time in the history of the Abkhazian language that the issue of the use of this language in the education system was raised.

At that time, schools for mountaineers were established with the aim of teaching Russian children together with Caucasian ones in order to bring them closer and “tame” Caucasians. Sokhumi Mountaineers’ School was opened on April 4, 1863. It initially had 20 students, 15 of whom were Abkhazians and 5 - Russians. Teaching was conducted only in Russian in this school. The teachers spoke Russian, but the Abkhazian students did not know Russian at all. D. Gulia raised the issue of introducing of the Abkhazian language teaching which was decided positively.

The use of the Abkhazian language in schools did not begin immediately after the publication of the Abkhazian alphabet textbook in 1865, due to the following reasons: absence of Abkhazian schools, lack of teachers, and the fact that the government planned to russify all Caucasian peoples and did not care about mother tongue knowledge.

The Imperial **Ministry of Public Education categorically banned the teaching of languages of non-Russian peoples** in schools, such as classical gymnasiums. The **Russian Church**, which had established parish schools at churches in the empire, was more soft in russifying policy. The students of the parish school were **initially taught the mother tongue, which had to prepare them for teaching in Russian.**

The Abkhazian alphabet book compiled by the I. Bartolomei’s Commission was not widely used because **at that time there were no schools in Abkhazian villages, the population did not see the need for knowledge and areas for its use, there were no professional Abkhazian teachers, and the textbook was not methodically perfected.** Due to this, in the schools that had opened a little later the teachers were basically Russians, and Georgians, of who Russians did not know Abkhazian and had no desire to study it, and Georgian teachers from Samurzaqano were fluent in this language.

Noteworthy is the letter of the head of the Sokhumi military unit, General **Vasily Geiman**, dated July 15, 1868, to the **Council of the Society for the Restoration of Christianity**, the contents of which are as follows:

Until now, we have been giving several local boys primary education in Russian or Georgian. They soon forgot the acquired knowledge, which led the population to believe that knowledge acquiring is a useless obligation. We have natural desire to accustom the population to the knowledge of the Russian language as soon as possible and to make it the dominant language, but we must admit that the methods we use for civilizing of Abkhazians are unsuccessful. We must make it necessary to introduce primary education in the local language. V. Geiman said: “Thus, Abkhazian literacy should be the first step in the moving the local population to further education in Russian. For this purpose, I consider it necessary to teach Abkhazian to the children in the parish schools in the

region under my entrust and [thus] prepare them to learn Russian, and to introduce teaching in Russian only in the Sokhumi mountaineers' school".

According to V. Geiman's plan, the excellent graduates of the parish schools were to be enrolled in the Sokhumi mountaineers' schools without any problem, and the best students of the latter were to be sent to **the Eisk Gymnasium**, or to **the Stavropol Theological Seminary**, or to **the military schools**. V. Geiman explained to the members of the Council of the Society for the Restoration of Christianity why he still named Eisk or Stavropol: *"The reason why I name Eisk Gymnasium or the Stavropol Seminary, is that the [ethnic] element in them is only Russian and it would be much more convenient for the Abkhazian who will grow up there to merge this element without any other influence ... No matter how good the Tbilisi gymnasiums and seminaries are, every Abkhazian will learn Georgian faster and better, and will be very worst in Russian and it will turn out that we will waste funds to teach Abkhazians to them completely foreign language and Abkhazia's proximity to Russia will be the same as it is now. In the end, Abkhazia needs Abkhazian priests, not Megrelians, or Georgians"*. The described educational system was introduced with minor modifications and operated in Abkhazia first during the last period of the Russian Empire, then during the Soviet regime and still operates on the territory of "independent Abkhazia".

V. Geiman's plan coincided with the plan of **Agafodor**, Bishop of Sokhumi, in 1893, according to which the **Sokhumi mountaineers' school** was to be transferred to the clergy department and transformed into a three-grade (with six years of study) theological school with agricultural and workshop departments. The political-ideological circumstances that the bishop named to justify his plan are noteworthy. He wrote: *"Experience from previous years shows that the Abkhazians who studied in secondary and agricultural schools ... could not bring anything good into the lives of the Auls population - neither cultural development nor rapprochement with the Russians. This is when the last [rapprochement of Abkhazians with Russians] is very important for Sokhumi district. This district needs special attention from the government in political and strategic terms. Recent wars with Turks shows that the Abkhazia's population believes the hostile propaganda on us and is not stable in the political beliefs... It is in the interests of the church and state to raise the religious and moral cult of the Abkhazians, to bring them closer to Russians and to turn them into loyal and devoted subjects"*. This document was accompanied by a list of subjects to be taught in school: in 6 years (in three grades) students had to study a total of 23 subjects. 21 of them, should

be taught and learnt in Russian, and 2 subjects - in Abkhazian: **local (i.e. Abkhazian) language and preaching practice.**

Thus, General (V. Gaiman) and Bishop (Agafodor) similarly considered the geostrategic, political-ideological, and cultural-religious interests of the Russian state. They planned that such school system should become Abkhazian people unaccustomed to thinking in their mother tongue, changing its linguistic and ethnic identity. The Abkhazian people were saved from mass russification in the period before the collapse of the Russian Empire only by the fact that state was unenthusiastic to fund to open schools in all villages, to train teachers, to issue textbooks, and to make education compulsory. That is why the number of literacy people among Abkhazians has not increased significantly.

It is also noteworthy that the struggle of the imperial authorities and church to cast out the Georgian language from Abkhazia and to carry out a russifying education policy among the Abkhazians gradually created a negative attitude towards the Georgian language, which is also reflected in the documents.

The Russian government took advantage of the appearing of Abkhazians loyal to the empire and aggressive towards Georgians before the 1905-1907 revolution. Most of Abkhazians did not take part in this revolution, which has a class struggle nature. Officials and their agency disseminated rumors among Abkhazians during the revolution that Georgians who had been participated in the revolution were planning to oust Abkhazians and seize their lands. This rumor paid off.

On April 27, 1907, the emperor signed a decree submitted by the government “**On Equalization of Land Ownership Rights of the Residents of the Sokhumi Okrug**”. This document officially removed the status of the “guilty people” of the Abkhazian people and gave them the right to inherit land. Thus, the government increased its authority among the majority of Abkhazians.

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, the number of schools in Abkhazia increased, but the Abkhazian language did not become the language of instruction in any of them, and was used as a subject only in some schools.

We agree with the Abkhazian specialists in pedagogy (A. Kaslandzia, A. Hashba, N. Lakashia, V. Quraskua) that the schools that existed in Abkhazia between 1864-1921 were not really national Abkhazian schools, **but we do not consider the most important circumstance** to make this conclusion the lack of teachers, absence of textbooks and the ban on speaking the mother tongue in schools. In our opinion, **the main thing was that the Abkhazian language was not fully used as the teaching language of most of subjects at that time:** when someone’s language was used as

the language of instruction of subjects, it caused that **students perceived the world, thought about different manifestations of this world only in the language in which they were taught and in which they had to make oral and written works, that is, to think.** In other words, the Geiman-Agafodor's education system was designed to russify Abkhazians and non-Russian students of other nationalities, to eradicate the national-linguistic basis of thinking, to gradually eliminate their mother tongue, and to replace them with Russian. The "products" of this system should conceive with Russian national clichés and liked it or not should turn as planters and defenders of other people's interests. For the same reasons, we cannot agree with the named Abkhazian scholars that the history of Abkhazian national schools dates back to 1921, the time of Russia's reconquest of Georgia. The Abkhazian national school did not exist either in 1921 and, unfortunately, does not exist now, either.

* * *

What kind of ecolinguistic consequences did the Geiman-Agafodor's educational system bring to the Abkhazian language?

The texts of several Abkhazian books published before 1892 seems to be of natural Abkhazian, mainly the phonological system, morphology, syntax and vocabulary of the Abkhazian language are correctly reflected, artificial, calqued forms are not observed yet. But the same cannot be said about the religious literature translated into Abkhazian by a commission set up in 1892 at the initiative of Bishop Agafodor. They clearly show the strong influence of the Old Slavic and Russian languages, which is most clearly seen in the vocabulary:

- It is obvious the strongest influence trace of the Old Slavic and Russian languages on most of the personal names and toponyms .
- There are curious errors, the source of which is less knowledge of Christianity by the Russian language and translators.
- Using artificial forms to express the passive voice verbal forms when the Abkhazian language does not have a voice category ...

Such examples are indisputable evidence that through these books Abkhazian clergy and students of parish schools considered such artificial forms to be valid variants, used them in conversation, during the liturgy, and thus the way of the **Abkhazian language ecosystem ruining** would open.

Thus, we can conclude that:

1. In a completely new ecological situation that had arisen in Abkhazia since 1864, the Abkhazian language has undergone a series of cataclysms planned by the Russian Empire.
2. The distrust factor towards Abkhazians strengthened the leading role of the russification policy in the imperial ideology. Imperial officials and hierarchs of the Russian Church believed that raising of Abkhazians only in Russian or Georgian would prevent the people from forming a loyal attitude toward the Empire. That is why no gymnasium was established in Abkhazia in 1864-1917 and the focus was shifted to the spread of Christianity in the villages of Abkhazia and to open of parish schools.
3. The educational system developed by V. Geiman and Agafodor also left the little functioning range for Abkhazian: it was to be used as one of the subjects only in the parish school and to pave the way for Abkhazian students to teach all subjects in Russian in later instruction stages. Such tactics would contribute to the mass russifying of Abkhazians.
4. The **Georgian language**, which was traditionally considered the language of culture and proceedings as well as the language of Christian church service, was **considered to be the main obstacle to the russifying policy**.
5. **In 1864-1917, the Abkhazian language was never used as the language of instruction in any of the schools**, although it was more or less taught as one of the disciplines in the parish schools. As for the number of study **hours, the hours allocated for the Abkhazian language never and nowhere exceeded the number of hours allocated for the teaching the Russian language**.
6. Schools opened in Abkhazian villages were officially called “**Abkhazian schools**” **only because the students of these schools were ethnic Abkhazians and they were taught the Abkhazian language** as one of the auxiliary subjects.

§2. Abkhazian language in the education system in 1917-1920

After the overthrow of the Russian monarchy in February 1917, the **Democratic Republic of Georgia (DRG)** was established on May 26, 1918, which included the Sokhumi region, as well. None of the authorities in power for a short time before could reformed the school system created during the empire, and because of this the **Abkhazian language still remained an auxiliary subject for the study of the Russian language**. The situation was slightly different during the existence of the DRG, namely:

Nationalization, i.e. the gradual replacement of the Russian language with the national language, has begun throughout Georgia, including Abkhazia. It was a complex process. The Abkhazian population still knew Georgian, but almost no one among the colonists of other nationalities knew Georgian. As for the **Abkhazian language, it was a monoethnic, family language and except Abkhazians only the members of mixed families knew it**. In such conditions, the immediate transfer of proceedings to the Georgian language was possible only in Georgian villages, i.e. in the whole territory of present-day Gali district, in part of Gulripshi and Sokhumi districts, and in one group of villages of Ochamchire district, as well as in Sokhumi. The same can be said about the languages of school education, with the difference that in one part of the Abkhazian villages there was still a group of people supporting education in Georgian.

Abkhazian authors underline that as if after the restoration of Georgia's independence in 1918 and coming to power as the ruling majority of the Menshevik wing of the Social Democratic Party the ethnic persecution of Abkhazians and the policy of georgianization began. Nothing similar is documented. On the contrary, **before and after 1918, the Abkhazian National Council often made hasty decisions that were contrary to, or not entirely in line with the legitimate interests of the autochthonous Georgian population of the region and Georgia as a whole**, that strained relations between Sokhumi and Tbilisi.

The Georgian government was trying to find a common language with the Abkhazians. A turning point in this regard was the decision made by the National Council of Abkhazia on July 21, 1919 to send a five-member delegation to Tbilisi to agree on constitutional issues with the central government of Georgia. The Constituent Assembly of Georgia (i.e. the Parliament) has appointed 5 people to work with this delegation on a parity basis. The Georgian-Abkhazian Parity Commission worked intensively. There were many important issues to be resolved, one of which was to determine the official status of the state language of Georgia - Georgian and Abkhazian in Abkhazia, as well as the time and place of their use.

Member of the Parity Commission M. Ubiria reported to the Abkhazian National Council on November 15, 1919, that the Parity Commission had considered three projects of the Abkhazian constitution, but the issue remained unresolved, as the constitution of one of the constituent parts of the state could not be approved until the entire state constitution was created. According to M. Ubiria, the Parity Commission has drafted an agreement between the Republic and the Autonomy on the management of Abkhazia. The agreement project referred to the language issue in Article 15, in which it was written:

“15. Georgian is considered to be the state language of Abkhazia, but the People’s Council of Abkhazia has the right, at its discretion, to choose the language of education and proceedings of all state and public institutions of Abkhazia” (Gamakharia, Gogia, 1997, pp. 452-453).

As one can see, **the government of the Democratic Republic of Georgia was ready to fully trust the Abkhazian National Council to lead a language policy in the region. No restrictions were planned in this regard.** It is another matter that from November 15, 1919, when M. Ubiria made the above-quoted statement, until March 4, 1921, when Abkhazia was occupied by Russia, there were only 15 months left and during this period it was not possible to solve important problems thoroughly.

Despite the lack of time, from October 1917 to March 1921, **Abkhazia was able to resolve some linguistic issues fairly**, namely:

1. On July 25, 1918, the National Council of Abkhazia (NCA) discussed the political relations between Abkhazia and the rest of Georgia. One issue concerned the problem of nationalization of governmental institutions. The protocol says: *“The Chairman proposes the following resolution: The National Council of Abkhazia, after hearing the report on the nationalization of governmental institutions in Abkhazia, has decided: Considering the nationalization of institutions to be generally entirely expedient, the National Council of Abkhazia does not yet consider it possible and expedient to implement it in Abkhazia. Due to the multinational nature of Abkhazia and the impossibility of nationalizing governmental institutions the **National Council of Abkhazia decided to temporarily leave Russian as the common language of governmental institutions on the territory of Abkhazia**”* (Gamakharia, Gogia, 1997, p. 422). We think this decision was really right, as changing the official working language without preparation could have caused serious problems.

2. An unknown author wrote in the Tbilisi journal Ganatleba “Education” (N2, 1920): *“The Megrelians, who settled in Abkhazia, are in a particularly bad situation; e.g. 50 households of Megrelians live in the village Tamushi. Their children study Abkhazian and Russian together with Abkhazians, and they do not have Georgian teachers”. In addition, most subjects were taught in Russian, even in many Georgian schools. The author of the article also experienced the situation of the Abkhazian language and considered it necessary to teach the state language of Georgia - Georgian, to Abkhazian students. The author wrote: “For Abkhazian textbooks should be compiled in Abkhazian ... They should be printed in Tbilisi“*
3. On August 3, 1918, the National Council of Abkhazia formally declared its support for the nationalization of Abkhazian governmental institutions, i.e. the convert of proceedings from Russian to the local language/languages, although it stated the following: *“Due to the multi-ethnic nature of Abkhazia’s population and impossibility of nationalization of the governmental institutions, the Council decided to temporarily leave the Russian language as the common language of governmental institutions on the territory of Abkhazia”*. This cautious decision should have been dictated to avoid impending provocations.

The documents do not even show an attempt to name the Abkhazian language as the language of the proceedings. Thus, the accusations of the Abkhazian separatists, as if the Georgians forcibly nationalized the state educational institutions in Abkhazia, are not confirmed by the factual material.

§3. Abkhazian language in the Soviet system of education

Abkhazia was occupied by Soviet Russia on March 4, 1921. In order to easily get support in the region, the Soviet regime needed ideas that would make the **Abkhazian population forget about Georgia’s independence and related achievements in many areas of life, including Georgian-Abkhazian relations**. It was also calculated that since the government of the Democratic Republic of Georgia, together with the population, had afforded an armed resistance to IX and XI armies of Soviet Russia, Georgia and its people should be punished with unjustifiably increasing of the rights, of minorities including inspiration of the confrontation, complete falsification of the past, etc. That

is why the communists fabricated and disseminated massively **ideological myths and political clichés** that as if the Mensheviks had intensified ethnic strife in Abkhazia, oppressed Abkhazians, persecuted the Abkhazian language, destroyed the Abkhazian identity, and so on. These myths and clichés were disseminated orally, through the press, fiction, textbooks, theatre plays and performances, and later through film and television. In 1921-1991 Abkhazian generations grew up in the face of a constant onslaught of this falsity, as a result of what, most Abkhazians today believe this lie.

In 1921-1930, the communists conducted a provocative policy in Abkhazia. This included the language issues, as well. For example, on April 1, 1925, the III Congress of the Soviets of Abkhazia **without any discussion approved the Constitution** that contradicted the constitutions of Georgia, Transcaucasian Federation, and USSR, as well as the treaty with Georgia. The text even stated that Abkhazia had the right to secede freely from the Transcaucasian Federation and USSR, at a time when Abkhazia was not a founding entity of either the Transcaucasian Federation or the Soviet Union. In the “Constitution” Russian was granted the status of the state language. It was such an arbitrariness that Moscow became outraged and the Abkhazian Constitutional Commission, on the instructions of the Transcaucasian Regional Committee of the Communist Party, was forced to change several important articles in the text, including the article on language. On October 27, 1926, the treaty Constitution of the Abkhazian SSR was approved, Article 8 of which says: *“The languages of the state institutions of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Abkhazia are three languages: Abkhazian, Georgian and Russian“*. Interestingly, without Moscow’s intervention, the Abkhazian communists were ready to doom the Abkhazian language and make Russian the only state language in Abkhazia that implied to prepare the ground for accelerate russifying of the entire population, including Abkhazians and Georgians. By the way, Abkhazian authors still believe that the constitution was good. However, Nestor Lakoba, the then leader of the Abkhazian Communists, admitted in his speech at IV Congress of the Georgian Communist Party on December 2, 1925, that it was “constitutional foolishness” (*“конституционная глупость”*) (Gamakharia, Gogia, 1997, p. 492). Moreover, he also said the following: *“All other languages in Abkhazia beyond the curtain of the Russian language ... should have been moved to the background. We should have corrected this mistake”* (Gamakharia, Gogia, p. 493). Any comment here is superfluous!

It should also be noted that of **three state languages mentioned in the 1926 constitution, this function was actually implemented only by Russian in Abkhazia.**

Many documents from that time show that in Sokhumi and urban-type settlements of Abkhazia the majority knew and used the Russian language. Due to the fact that there was no state administration, jurisprudence, clerical terminology in the Abkhazian language, there were no specialists who knew the language, it would be difficult to conduct official proceedings in Abkhazian, although no one tried to do that ...

Difficulties were created by the novelty established in Abkhazia: in addition to the three state languages (Abkhazian, Georgian and Russian), Armenian, Greek, German, Estonian, Turkish were established as administrative-territorial languages in districts and villages, which has practically problematic nature. That is why there was a need to conduct proceedings in Russian. It can be said that this artificial linguistic environment was developed in favor of the Russian language and Russian-Soviet policy. The “freedom” of state languages declared in the Constitution was intended only to expand the functions and usage spheres of the Russian language.

* * *

It should be emphasized that in 20s not only for Abkhazia, but also for Georgia as a whole, the declaration of compulsory education for all children under school age and the mass elimination of illiteracy were of great importance, but the same cannot be said about other aspects of language policy.

According to the 1923 census, only 16% of the entire population of Abkhazia was literate and most of them were Georgians. Georgian and Russian were the most common second languages. Most of the second-language speakers among Abkhazians spoke Georgian. In 1920-1921, there were a total of 295 schools in Abkhazia. Among them there were 228 Georgian and of 67 non-Georgian schools the largest and almost equal number were Greek (26) and Armenian (24) schools, 13 Russian schools, 3 Estonian and 1 German school.

According to a document drafted by People’s Commissar of Education of Abkhazia A. Chochua in 1927, the state of school education was as follows: the author first states that there were no pure national schools in Abkhazia until 1917, and then the politician partially confesses the existence of a national school in 1917-1920 - the author blames the Mensheviks for the fact that the national schools covered only the elementary level. A. Chochua compares the statistics of schools, teachers and students in Abkhazia during the independence of Georgia and the Soviet period, which actually confirms their increase

and not decrease: “In 1920 - 146 schools, 248 teachers, 10,468 students; in 1922 - 183 schools, 530 teachers, 11.403 students”.

In 1921-1930, the education system was characterized by one major feature throughout the communist empire - it was the so-called mass establishment of national schools in areas populated by ethnic minorities. At first glance, this initiative was pleasing, but if we look at the real situation reflected in the archival documents, it was just communist falsification and propaganda measure, as can be seen in the example of so-called Greek schools opened by the communists:

According to A.Chochua’s information, the Communists established educational institutions in Abkhazia, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Trialeti, and Ajaria under the name of Greek schools after 1921, but soon education officials began to complain that neither students nor teachers knew Greek and that there was no textbooks and methodical literature. Textbooks and literature of Greek language were purchased in Greece, but the commissions rejected these books due to ideological considerations. This artificially created problem was solved as follows: these schools were left as Greek schools, and the teaching was conducted in Russian, i.e. so-called Greek school was used in order to accelerate the russification of the Greek children. In the 30s and 40s, these schools were no longer officially called Greek schools and the Greek language was no longer taught in them not only in Georgia but also in other republics, i.e. this was a part of the common process.

As for learning the **Abkhazian language** and teaching in this language, the situation in this regard has changed only slightly: **the number of teaching years increased in so-called Abkhazian schools - if before in so-called Abkhazian school classes lasted for 2, 4, or 6 years, in the 1920s seven-grade and nine-grade schools were established, although the Geiman-Agafodor’s system remained unchanged in these new schools, in other words, not only the mother tongue but also some other subjects (Arithmetic, Nature ...) were taught in Abkhazian in the primary classes against the background of enhanced teaching of Russian, while in the second grade of the school all disciplines were taught only in Russian.**

In Abkhazia, students of so-called Abkhazian schools were required to have knowledge of the Russian language that they would enable to work after school, or to continue their studies in higher education institutions where teaching was conducted in Russian (Quraskua, 2003). Unfortunately, Abkhazian researchers still do not recognize the fact that the main goal of so-called national school was not mother tongue and to get a quality education on its basis, but Russian and to start thinking in Russian in all

subjects, i.e. this school was a tool to destroy the identity of Abkhazian students.

On March 13, 1938, the Council of People's Commissars and Central Committee of Communist Party of Soviet Union adopted the resolution "On Compulsory Teaching of Russian in Schools of National Republics and Districts", the main purpose of which was to deepen, accelerate and disseminate en masse Russian among non-Russian population. It was directed against almost all non-Russian languages. According to this document, an extremely high standard was set for the graduates of secondary and high schools, which made all non-Russian students and teachers work with all their might to approach this standard. Against this background, both students and teachers faced many objective and subjective obstacles in learning the Abkhazian language, namely:

- The complex linguistic structure of the Abkhazian language, the deep scientific research of which was beginning to develop at that time;
- Uncertainty of orthographic and orthoepic norms;
- Absence of branch terminology;
- Radical changes in writing in a short period of time (1926, 1928 and 1938), which created difficulties to the literate people to read and write in their mother tongue;
- Thematic limitations and saturation with communist ideology of Abkhazian literature, which did not attract readers;
- Against the background of the priority of the Russian language, less attention to the Abkhazian language and segregationist attitude towards it;
- Existence of a psychological barrier, when the population did not see the prospect that knowledge of the Abkhazian language would create the conditions in further continuation of education or career development;
- The narrow disseminating geography of the Abkhazian language, which convinced Abkhazians that they could not use the language anywhere beside beyond just two zones of Abkhazia;
- Low level of teachers' education;
- Non-development of teaching methods, etc.

Unfortunately, most of these problems are still relevant today, as the communist legacy is still unchanged and nihilistic attitude towards the existing problems has not changed.

Abkhaz authors unanimously state that as if according to the resolution of the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party of June 12, 1945, in 1945-1946 school years the teaching in the I-IV grades of Abkhazian schools was converted to

Georgian, and from 1946-1947 school years Georgian became **the language of instruction in Abkhazian secondary schools and** Abkhazian language was preserved as one of the subjects in the curriculum. This accusation is untrue and does not take into account aspects of the general political-ideological course that has been going on throughout the Soviet Union since 1936.

First of all, it must be said that at that time Tbilisi could not dare to make nationalist deviations in general russification condition. Moscow did not forgive anyone for that. Stalin was not personally interested in dissemination of the Georgian language: for example, he was not at all interested in the fact that Armenians and Azeris living in Georgia did not learn Georgian, corresponded with Tbilisi in Russian, and that the working language of republican events in Tbilisi was Russian, etc. Historian Grigol Lezhava discovered a decree of December 17, 1937 by the Organizing Committee of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union *“On the Liquidation and Transformation of Artificially Created Districts and Rural Councils and Reorganization of National Schools”* which was approved on January 24, 1938 by the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. The decree harmfully stated the existence of national departments of national schools and ordinary schools in the republics and autonomies, and meant their reorganization into ordinary Soviet schools. One paragraph of the decree says:

“B) Reorganization should be carried out as follows: ... it is necessary that the special national schools be reorganized via transforming them in line with the curricula of the ordinary Soviet schools, or via teaching them in the language of the respective republic or in Russian; To provide these schools with teachers, from the Fall of 1938, children of other nationalities were also admitted to these schools.

C) ...

D) Commissioners of Public Education of the Allied Republics personally approve the terms and rules of reorganization of each national school and complete all the work before the beginning of the school year, i.e. until August 1, 1938” (Lezhava, 1997).

The decree referred to the languages of minorities of all eleven allied republics of the Soviet Union at the time including the ones of autonomies. Perhaps this should explain the fact that, 9 years after the adoption of the cited decree, in 1947 the Abkhazian poet **Bagrat Shinkwba**, historian **Georgi Dzidzaria** and linguist **Konstantin Shaqril** appealed against introduction of Georgian as the studying language instead of Russian in so-called Abkhazian schools. Kremlin has not reacted because the **category of special national schools included Abkhazian and languages of all other autonomies.**

Consequently, the authors of the complaint had problems, in our opinion, due to the **ignorance of the decree of January 24, 1938 and the opposition to the “Marxist-Leninist national policy”**.

G. Lezhava also documented that **from 1938 to 1945, that is, for the whole 8 years, leaders of the Georgian SSR dragged on the reorganization of so-called Abkhazian schools**. Obviously, the population did not know the real goals of Moscow and the history of the issue, so everything was blamed on Georgians and relations between Abkhazians and Georgians were strained.

It is essential to find out what has changed in the curriculum of so-called Abkhazian schools since the Fall of 1945, whether the teaching of Abkhazian language in I-IV grades and high school levels has been abolished. This issue is clarified by the Resolution of the Abkhazian Regional Committee of the Georgian Communist Party, approved on March 13, 1945, *“On Measures to Improve the Educational Work in the Schools of the Abkhaz ASSR”*, which clearly states:

“3. Teaching of Abkhazian language and literature should remain a mandatory subject in the curricula of Abkhazian schools under reorganization”.

It should also be noted that as a result of this reorganization, the Georgian language took the place that the Russian language held until 1945. In addition, during this general Soviet action, similar processes were taking place in all other republics, and the fact that the Abkhazian language was still taught in so-called Abkhazian school is documented by 6 school programs published in the Abkhazian language in 1945-1953.

* * *

After Stalin’s death, the language of instruction in so-called Abkhazian schools above IV grade has become Russian again, in I-IV grades Abkhazian remained, **but this has not improved the situation of teaching the Abkhazian language**. Studying Russian in almost all disciplines accustomed Abkhazian students to thinking only in Russian and helped to increase the priority of this language. As a result, Abkhazian children living in cities were mainly enrolled in Russian-language kindergartens and schools, so that less knowledge of Russian would not prevent young people from enrolling in higher education and building future careers. Due to this, **most of the monoethnic (Abkhazian) families living in the cities became practically bilingual in the second half of the 1960s, and the only language of the biethnic families was Russian**.

As for the villages, since most of the families were mono-ethnic and the daughters-in-law of other nationalities traditionally had to communicate in their husbands' language, the only language of communication remained Abkhazian, but according to our observations from the early 1980s made it clear that rural youth in communication with each other (more often) and with the elders (relatively less) used a mixture of Abkhazian-Russian language codes.

The growth of bilingualism among Abkhazians has had a serious impact on the ecological status of the Abkhazian language, in particular, Russian jargon and slang appeared in the oral speech of young Abkhazians, and Russian branch terminology has been introduced into the speech of people of all generations of both sexes.

§4. Abkhazian language in the current education system

The teaching of the Abkhazian language in present-day Abkhazia differs little from the situation of the last two decades of the Soviet regime. Despite the declaration of “state independence” after the Russo-Georgian war in 1993, the influence of the Russian language deepened. The school system has not changed significantly either. The question arises: why did not the Abkhazian “legislators” living in “independent” Abkhazia set a goal of converting of so-called Abkhazian, in fact Russian, school into a truly national school? The answer is simple: Moscow will never allow the Abkhazian “legislators” to do so, since the precedent of converting so-called Abkhazian school into a truly national school will quickly lead to similar reform demands in the subjects of the Russian Federation, especially in the troubled North Caucasus and regions of river Volga. We must keep in mind that the strong lever of governing Abkhazia is the full dependence of its budget on Russian subsidies!

As of September 3, 2013, there were a total of 165 secondary schools in Abkhazia, of which 60 were “Abkhazian”, 16 ones - “mixed” Abkhazian-Russian, 47 ones - Russian, 31 ones - Armenian and 11 ones - Georgian. Today, Georgian schools are also Russian. Since the language of instruction in “Abkhazian” schools from V grade is Russian (with the exception of “**Abkhazian language**” and “**Abkhazian literature**”), the above statistics do not reflect the reality: **in fact “Abkhazian”, “Abkhazian”-Russian and Russian schools (including former Georgian schools) are Russian and their share is 134 units of the region, i.e. 81.2% of the existing schools, only Armenian**

students have the right to study in their mother tongue (the share of Armenian schools is 19.8%). This means that **more than 4/5 of the students in the region, including almost all Abkhazian and Georgian children, are strongly influenced by the Russian language every day:**

he/she:

- thinks, writes and speaks in Russian;
- studies only Russian terminology of exact, natural and social sciences;
- perceives the world through the prism of the Russian language and Russian ethnopsychology;
- becomes nihilistic towards Abkhazian language, literature and culture as a result of low level of Abkhazian textbooks;
- accustoms to the idea that the language and culture of his/her nationality is disenfranchised and unpromising, while Russian language and culture is of higher category, perfect, prestigious and most useful language for building personal career.

According to the 2019 publication of the former “Minister of Foreign Affairs” of Abkhazia, linguist **Vyacheslav Chirikba, only 30-40% of children in so-called Abkhazian kindergartens and primary classes speak their own national language.** *“If such a situation persists, and everything confirms this, the situation will reach a point when it will be impossible to go back and revive the language,”* - says the author.

A serious problem is that ignorance of the mother tongue is no longer considered a shame in Abkhazian society. Everyone is accustomed to this type of people and they are considered to be full-fledged Abkhazians. The prestige of town-dweller has become a stereotype, and this is why villagers flock to towns. In the town, knowledge of Abkhazian language is not supported by the communication environment of most families, so students are not motivated to learn their mother tongue, which adds to the structural complexity of Abkhazian language. Revitalization of Abkhazian language is complex process and are accompanied by many problems, the most important of which is to declare Abkhazian as the language of instruction not only verbally, but concrete steps should be made towards it:

1. Development and approval of terminology of various scientific fields;
2. Compilation of differentiated curricula and textbooks for those who do not know the language, for those who know a certain level of mother tongue;
3. Introduction of Abkhazian as the language of instruction should be carried out in stages: the process should start from kindergartens, then continue in the

primary grades of the school, in the next stage - in the upper grades, and finally in all faculties of the university. It will take at least 15 years.

4. In all administrative institutions, official proceedings should be conducted in the first, **transitional stage** in Abkhazian and Russian languages, and after some time, Abkhazian and Georgian languages should be introduced with this function...

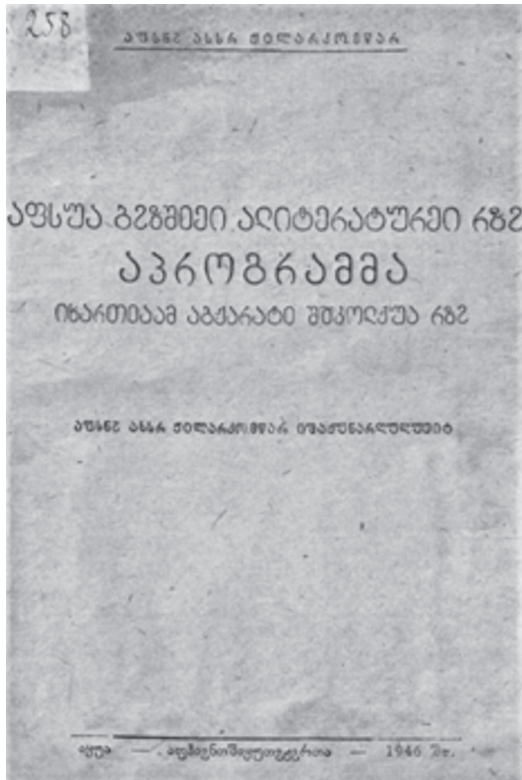
WHETHER THE PUBLICATION OF LITERATURE IN THE ABKHAZIAN LANGUAGE WAS BANNED IN 1938-1954 OR NOT?

In the publications of Abkhazian authors, as well as in the materials posted on social networks, accusations are often made, according to which in 1938-1954, when the Abkhazian language was based on Georgian graphics, Abkhazians were being georgianized and because of this the rights of Abkhazian language and literature were restricted. Abkhazian books, brochures, journals/magazines and newspapers of different content, published in 1938-1954 on Georgian graphics base and which are kept in the funds of the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia remove the ground of these accusations. According to these materials, in 1938-1954, more than 300 books and brochures were published in Abkhazian during 16 years.

Out of this literature, **10 times printed school programs of Abkhazian language and literature are noteworthy.** These are:

1. Programs for primary schools. Abkhazian language, writing, count, history, geography, natural science. Sokhumi, 1938;
2. Abkhazian language and literature program for grades V-VII of secondary schools. Sokhumi, 1939;
3. Programs for primary schools. Abkhazian language, writing, count, geography, natural science, drawing. Translated from the RSFSR programs with the inclusion of the Abkhazian language program by Ar. Ardzyuba and Vlad. Maan. Sokhumi, 1940;
4. Abkhazian language and literature program for non-secondary and secondary

- schools. Sokhumi, 1945;
5. Abkhazian language and literature program for primary schools. Sokhumi, 1946;
 6. Abkhazian language and literature program no-secondary schools. Sokhumi, 1946;
 7. Abkhazian language program for primary schools. Sokhumi, 1947;
 8. Abkhazian language and literature program for non-secondary and secondary schools. Sokhumi, 1947;
 9. Abkhazian language and literature program (V-XI grades). Sokhumi, 1948;
 10. Abkhazian language program (grammar with spelling) for V, VI, VII, VIII grades. Sokhumi, 1953.



Abkhazian language and literature program for non-secondary schools. 1946

1. N. Popova, A. Pchelko. A set of tasks and exercises. IV grade. Sokhumi, 1947;
2. S. Polyak, N. Nikitin, L .Volodina. A set of tasks and exercises. I grade. Sokhumi, 1953;
3. S. Polyak, N. Nikitin, L. Volodina. A set of tasks and exercises. II grade. Sokhumi, 1953;
4. S. Polyak, N. Nikitin, L .Volodina. A set of tasks and exercises. III grade. Sokhumi, 1953;
5. V. Tetyurev. Natural science. III grade. Sokhumi, 1953 ...

The fact that these textbooks were published in the Abkhazian language is another evident proof that there was no deliberate georgianization in so-called Abkhazian schools, in particular in the primary grades.

It is important for the research issue a quite a lot of original Abkhazian fiction published in 1938-1954, fiction translated from Abkhazian into Georgian, Russian and other languages, as well as legal, party-ideological and economic literature, the total number of which exceeds 250 units.

In 1938-1954, individual works or collections of Abkhazian writers were published (more than one book by some writers was published). Of the works and folklore of Abkhazian writers who appeared on the literary scene before 1938, the following was published:

1. Plays by Dzadz Darsalia (1938);
2. Collection of proverbs, riddles and other folklore materials collected by Dmitri Gulia (1939);
3. Dmitri Gulia's "Short Stories" (1942);
4. Dimitri Gulia's "Essays" in three volumes (vol. I - 1947; vol. II - 1952; vol. III - 1953);
5. Levarsa Kvitsinia's poem "Daur" (1938);
6. Levarsa Kvitsinia's poem "Sharizan" (1939);
7. Volume I of the collection of Abkhazian fairy tales collected by Konstantin Shaqryl and Khukhut Bgazwba (1940);
8. Ivan Papaskir's short story "Temyr" (1939), etc .;

Books by beginner Abkhazian writers were also published during the study period:

1. Bagrat Shinkwba's book "First Songs" (1938);
2. Bagrat Shinkwba's poem (1943);
3. The second collection of poems by Bagrat Shinkwba (1948);
4. The first collection of poems by Alexey Lasuria (1944);
5. The second collection of poems by Alexey Lasuria (1954);
6. The first collection of poems by Alexey Jonua "Morning Beams" (1949);
7. The second collection of poems by Alexey Jonua "In the Name of the Motherland" (1953);
8. Abkhazian translation of George Gulia's short story "Saken's Spring" (1949), for which the author was awarded the Stalin State Prize;
9. The first collection of poems by Chichiko Jonua "Land of Flowers"(1950);
10. The first collection of poems by Ivan Tarba "Mountain spring" (1949);
11. The second collection of poems by Ivan Tarba "The Heart Speaks" (1954);
12. The first collection of poems by Kirshal Chachkhalia "Earthly Stars" (1954).

In 1938-1954, 7 literary collections were published in Abkhazian, in which the works of Abkhazian writers were published.

In 1932-1941 a literary-fiction journal was published, which was first called "*Apsny Qapsh*" ("Red Abkhazia"), and in 1939 it was called "*Aliteraturatv Jhournal*" ("Literary Journal"). Its publication was interrupted by the war. At the turn of the 40s and 50s, 3 issues of the "*Aliteraturatv Almanac*" ("Literary Almanac") was also published. In 1939, the edition of the Abkhazian newspaper "Apsny qapsh" was renewed.

Of particular note from the facts cited here is that it was just in 1938–1954 the first collections of the works of a **group of novice Abkhazian writers** were published, and if anyone wanted to suppress the basis of Abkhazian literature, it would be "logical" if it was the novice writers who would be banned from publishing their first works, which, fortunately, did not happen.

The data of **the literature translated into Abkhazian** are also noteworthy. In particular, during the research period, the works of 5 authors translated from Georgian into Abkhazian were published: Shota Rustaveli, Nikoloz Baratashvili, Alexandre Qazbegi, Egnate Ninoshvili, Shalva Dadiani; 6 books were translated from Russian into Abkhazian and published: "The Story of Igor's Hike", works by Nikolay Gogol, Alexandr Pushkin, Maxim Gorky, Alexandr Serafimovich, Dmitry Furmanov; Works by

5 other nationalities were also published: Jean-Baptiste Molière, Daniel Defoe, Lope de Vega, Taras Shevchenko, and Hovhannes Tumanyan.

These data show that Georgian, Russian and other fiction **was published in approximately equal proportions in the Abkhazian language** and there was no bias in favor of Georgian authors.

In the same years, legal-normative and party-ideological, economic literature (much less but still) was regularly published in Abkhazian. The abundance of such literature is a clear indicator of the protection of the rights of the Abkhazian language.

More than 300 books and brochures published in 16 years (i.e. an average of 18.7 publications per year) are not small number, especially considering that in 1938 76 years (1862) have passed since the creation of the Abkhazian literary language and 26 years (1912) - since the establishment of Abkhazian fiction; In addition, in the same period 1938–1954, a small group of Abkhazian writers worked in the field of writing, and all of them could not create high-quality works of art.

It should be noted that in 1954 the “**Abkhazian-Georgian Dictionary**” compiled by **Bagrat (Shota) Janashia**, a Georgian abkhazologist working in Sokhumi and the best knower scholar of the Abkhazian language, was published. It should be specified that the same scholar is the author of the first **short Georgian-Abkhazian dictionary**, which is attached to Georgian language textbook by **T. Goniashvili and Kl. Tevzadze** intended for Abkhazian students published in 1938. Abkhazian-Georgian and Georgian-Abkhazian dictionaries were intended, first of all, for Abkhazian teenagers and young people (for pupils and students) who must have known the Abkhazian language as well. If someone really fought against the Abkhazian language in 1938-1954, could use all means to ensure that these two dictionaries had not been published.

As for the publication of both fiction and scientific literature in Abkhazian in Abkhazia after 1993, the situation is as follows: fiction is rarely published, due to what some writers started writing in Russian in the hope that Russian publishing houses would be interested in and publish the books; Several books on various genres of Abkhazian folklore have been published; The only literary monthly journal “*Alashara*” is published once every two months due to financial problems; Several bilingual (Abkhazian-Russian and Russian-Abkhazian) dictionaries have been published ...

TOPONIMIC WARS IN ABKHAZIA

A real toponymic war has been going on in Abkhazia since 1864: at different times, toponyms in the language of one of the ethnic groups were provocatively abolished or planned and new geographical names in another language were legislated instead.

The first mass change of toponyms in Abkhazia began after the second Abkhazian muhajiring in 1867, and from the third muhajiring in 1880 this process became much more intense. Pro-Russian separatist authors avoid covering the issue - they do not want to offend Russia, but written sources clearly show the scale of the process from 1867 to 1917, which was related to the settlement of colonists on lands emptied by the Abkhazian population. For example, according to various sources, in the last 50 years from 1867 to 1917, a large new group of toponyms appeared in Abkhazia, replacing the existing Abkhazian or Georgian geographical names. Most of them are created on the basis of Russian toponymic models, with Russian topoformants, some of which have roots in another language. Turkish, Armenian, Greek, German and Estonian toponyms also appeared in small numbers during the same period. Here the name some of them:

Russian toponyms or the ones with Russian model basis: Anastasievka, Andreevka, Baklanovka, Baranovo, Bebutovka, Bogoyavlenskoe, Bolshoy-Kraevich, Georgievsk, Grebeshok, Konstantinovka, Evdokimovka, Ekaterininskoe, Ermolovka, Estonka, Verkhne-Kovalevskoe, Vesyllovka, Vladimirovka, Vosemsotskoe, Zakharovka, Yurievka, Kazarma, Kavakluk-Armianskoe, Kavakluk-Grecheskoe, Kesyanovka, Maly Kraevich, Mariinskoe, Megrellovka, Mendeleevo, Metelevka, Mikhailovskoe, Nikolaevskoe, Novy Afon, Novochernigovka, Olginskoe, Orekhovo, Osechko, Otradnoe, Pavlovskoe, Petrovskoe, Petropavlovskoe, Pilenkovo, Poltavo-Aleksandrovskoe, Poltavskoe, Primorskoe, Rogozhino, Serebrianoe, Spasovka, Starushkino, Sulevo, Troitskoe, Shafranovo, Shurinovka, Chernigovka // Starochernigovka, Tsugurovka ...;

Turkish: Beshkardash, Derekooy, Kestaneluk, Manakluk, Semenli, Jevizluk. Some of these villages belonged to Armenian colonists, some to Greek ones. We suggest that Turkish toponyms were brought by the colonists from Anatolia; Armenian: Demerchants, Khachatur;

German: Gnadenberg, Naidorf;

Greek: Mania // Maniya and Reper (?);

Estonian: Lindau, Salme.

The legalization of these new names violated the previous toponymic situation in Abkhazia and damaged the Abkhazian-Georgian onomasticon.

Even during the 70 years of the Soviet regime, the toponymic situation in Abkhazia greatly changed. In this regard, in 1921-1935 the Abkhazian Bolsheviks supported it, and then “the baton was passed” to the Georgian Bolsheviks, at one point Moscow directly intervened in the case. We believe, that all toponymic processes were undoubtedly controlled from Moscow, as national geographical names were constantly fought throughout the empire, which was one of the most productive methods to aggravate relations between nations. In order to maintain such aggravation, sometimes one of the two neighboring ethnic groups was given an imaginary advantage, sometimes - the other. Here are some important facts:

Four times in Abkhazia, namely in 1925, 1935, 1978 and 1988, special commissions were set up to specify toponyms. Their common goal was to erase most of the centuries-old Georgian toponyms from the geographical map, or to radically change them according to the phonetic-morphological models of the Abkhazian language.

The general shortcomings of these commissions should be considered as follows:

1. The commissions were monoethnic. Parity was not observed and all commissions consisted only of Abkhazians;
2. During the work, they preferred the folklore material obtained from Abkhazian informants and Russian-language sources of 19th c.;
3. No attention was paid to Georgian and foreign data.

Naturally, such working style determined the obtained results.

Abkhazian toponymist, currently the Speaker of so-called Abkhazian Parliament Valeri Kvarchia writes that in the early years the Abkhazian Bolsheviks started working to collect old toponyms, but this proved difficult because it was impossible to find an Abkhazian informant in some parts of Abkhazia after the muhajiring and there were no professionals. For these reasons, the work was not completed, but based on the materials of that time, in 1925, the issue of the administrative division of Abkhazia was discussed. A new commission was set up in 1935, but even it was unable to carry out the task competently (Kvarchia, 1985). According to our materials, in 1925-1935, commissions composed of Abkhazian members abolished a total of 7 toponyms and legalized 10 new toponyms, of which one was Abkhazian - Lakoba which was derived from the surname of Bolshevik leader Nestor Lakoba, one Abkhazian-Russian - Psirdzkha-Arkhireiskoye, 2 toponyms were derived from the surnames of Armenian communists on the Russian basis: Shaumyanovskoe // Shaumyanovka and Myasnikovo // Myasnikovka, 1 German - Karl Marx and 5 Russian toponyms: Lenino, Kultuchastok, Konsovkhoz, Svoboda, Treti International. As we can see, none of the new toponyms were of Georgian origin.

In 1936, the Soviet Union underwent major changes in the field of administrative-territorial management. As part of the reform, new constitutions of the USSR, the Allied Republics and the Autonomous Republics were drafted, including the capitals of the USSR, the Allied and Autonomous Republics, legal Russian names of which often did not correspond to the original names of the cities. The reform also affected the Russian spelling of the names of some cities on the territory of Georgia. In particular, the report sent to Moscow by Nestor Lakoba, Chairman of CEC of the Abkhazia ASSR, is noteworthy in this regard:

The author addressed to the Main Division of State Photography and Cartography of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR. He did not agree with the introducing of **Sukhumi, Tqvarcheli, Ochemchiri** forms as the norm by the transcription bureau of this division. It seems that N. Lakoba's report was based on a scientifically erroneous conclusion of a commission set up in 1935 and confirms the low scientific level of the commission. The real etymology of these toponyms is as follows: Georgian (Svan) Tskhumi "hornbeam" > Turkish Suhum (cf. Arabic Suhumu) // Suhum-kale "Sokhumi's fortress" > Russian Sukhum-Kale > Sukhum > Geo. Sokhumi; Georgian (Megrelian) Tqvarchelia "cyclamen" > village name Tqvarcheli > Abkhazian Tqvarchal; Megrelian Oche + Mchire "large arable land" > village name Ochemchire > Abkhazian Ochamchyra. Thus, neither N. Lakoba nor his consultants had a historical or linguistic basis for their claims. It is obvious that the Abkhazian Bolsheviks were trying to erase the traces of the historical residence of Georgians in the present-day territory of Abkhazia.

Soon the CEC of USSR intervened and on August 16, 1936, passed a resolution "On the correct spelling of the names of settlements", which was published in Abkhazian, Georgian and Russian newspapers in Abkhazia. This decree officially legalized the Russian names of 18 settlements in Georgia, of the capital of Armenia and of 2 settlements in Turkmenistan. The draft text has been compiled by the mentioned Transcription Bureau, against which N. Lakoba had made a claim for the issue. The aim of this document was to bring the Russian spelling of geographical names distorted under tsarism closer to the orthoepy of the local languages. Just at that time, the **rule of maintaining the nominal case suffix -i** of the Georgian toponyms with final-consonant in the Russian transliteration of toponyms was established, against which the Abkhazian and Ossetian separatists are still fighting relentlessly: **Sukhumi, Tqvarcheli, Ochemchire (Сухуми, Тқварчели, Очемчири).**

The documents show that **the cruel People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs had a targeted institution to solve such problems, which drafted the final decision,**

and we do not think Georgians would have worked in it and thought how to “distort the Abkhazian toponymic environment.”

In 1938-1953, a new stage of mass renaming of villages in Abkhazia was underway, which Abkhazian authors call as the “stage of georgianization“. During this period, Russian, Turkish and German toponyms introduced in 1867-1917 were changed mainly to Georgian names. According to Abkhazian authors (Z. Anchabadze, G. Dzidzaria, Sh. Inal-Ipa, V. Kvarchia ...), Abkhazian toponyms were unjustifiably changed in the 1940s. In 1938-1953, the group of toponyms in Abkhazia was really replaced by ideologized Georgian toponyms: Shroma “labor”, Tavisupleba “freedom”, Leselidze - surname of the soviet Georgian general, Salkhino - “place of joy”, Gantiadi “dawn” ... Against this background, Abkhazian authors do not want to see that at the same period a part of Russian geographical names were replaced by Abkhazian toponyms, as well and the comonyms with Abkhazian etymology were not replaced by Georgian toponyms (Gvantseladze, 2000). For example: Asterovka (Rus.) replaced by Amzara (Abkhaz.); Baklanovka (Rus.) > Aatsy (Abkhaz.); The names of villages Centralnoe Komsomolskoye and Krasnoe (Rus.) were merged and renamed Psyrdzkha (Abkhaz.); Gnadenberg (Germ.) > Dzygwta // Dzigvta (Abkhaz.); Kavakluk (Turk.) > Achandara ...

We believe that Georgian officials during the bloody repressions could not dare to change the Russian toponyms on their own initiative without prior agreement with Moscow. In all probability the Moscow’s provocative initiatives were the formation of commissions staffed with non-professionals first in Abkhazia in 1925, then in 1935, and between 1938-1953 the replacement of a large group of Russian toponyms with Georgian and a small part – with Abkhazian names. Clearly, in this case, Moscow wanted to maintain the permanence of tensions in Abkhazian-Georgian relations. Objectivity required the establishment of a joint commission of Abkhazian and Georgian professionals in 1921-1953, which would accurately determine the historical toponymy and make impartial decisions on the issues under consideration.

In 1955-1991, when some of the new Georgian toponyms that had been really unfairly legalized at the previous stage were abolished, Russian colonial toponyms were restored instead of historical names by the will of Abkhazian but Abkhazian authors do not protest at all (sic!). We present a small number of such examples: Qazbegi again became Chernigovka; Bagratistsikhe > Alekseevka; Alpuri > Alpiiskoe; Vertskhliani > Serebrianoe; Koriantelli > Metevka; Kodori > Vladimirovka; Uravi > Pavlovskoe; Sagiorgio > Georgievskoe; Kvemo akhuti > Poltavo-Alexandrovskoe ... (Gvantseladze, 2000).

It should be noted that in the 1930s and 1940s, in the Georgian provinces most of the other-language toponyms have been replaced by Georgian names in Abkhazia, but the vast majority of the changed toponyms were Russian, German and Turkish comonyms created during Tsarist Russia. Abkhazians claim that the georgianization of toponyms in this region in 1938-1953 was aimed at the forcible assimilation of Abkhazians, but they do not take into account that large groups of non-Georgian toponyms occurred in other parts of Georgia, as well, where Armenians, Azeris, Russians and Greeks lived compactly. Though, then, and not later, for some reason, Georgian geographical names were not massively legalized instead of toponyms in the languages of these diasporas. It is unclear why toponyms were not changed en masse in Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli, or the South Ossetian Autonomous District.

What the current situation looks like in Abkhazia, which has been occupied by the Russian Federation for the third time since 1993?

Special attention is paid to the fight against Georgian toponyms. For example, since 1993, streets and avenues have no longer the names of Georgian public figures, including the names sourced from the surnames of the figures with great merit before the Abkhazian people. They attach more importance to the fight against comonyms because they know that Georgian toponyms on both sides are much older than Abkhazian toponyms - Georgian names are abundantly attested in ancient and medieval written and cartographic sources, and the first Abkhazian toponyms are mentioned from the 16th century.

Currently, Abkhaz authors publish works that cannot withstand any criticism. They **completely ignore the information in ancient sources in Georgian and other languages**, which do not support the assertion of these authors that Abkhazians first lived in Abkhazia and Georgians settled later. These authors still mostly use the not-so-long-ago created **folklore information and nineteenth-century Russian sources** that do not reflect the true history of these parts. The practical implementation of “historical theories” based on false foundations is the fact that **dozens of Georgian names have been banned in Abkhazia since 1993**, in particular, the **unnatural names of Georgian villages with communist semantics** have been **rightly** banned: **Tavisupleba** “freedom”, **Shroma** “labor”, **Ganakhleba** “renewal”, **Gantiadi** “dawn”.

But in this context, it is **completely illogical** to leave unchanged the names of Tsarist toponyms and the comonyms sourced from the surnames of some communists: **Shaumyanovka, Miasnikovka, Kesyanovka** It seems the fact seems to have played a crucial role that the occupation regime did not want to offend its “feeder” Russian

government and the Armenian separatists on their side over the toponyms. The most obvious manifestation of the **total toponymic war** is that in Abkhazia the **centuries-old Georgian comonyms attested in ancient historical sources** were abolished and replaced by **artificially created pseudo-Abkhazian names that never existed before**: Geo. **Okhur(e)i** > Abkhaz. **Akhur**, Geo. **Mukhuri** > Abkhaz. **Makhur**, Geo. **Samkvari** > Abkhaz. **Galkhuch**, Geo. **Shesheleti** > Abkhaz. **Shashalat** // **Shash-ikyt**, Geo. **Makhunjia** > Abkhaz. **Makhw-ijra**, etc.

The orthography of Kartvelian toponyms in Abkhazian, Russian and foreign languages has changed en masse - **secondary Abkhazian phonetic variants, and currently invented forms, are being legislated**. For example, the Megrelian oikonym **Pokveshi** “of cave” was replaced by the Abkhazian form **Пѡкѡшь (Pakwash)**, derived from it and the official Russian name was **Пакуаш** and the English one - **Pakuash** ...

They are also fighting against the Georgian nominal case suffix **-i** presented in the names of **Sokhumi, Gali, Tqvarcheli** and other places, which, when writing them in Russian, English and other languages, unmistakably underlines the Kartvelian origin of these polysonyms. Due to this, the occupation regime requires international organizations and the mass media to write and pronounce in Russian and other foreign languages: **Сухум** // **Sukhum**, **Гал** // **Gal**, **Тқырчал** // **Tquarchal** ...

ECOLOGY OF ABKHAZIAN SURNAMES AND PERSONAL NAMES

Several types of surnames are predominant among Abkhazians, some of which are not of Abkhazian origin. In our opinion, Abkhazian are not only the surnames the roots and affixes of which are undoubtedly of Abkhazian origin, but also those Kartvelian or Circassian (more rarely - Turkish) surnames, which are morphologically adapted on the Abkhazian ground, i.e. Abkhazian affixes are added. For example, Georg. Maru-sh-yan-i (// Maru-sh-is-dze) > Marshan-ia > Abkh. A-Marshan ...; Turk. Omerekech-Oghlu > Abkh. Omerkech-Ipa ...

The following structural models of Abkhazian (and abkhazised) surnames are currently prevalent among Abkhazians living on the territory of Abkhazia:

The first group consists of the surnames without affix, with pure root: Bagapsh, Baras, Barach, Dbar, Trapsh, Kchach, Chablakh, Chalmaz, Chuaz, Halbad and others.

The **second group** consists of the “**non-suffixal**” surnames containing the **Abkhazian a- prefix** of general nominal form. This model mainly includes those surnames of Kartvelian origin, which were originally added by the suffix **-ian > -ia** of Kartvelian origin, but after the abkhaziation of part of these surnames, this suffix was removed and Abkhazian **a-** prefix was added to: Abkh. **A-blyskir** < Kartv. **Buleiskiri** // **Buliskir-ia**; Abkh. **A-marshan** < Kartv. **Marshania** < **Marush-yan-i** (cf. **Marush-is-dze**); Abkh. **A-mpar** < Kartv. **Mephor-ia**; Abkh. **A-nkvab** // **A-mkvab** < Kartv. **Mekvab-ia** // **Mikvabia** < **Mekvabe-a**, cf. **Mekvabishvili** (Kh. Bgazhba); Abkh. **A-jynjal** < Kartv. **Jinjol-ia**, **Jinjol-a-va ...**;

The **third group** includes the surnames derived by the suffixoid **-ipa** “one’s son”: **Dadal-ipa** “son of Dadal” - from the Turk. **Dadal-oghlu**; **Demerj-Ipa** “son of a blacksmith” (Turk.: **Demerj-Oghlu**), **Inal-ipa** “son of Inal” (cf. **Inalishvili**), **Pate-ypa** “son of Pata” and others. This model includes most units.

The **fourth group** is the surnames derived from the previous group with **-iba** // **-yba** endings: **Abd-yba**, **Adle-yba**, **Alte-yba**, **Ashwme-yba**, **Gadl-iba** (from Kartvelian **Gadelia** // **Gadilia** surname), **Le-yba**, **Tse-yba**, **Tswe-yba...**

The **fifth group** the surnames with **-aa** suffix, which are divided into two subgroups:

A) Abkhazian surnames in which the suffix **-aa** denotes collectivity: **Abgaj-aa** “Sbs with hump on back”, **Agwkh-aa**, **Agwm-aa**, **Atwm-aa**, **a-Kyrt-aa** “Georgians”, **Ashkhar-aa** “mountaineers” (cf. **A-shkha-r-ua** “mountaineer”) ...;

B) Georgian surnames with the suffix **-[v]a**, in which instead of this suffix ending **-aa** is confirmed in the Abkhazian pronunciation. It is noteworthy that either in the Megrelian pronunciation of these surnames are not confirmed **-[v]a** suffix and is attested as a pure stem; cf: Abkh. **Dum-aa** - Megr. **Duma**, Abkh. **Kwart-aa** - Megr. **Kort-a**, Abkh. **Kupr-aa** - Megr. **Kupr-a** (cf. Georgian name confirmed in the 10th century **Kupr-a**, as well as Georgian surnames **Kupr-a-dze**, **Kupr-e-i-shvili**) and et al. In this type of Georgian surnames **-va** ending is confirmed only in Imeretian, Gurian, Ajarian, Lechkhumian and Rachian dialects, as well as in the Georgian literary language: **Bigva-va**, **Sichina-va**, **Chitana-va ...** Due to the fact that the **v** consonant is not pronounced either in Abkhazian or in Megrelian it is completely unacceptable assumption of N. Marr and I. Qipshidze as if **-va** suffix of Georgian surnames are derived from Abkhazian **- ipa** suffixoid.

We assume that in the process of settlement of Abkhazians in Abkhazia after the

16th century and assimilation with native Georgians, Abkhazians added the Abkhazian suffix *-aa* of collectivity to the Georgian stems of surnames. This opinion is supported by the facts when *va // -a* suffix is not confirmed in the Georgian surname, but in the Abkhazian pronunciation *-aa* suffix is attested. These are: **Arst-aa** < **Eristav-i** and **Aymkh-aa** // **Emkh-aa** < **Geo. Emkhvar-i** < **Amilakhvar-i** < social term **amirakhori** “command of the cavalry”.

The data of the Abaza language is of great importance for determining the time of the formation of Abkhazian surnames. Since there is no doubt about the existence of Apswa-Abaza ethno-linguistic unity until the 16th century, when the ancestors of Apswas began to settle in Abkhazia, we must assume the following: If at that time the Apswas already had named models of surnames, then the same structural models must be attested among the Abazas. There are only 4 models among the Abazas: 1. Stems without suffix: Lapugw, Makhwa, Nypa, Bors, Hvatysh, Smyr ...; 2. The surnames containing the suffix of collectivity with singular function: Jyr-aa, Lars-aa, Li-aa, Akh-aa, Chym-aa, **Waz-aa**; 3. Several surnames with the suffix *-ba*: Akh-ba, Kvadz-ba, Agr-ba, Ali-ba, Adzyn-ba, Dzy-ba, Mych-ba, Zhir-ba, Lawrsan-ba, Kap-ba; 4. Several surnames with the suffix *-dza*: **Kwyzh-dza**, Ek-dza, Kil-dza... Among them, the surnames without suffix and with suffix of collectivity are common for Abazas and Abkhazians. Among Abazas, the surnames with suffix *-ba* occurs in Russian pronunciation, while the *-dza* suffix is confirmed only among Ashkharuas.

We believe that the *-ba* suffix should have been added to Abaza surnames without a suffix only in the 20s-30s of the 20th century, when 60 Ashkharuas families were settled by the communists in Abkhazia to justify the existence of the Abkhazian SSR and to increase the number of Abkhazians in the region. Apparently, on their way back to the North Caucasus (in the late 1930s), the Ashkharuas “took with them” the Abkhazian suffix. It should be noted that none of the surnames containing the suffixoid **-ipa** is confirmed at all among the Abazas, and this suffixoid is the origin for the Abkhazian suffix **-iba** and **-ba**.

Another important circumstance is noteworthy: among the Abazas, there are attested the surnames without suffix and with suffix of collectivity, to which the suffix *-ba* is added in Abkhazian, i.e. these surnames are divided into different structural models in these two languages; for example: Ashkhar. Kapa - Abkh. Kap-ba, Ashkhar.-Abkh. Smyr - Abkh. (In Batumi) Smyr-ba, Ashkhar. Li-aa - Abkh. Le-yba, Ashkhar. Adzyn-aa - Abkh. Adzyn-ba ...

Thus, we must conclude that before the 16th century, during the period of Apswa-Abaza linguistic unity, neither Abkhazians nor Abazas had the surnames with final **-ipa > -iba > -ba**, and only the ones without suffix and with suffix of collectivity were common among them. As for the Abkhazian surnames with **-ipa > -iba > -ba** suffix, they **must have been emerged after the 16th century on the territory of Abkhazia by analogy with the Georgian surnames with the final -dze and -shvili**.

The formation process of the Abkhazian surnames with final **-Ipa // -iba // -ba** seems to have lasted a long time. It was not yet completed by the late 1860s. This is evidenced by the lists of Muhajirs compiled in 1867. According to these lists, in 1867 **among Abkhazians the surnames (along with Georgian surnames) without suffix, the ones with -ipa suffixoid and the ones with -ba suffix were widespread**. In the lists of Muhajirs a **high frequency of violations** of one rule of using Abkhazian surnames drew attention. In particular:

According to the Abkhazian rule, if the surname with **-iba // -ba** suffix follows the personal name, then the surname is represented in full, but in the inverted form, i.e. when a surname with suffix precedes a name, the suffix is inevitably removed from a surname; cf., for example, on the one hand: Adgur Le-yba, Alkhas Amch-ba ... and, on the other hand: Ley Adgur, Amchy Alkhas ... In the lists of Muhajirs, the **violation of rule in 40 surnames with suffix in the postposition was found 306 times**, and these surnames were fixed without suffix, but the use of the suffix **was obligatory**. For example, the lists say: Mamud Abdi (Мамуд Абды) - should have been Mamud Abdiba; Susran Abukh (Сусранъ Абухъ) - should have been Susran Abukhba ... These examples reflect the real situation in Abkhazian in 1867 and show that the final formation of surnames with suffixes is a completely new phenomenon in this language. The suffixation should have been completed only by the beginning of the 20th century.

In terms of language ecology, the following should be noted:

- It is true that the authorities of the Russian Empire planned to russify the Abkhazians and organized genocide against them, but they **did not convert Abkhazian surnames to the Russian model** while the surnames were being russified en masse among the other peoples of the Caucasus; cf. **Abaza, Circassian, Chechen, Ossetian** surnames with Russian endings;
- In the official documents of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century (baptism books, student lists ...) some Abkhazian surnames with the suffix **-ba** were added by the Georgian (Megrelian) ending **-ia**, or only

by the vowel -i: Chanba > Chanbaia, Ketsba > Ketsbaia, Lakrba > Lakirbaia // Lakirbai ...

According to our estimation, at least 60% of Abkhazians have Georgian surnames and they are descendants of Georgians who have long been abkhazised. Currently in Abkhazia a **mass campaign of apswaziation of Georgian surnames** is in progress in several ways. After the 1993 war, Abkhazian society noticed the abundance of Georgian surnames in Abkhazia and there emerged a fear that no one would recognize the “independence” of Abkhazia when they learned that the majority of the population did not even have Abkhazian surnames. This view is so widespread that some scholars have even changed surnames. For example, the historian **Igor Markholia** turned into **Marykhwba**, ethnologist **Galina Kopeshavidze** - **Tarjman-ipa**, linguist **Leonid Samanjia** - **Samanba**, and others, although the surnames **Marykhwba**, **Tarjman-ipa**, **Samanba** are not factually attested in any source.

The tendency to give **Abkhazian children Russian or russified foreign names**, which began long before the Abkhazian war, continues today. Most Abkhazians of all ages have such names as **Svetlana (Sveta)**, **Nadezhda (Nadia)**, **Lolita**, **Janna**, **Inna**, **Vyacheslav (Slava)**, **Vladislav (Slava)**, **Yuri**, **Vladimir (Vova)**, **Sergey**, **Artur**, **Anatoly** and other. However, in the last twenty years, the number of **Abkhazian or abkhazised Circassian and Arabic-Turkish names** such as **Akhra** “rock”, **Matswys** “lighting”, **Amra** “sun”, **Shwarakh** “beast”, **Mas**, Abzagw, etc. has increased. If in the past it was a common to give Abkhazian children such Georgian or georgianized oriental names as: **Mzia**, **Natela**, **Khatuna**, **Otar**, **Nugzar**, **Tunti** (Megr. “bear”), **Mushni** (Sv. “Svan man”), etc. today it happens only when parents want to express the memory of close dead relatives with similar names.

Thus, the analysis of the onomastic situation in Abkhazia today clearly demonstrates that geographical names, surnames and personal names are actively used as tools of ideological warfare, while the planned onomastic tendencies have obviously anti-Georgian nature.

ABKHAZIAN LANGUAGE BEYOND THE AUTONOMOUS REPUBLIC OF ABKHAZIA

The **largest Abkhazian diaspora is currently represented in the Republic of Turkey**, where Abkhazians were deported three times by the Russian Empire in 1864, 1867 and 1878-1880. It is clear from historical documents that during the conquest of the Abkhazian principality, Russia **needed territory** than the population of Abkhazia, and the fate of the **Abkhaz people was predetermined**. They took advantage of the fact that since part of the Abkhazians considered themselves **Sunni Muslims** like the Turks, in all three cases they demanded Abkhazians to leave the homeland and settle to the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans were also interested in portraying themselves as **supporters of anti-Russian Caucasians, gaining their trust, and resettling Muhajirs in areas where** there was a threat from the non-Turkish population. The deal of Russian-Ottoman provided for several key conditions, including:

1. The Turkish authorities should not have resettled Abkhazian Muhajirs expelled from Georgia near the Russian border;
2. Muhajirs were forbidden to return to their homeland.

Despite the agreement, both in 1867 and 1877-1880, the Ottoman government settled Abkhazian Muhajirs near the Russian border. For example, the **city Batumi and several neighboring villages** are still inhabited by descendants of Abkhazian Muhajirs, whose ancestors mainly settled here in 1867. They know exactly which village their ancestors were from and remember that some of them first were settled in the depths of Turkey, but hoping that the Russian consulate in Batumi would allow them to return to their homeland, they came to Ajaria and settled there after being rejected by the Russians. During all three mass muhajiring, many more Abkhazians settled in the **north-western and western parts of the present-day Republic of Turkey, as well as on the Balkan Peninsula (Bulgaria, Serbia ...), Syria**, etc. (Muhajirs soon moved to other places from the Balkans).

When Abkhazians settled in uninhabited areas, new villages were named after the villages of Abkhazia which they had come from, or they used the name of a surname in the name of the village, the name of the leader of a given group, and so on. The first group of names includes: Ankhwa, Gup, Jgerda, Chlow, Dal, Achandara, Warcha, Eshyra, Abzhaqwa, Guma, Tsabal, Akapa, Psyrdzkha ...; The second group of village names includes: Bganaa “Bganbas”, Tsguaa “Tsygwbas”, Lakraa “Lakrbas”, Tvan Ikyta “Tvanba’s village”, Ashw Ikyta “Ashwba’s village”, Tapsh Ikyta “Tapsh-ipa’s village”,

Baghable “Bagba’s district” and others. Interestingly, some of these villages have retained these names to this day, but only when speaking in Abkhazian.

Currently, in the territory of the Republic of Turkey the descendants of Muhajirs live in large groups in big cities: **Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir** ..., as well as in about 200 villages located in the provinces of Adana, Amasya, Balikesir, Bilecik, Bursa, Düzce, Eskişehir, Zonguldak, Tokat, Yozgat, Manisa, Muğla, Ordu, Sakarya, Samsun, Sivash, Sinop, Kayseri, Kocaeli, Kütahya, Çorum (V. Chirikba).

It is also noteworthy that some Abkhazians living in Turkey live in villages where Georgians also live. They have had problems with each other since the 1992-1993 war in Abkhazia. We will name some Abkhazian-Georgian villages: **Balaban, Ajisu, Mashuk** (Kocaeli Province), **Yenikent** (Ordu Province), **Karapinar, Kurtköy, Yanikköy, Sarier** (Sakarya) and others.

Abkhazians descendants of Muhajirs still retain their ethnic identity. The **elderly know the mother tongue well** and follow the traditional Abkhazian culture: verbal and musical folklore, dances, traditional clothes, settlement forms and dwellings, etiquette, customs. **Most of them, especially children, middle-aged people, urbanites know the language of their nationality poorly or do not know at all.**

During the **mass turkeyzation in the 20th century throughout Turkey, all non-Turkish nationals, except Christians and Jews, were changed their surnames to artificial Turkish ones.** Because of this, Abkhazians, descendants of Muhajirs, now have Turkish surnames, but many people know the surnames of their ancestors, among which there are some surnames of Georgian origin.

The pure Abkhazian surnames of the Muhajirs’ ancestors are: **Akhba, Kapba, (A)Zhiba, Kvadzba, Tswyjba, Amychba, Ashwba, Kilba, Amgial-Ipa, Abukhba, Avidzba, Dzikhvba, Zukhba, Tsugba, Ateiba, Bizhnova, Bartsits, Kupalba, Gumba, Palba, Ardzinba, Twanba, Kiatswba, Khikwba, Shamba, Tswyshba, Dzikut-Ipa, Bazba, Tryshwba, Aur-Ifa, Tarba, Aqusba, Adzinba, Ateiba, Ababa, Bazhy, Iashba // Eshba, Aiegba, Khilpakhtsva-Ipa, Agumaa, Aiegba, Magba, Bganba, Gwasba, Darymba, Qalghy, Khishba, Hagba, Ketsba, Ashkharaa, etc .;**

Surnames of Georgian origin are: **Chqwania, Khvachaia, Papaa, Gablia, Sagharia, Osia, Qurua, Watar-Ipa> Wатыrba, Kurkunia, Nakharia, Pasanian, Matua, Briskil, Beigwa, Gamsania, Gulia, Lamia, Tania, Wardania, Khurkhumal, Chatanaa, Kwaratskhelia, Mshwydaa, Kardia, Kobakhia // Kopakhia, Gabnia, Gabria, Iasaa, Logua // Laguna, Sakania, Harazia, Tskua, Chalakua, Bedia, Puchkuria, Tsitskhua** and others.

The discourse of Abkhazians living in Turkey is noteworthy for linguists. **All territorial discourse variants of Abkhazian language (dialects, subdialects...)** are spoken among Muhajirs **except the Abkhazian discourse of Samurzaqano.**

Abkhazian language is not taught in any school in Turkey yet, but a couple of years ago the Turkish government included Abkhazian in the list of languages that could be taught in schools and universities under certain conditions: a specific number of people willing to learn this language should be collected, a teacher must have a qualification document officially recognized by the Turkish authorities, there should be official manuals of appropriate level, etc. These conditions have not yet been met in relation to the Abkhazian language, although several textbooks of Abkhazian language have already been developed and published in Turkish, and both Turkish citizens and foreigners are taught this language as an optional subject at **Bosphorus University,** but this is certainly not enough to save the Abkhazian language in the country where the absence of Abkhazian language teaching increases the risk of its extinction due to the small number of Abkhazians in the mass of 83 million population, their dispersion, increasing urbanization process, mixed marriages, low competitiveness of the Abkhazian language, low prestige of the language and high degree of turkization, as well as emigration to some Western European countries (mainly to Germany).

The same problems exist in the **Syrian Arab Republic,** which was conquered by the Ottomans during all three Abkhazian muhajiring. Prior to the current war in Syria, Abkhazians lived predominantly in the cities of **Damascus** and **Homs,** as well as in the villages around them. Their number did not exceed 3,000 people. The real threat of extinction of the language of Abkhazians displaced due to the war has increased even more.

As for the Abkhazians living in the Autonomous Republic of Ajaria, their number in 2002 was 1,558 people. Most of their ancestors came here in 1867 because of positive experience of proximity to Ajaraiia's Abkhazia and close relations with Georgians. The second large group settled in Batumi and its environs in 1878-1880. Eventually relatively close groups of Abkhazians appeared in the following districts of Batumi: Bartskhana, Souksu (near the current main cemetery), "Pivzaodi", "Garadoki", Lake Nurie, as well as in the following villages: Peria, Angisa, Salibauri, Chelta, Adlia, Gonio, Urekhi, Kveda Sameba, Minda, Mnatobi, Kakhaveri, Charnali ... Today, most of the Abkhazians living in the villages have already settled in Batumi.

Abkhazians currently living in Autonomous Republic of Ajaria have the following surnames: Ababiko, Abdiba, Agiba, Agirba, Agumaa, Agumba, Avejba, Avkhat, Aiozba,

Aikutsba, Akvazba, Akujba, Alkhorba, Ananba, Ank'ubaia, Azhiba, Argun, Aristava, Arsia, Arshba, Ardzinba, Asadzba, Aslan-Zade, Atrushba, Ashamba, Ashba, Ashlarba, Ashmeiba, Achugba, Atsamba, Atsimba, Atsugba, Ajiba, Basnik-Ipa, Bedia, Bezinba, Gamsania, Gechba // Gechbaia, Emin-Zade, Zvanbaia, Zvanbaia, Topch-Ipa, Yazijba, K'aitamba, K'arak'ejba, K'efalba, K'ishindba, K'ishliba, K'itazba, K'olbaia, K'ost'imba, K'odzba, K'udba, Lazba, Leiba, Maiba, Milalba, Mikalba, Muradba, Muskhajba, Mologhli, Naimba, Nakhshia, Naqopia, Pamba, Reizba, Saatch-Ipa, Selimba, Smirba, Tantiba, T'at'arba, Pshanava, Katiba, Kapba, Korkia, Kutelia, Sharashidze, Shushanidze, Chazmava, Chamba, Chaushba, Chimba, Churugba, Tsitsaba, Tsuzba, Chatanava, Cholokva, Khalvashi, Khalitba, Khashimba, Khajiba, Khiba, Khokhba, Jimjba.

It is noteworthy that some of the **official Georgian forms are based on Russian spelling and pronouns and not Abkhazian**. It is also noteworthy that **some surnames have a Georgian (Megrelian) ending -ia**, which should have been added not in Ajaria, but in Abkhazia, since among Ajarian Georgians, surnames are predominantly have the endings **-dze** and **-shvili** and not **-ia**. These surnames are: Ankuba-**ia**, Gechba-**ia** // Gechba, Zvanba-**ia**, Zukhba-**ia**, Kolba-**ia**. In other words, the surnames of the Muhajirs living in Ajaria have not been changed on the basis of Georgian rule.

It seems that while settling here, some patronymics also functioned as a surname. The following should indicate this: Kitazba is the official surname in Ajaria today, but the representatives of this clan remember well that their real surname was (A)Marshan; We think that Chaushba was the patronymic of Arinba, more precisely, within the surname Arydba, as the latter is confirmed as a surname in Abkhazia; The real surname of the representatives of Aslan-Zade is Khiba, which is also common in Abkhazia. Because of this we think that Aslan-Zade was one of the branches of the Khiba family.

As for the mother tongue of Abkhazians living in Ajaria, Abkhazian, it has quite troubles at the moment, because most of the Abkhazians either do not know it completely or speak it poorly. The Abkhazian language is best spoken by the elderly and middle-aged people, as well as those Abkhazia's Abkhazian women who have married Abkhazian or Georgian men living in Ajaria.

According to our respondents, their Muhajir ancestors mostly had Abkhazian and Muslim names, later those born in Ajaria were mostly given Muslim names, since the middle of the 20th century the cases of giving the names entered from Georgian and Russian became more frequent. Currently, the same names are most common among Abkhazians living in Ajaria, which are also attested among local Georgians, and Muslim or Christian names are preferred in believing families.

This group of Abkhazians had and still has to live in the environment of the Georgian literary language and its Ajarian dialect. During the Soviet period the influence of the Russian language and the decreasing influence of the Turkish language was high. It was and is still pivotal the frequency of mixed marriages and the fact that almost 70% of the small number of Abkhazians live scattered in the city of Batumi, where there was a high degree of urbanization and internationalization. All these factors left their mark on the linguistic competence of the Abkhazians of Ajaria. The following socio-linguistic strata are distinguished in this regard:

1. **Proper Abkhazian families:** The members of this group have Abkhazian parents, everyone in the family knows Abkhazian, but they are fluent in both Georgian literary language and Ajarian dialect. Many of them know Russian, few - Turkish. This is practically the stratum of **Abkhazian-Georgian bilingualism**.
2. **Abkhazian-Georgian families:** Most often, father, grandparents are Abkhazians, and mother is Georgian. Because of this, a child knows the Abkhazian language due to good knowledge of the Abkhazian language by father, grandmother and grandfather, although in Ajaria there are rare facts when a mother of another nationality knows the Abkhazian language.
3. **Georgian-Abkhazian families:** in such a family, except for Abkhazian mother, all are Georgians and mother does not teach completely or teaches in a small dose her child mother tongue. As a result, child does not know the mother tongue.
4. **Vulnerable mono-ethnic and biethnic families:** in such families neither parents nor grandparents know or have poor knowledge of the Abkhazian language and cannot communicate with a child in the Abkhazian language. Consequently, a child cannot learn this language.

There are other variations, but the main thing is that **in Ajaria very few, or half of Abkhazians know the Abkhazian language, which threatens the discourse codes disseminated here**. Abkhazians living in the **village Peria**, where about 60 Abkhazian families live compactly, know the Abkhazian language much better than in the city.

Some of the parameters of the survey results of Abkhazians from Ajaria conducted by members of one of our earlier expeditions in 2011 were thought-provoking: it turned out that **45.8% of the respondents named Russian as the language of their education** (most of them were educated during the Soviet period); **25%, or a quarter of the**

respondents considered Russian as their mother tongue; 83.3% could write well in Russian; 79.2% could speak the same language well, while only 8.3% could read and write in Abkhazian, and 33.3% could speak fluently. This was happening in the part of Georgia where the majority of the population is Georgian and their mother tongue is predominantly Georgian!

Another survey result is also noteworthy: **75% of the respondents indicated that they were required** to have a good knowledge of the Abkhazian language. This means that the **majority of Abkhazians in Ajaria consider the knowledge of the Abkhazian language to be a key factor in the survival of their ethnic identity, Apsuara.**

Naturally, a good deal was mattered when in such conditions **Abkhazian Sunday School** was founded in 2009 in the apartment of **Anzor and Svetlana Kudbas** in Batumi, where Abkhazians and Georgians of different ages studied Abkhazian under the guidance of teacher **Ada Kutelia**. Even more important is the formal introduction of the **Abkhazian language in the public schools of Batumi N14 and the village Peria**, which gave the Abkhazians of Ajaria hope that their next generation would preserve and develop the Abkhaz language.

ECOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE ABKHAZIAN LANGUAGE ACCORDING TO LINGUISTIC LEVELS

§1. Phonological composition and grammatical structure from an ecolinguistic viewpoint

The aggressive and cynical carried out by Russia in Abkhazia in 1864 had catastrophic consequences for the destruction of the ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural identity of the Abkhazians.

Ecological condition of the phonological system. The first works, in which the phonetic composition of Abkhazian, the key phonetic processes and grammatical categories were quite fully reflected, were P. Uslar's monograph "*Abkhazian Language*" published in 1862 and the alphabet book of the Abkhazian language published in 1865. The following is clear from these books:

There were 73 phonemes in the Bzipi dialect of the Abkhazian language: **six vowels and 67 consonants**. Consonants were divided into **triplets, pairs, and singles**. It was a

landmark of general and historical heritage. By that time it had already been completed the transformation of **oa** syllable into **aa** complex. There were classes of characteristic phonemes: **labialized**, **palatalized**, and **intensive sounds**. The position of the whistling-hushing consonants and pharyngeal spirants was still relatively sustainable as evidenced in both books.

If we consider the combination of the described phonological features as an initial, ecologically sustainable condition and compare it with the current situation, we can conclude that the ecological condition of the phonological system of the Abkhazian language has more or less changed in all places where this language is disseminated:

Tsarist, Soviet and Post-Soviet language policy in Abkhazia, violation of compact settlement of Abkhazians, threefold muhajiring, destroying influence of Russian, especially in the Geiman-Agafodor's school education system, pressure of the Abkhazian literary language on the Abkhazian dialects largely violated the positions of 10 consonants, namely, of whistling-hushing consonants, pharyngeal spirants, and characteristic dental spirant of Abzhwa dialect. This situation in Abkhazia should be considered an ecological catastrophe, as it is a serious trauma for the problem of the existence of 10 phonemes momentarily.

A similar fate befell the discourse micro-variant **spread in Ajaria**, but the difference here is that the Abkhazian migrants appeared in the Georgian ethnic, linguistic and cultural environment did not settle in a single and continuous continuum, their small groups underwent the strong influence of the Russian language even here. The violation of the phonological system was also greatly influenced by the frequency of mixed marriages and rapidly increasing degree of urbanization.

Similar to the situation in Abkhazia-Ajaria are the results in the Republic of Turkey: linguistic policy of turkeyzation, "island" dissemination of the Abkhazian language in the Turkish language "ocean", inability to receive education in the Abkhazian language, high prestige of the Turkish language, only Turkish-language information space, mixed marriages, high degree of urbanization are the basic reasons which endangered the disappearance process of all phonemes different from the Turkish language.

The same situation took place in **Syria** before the current war. The Arabic language was a source of influence here. The war created a new dangerous factor: a large number of descendants of Abkhazian Muhajirs became refugees and moved to other states where they were posed a threat of assimilation.

As a result of the returning to Russian script from 1954 to the present, the **orthographic norms** characteristic of the vocabulary entered from Russian were

artificially transplanted and introduced the rules according to which the phonetic adaptation of the borrowed words was prohibited according to the rules of Abkhazian phonotactics: for example, it is still prohibited to write the vowel *a* instead of the unstressed vowel *o* in the part of words entered from Russian: in Abkhazian is not written *Масква* „Moscow“, *ақтиабр* „October“, *акосмас* „cosmos“...), i.e. the norm became not Russian pronunciation, but Russian spelling...

* * *

Grammatical structure from an ecolinguistic viewpoint. If we base on P. Uslar's work and the alphabet book of Bartolomei's commission and observe the history of the language in terms of morphology and syntax ecology it is easy to notice that the situation in this area of the Abkhazian language has practically not changed: Fundamental grammatical and grammatical-semantic categories are preserved. The **only grammatical change** is related to the influence of the Russian language which resulted the **artificial emergence of the forms with the function of passive voice** at the turn of the 19-20th cc. in the Abkhazian literary language, which **did not have a grammatical category of the voice**. In particular, artificial forms of *iqaçaxojt* “is made” type were emerged. Such forms are very common in the language of mass media today.

§2. Lexical fund from an ecolinguistic viewpoint

We consider 1827 as a starting point in the vocabulary, when Vladimir Romanov compiled a Russian-Abkhazian dictionary containing 1952 words, mostly from the basic lexical fund. The dictionary reflects the situation in which the Abkhazian language existed before the implementation of the language policy of another state, in particular, of Russia. The dictionary mirrors the discourse of Sokhumi. Most of the words are Abkhazian, but there is words of other languages, as well, namely of Kartvelian, Circassian and Turkish. For example, from the words on the first 5 letters of the dictionary, 12 words are borrowed from Kartvelian or via Kartvelian, 3 words - from Circassian, 8 words - from Turkish. The fact that one Russian word is also confirmed in the dictionary attracts attention: *akash* < Rus. каша «porridge» (Romanov, 2014, p. 26). Apparently, Abkhazian informant knew this word from the Russian military serviceman.

During the 194 years since the compilation of V. Romanov’s dictionary, the **Russian language has had a catastrophic impact on the vocabulary**: hundreds of Russian and international words have entered the Abkhazian language, most of them is barbarism. These words covers all fields. The most borrowed words refer to social relations, economics, technique and technology, agricultural activities, culture. There is a high number of calqued neologisms from Russian, as well.

The traditional vocabulary characteristic of the late feudal era also changed and was replaced by Russian terminology: russianisms such as: **aimperat’or** “Emperor”, **auезд** “district”, **ap’rist’av** “police superintendent”, **ap’rik’az** “order”, **anachalnik** “senior, ruler”, **asud** “court”, **ak’at’orga // ak’art’oya** “hard labor, penal servitude”, **anadel** “measured out plot of land”, **ap’lan** “the land plot outlined in the land management plan”, **anjnyr** “engineer”, **ak’ap’it’an** “captain”, **ageneral > ainral** “general” and many others. Since 1921, much of similar vocabulary has been ousted by Soviet ideological vocabulary and calqued neologisms.

The high influence of the Russian language is also manifested in the **selection of discourse codes and instant shifting during conversation**. Often the dialogue starts with one particular type of Abkhazian language (Abzhwa, or Bzip dialect, or literary language), but one of the collocutors suddenly, inadvertently switches to Russian, which is automatically followed by the switching of the other collocutor to Russian and thus continues until the end of the dialogue. If the collocutors do not know Russian well, they still use Russian words and short phrases in the conversation from time to time.

Except for people of humanities, no one writes or reads in Abkhazian. From books, only fiction (more poetry than prose) is published in this language at the expense of the authors. The literary magazine “*Alashara*”, which was published monthly until 1993, is now published every two months due to financial problems, and only programs for children and news, as well as ethnological programs, which are rarely broadcasted, are broadcasted in Abkhazian.

Since 1993, there has been a tendency in Abkhazia to promote purism, when russianism and internationalism are replaced by Abkhazian artificial equivalents. This is undoubtedly a welcome trend, and if it is not delayed, the Abkhazian language will be more or less cleansed of very violent borrowings.

The changing of the Abkhazian language lexical fund was influenced by the translation of the Gospel and other religious literature from Russian by two Translators’ Commissions established in 1892 and 1906 at the initiative of the Bishops of Sokhumi.

During the translation, the members of the commission used Christian terms that were quite rarely preserved among the people, but to denote most of the religious concepts, they either quoted the words invariably from Russian, or they were calqued. Thus, the Abkhazian translation commissions created Christian religious terminology in the Abkhazian language and thus enriched the vocabulary of this language.

§3. Reflection of traumatic memory in Abkhazian language

In the work, we will separately discuss the issue of how the general national-scale tragedies experienced by these people during the last 200 years were mirrored in the collective memory of the Abkhazian people and in the Abkhazian language. For analysis, we selected the reflection of the **problem of muhajiring** in traumatic memory.

Much has been written about official muhajiring in **official Abkhazian historiography**. This historical fact is most academically discussed by the historian **Georgy Dzidzaria** (Dzidzaria, 1982), which cannot be said about many other Abkhazian authors who try to **rewrite real history**: They soften their criticism of the policies of the Russian Empire and embellish the cruelty of the empire. But before the “declaration of independence” of Abkhazia, they did not forget to strongly rebuke the policies of the Ottoman Empire, but now history has been rewritten and the negative role of the Ottomans in the muhajiring campaign has been less underlined - the reason is the expectation of the Turkish Republic to “recognize the independence” of Abkhazia.

In this regard, the authors of the textbooks of the history of Abkhazia for the X-XI grades, Oleg Bgazhba and Stanislav Lakoba, are noteworthy. They briefly describe muhajiring and do not criticize Russian policy. None of the 8 questions attached at the end of the relevant paragraph refer only to muhajiring (Bgazhba, Lakoba, 2006). Instead, in the next paragraph, entitled “Settlement of Other Peoples in Abkhazia”, most of the text is specially subtitled: “Jakob Gogebashvili: Views on Abkhazia” and “Mass Settlement of Georgians in Abkhazia”. This paragraph covers 3 incomplete pages of A5 format, 91 lines. The whole paragraph is devoted to the negative portrayal of Georgians, except for 7 lines. In the paragraph, via anti-Georgian verbal manipulating, easily deciphering, as if covering hate language, falsifying the facts and concealing, the authors attack the students’ subconscious, creating an image of Georgians as the constant enemy of the Abkhazian people (Bgazhba, Lakoba, 2006, pp. 260-264). The mentioned methods are

used in all other parts of the manual as well. Such a curved mirror and intensifying hatred forms a rewritten new version of traumatic memory among the students.

Let's compare this behavior of Bgazhba-Lakoba to the attitude of the nineteenth-century's Abkhazians who fought against the same muhajiring and Russian invaders reflected in Abkhazian heroic folklore and who were perceived as **national heroes** in the collective memory of the Abkhazian people. In the university textbook of Abkhazian folklore a prominent folklorist Sergey Zukhba has named those national heroes who fought relentlessly against the policy of the Russian Empire, and grateful people dedicated poems and songs to them. As for muhajiring, "Songs of Suffering" and oral narrations are mainly dedicated to it in Abkhazian folklore. S. Zukhba wrote: *"The works included in this cycle are close to the historical truth, but the heroic features are very noticeable in them. **Lyrical-epic songs with the mourning and wailing nature, as well as narrations conveying suffering have leading role. The Abkhazian people did not want to leave their paradise homeland and go somewhere, but they were deceived. They remember their homeland Abkhazia with woe, rebuke the leaders of their resettling (policy-makers of the Turkish Sultan, officials of Russian Tsarism, local feudal lords) - these are the main contents of Muhajir folklore. In these works, historical stories are specifically narrated**"* (Zukhba, 1988, pp. 399-400).

It is noteworthy that people called such songs "Songs of Suffering", the name is associated only with muhajiring, that is, in the traumatic memory of Abkhazians, suffering and woe is related to the deportation process, initiated by the Turkish and Russian authorities and local feudal lords. The songs of this group refer to the heroes who were ideal Abkhazians for people, opposed muhajiring and fought against the Russian government.

The theme of muhajiring has been reflected in Abkhazian fiction, as well. Bagrat Shynkwba's bestselling novel, *"The Last Ubykh"*, and his poem *"The Lullaby of the Muhajirs"* were written on this theme, on the basis of which an impressive song was created; Dmitry Gulia's autobiographical poem *"My Hearth"*, Samson Chanba's short story *"Song of Suffering"*, his drama *"Muhajir"* reflect the same topic ...

Muhajiring is marked as the **greatest calamity** in the traumatic memory of the descendants of Abkhazian Muhajirs living in Ajaria, but they do not attribute this calamity to the Georgian people and know that the Russian Empire had **planned and carried out** the expulsion of their ancestors from Abkhazia. Abkhazians of Ajaria do not like to talk about muhajiring. They also have some fears about this topic. One of our respondents, **Alexandre Atsanba**, honestly stated in 2011: *"We are not talking about that. Our people*

[previous generations] *did not speak about it at all and we didn't ask either. They were very depressed. I asked once and they answered that they, the older generation, did not ask either, it was a very painful topic for them*". We assume that the **taboo passed down from generation to generation among the Abkhazians of Ajaria is an expression of the instinct to protect themselves, their children and grandchildren from negative emotions.** In addition, the **Abkhazians of Abkhazia, especially the intelligentsia, did not forget the bitterness of muhajiring, but they preferred to blame the Georgians for the tragedy of muhajiring as the basis of traumatic memory,** apparently because they do not care about the real history of Abkhazia, it is also dangerous to anger Russia and thus the Georgians were turned into scapegoat.

The **anti-Georgian element of traumatic memory was further deepened in the 1992-1993 war,** which brought great casualties and many tragedies to both Abkhazians and Georgians, most of Abkhazia's Georgians turned into refugees. Naturally, during the war, any person living in a war zone finds it difficult to maintain objectivity and considers own people to be righteous and heroes, while those on the other side are bloodthirsty enemies. It was the same in Abkhazia in 1992-1993.

The traditional normal attitude towards Georgians was seriously changed for the first time during the revolution of 1905-1907, which is confirmed by many documents. In our opinion, the **formal abolition of the status of "guilty people" for the Abkhazian people** on the basis of the decree of the Russian Emperor of April 27, 1907 and the **false "assertion" implanted by empire's ideologues in Abkhazian** - as if the active participation of Abkhazia's Georgians in the revolution was aimed not at eradicating social injustice and liberating from national oppression, but at "massacring of Abkhazians and expropriating their land". It seems that this helped to redirect the traumatic memory of Abkhazians due to the escalating distrust towards Georgians. In this regard it was also important the incitement policy implemented by the communists since 1921 and the school that for 70 years instilled in the Abkhazian generations the idea that Abkhazia had always been the homeland of Abkhazians and Georgians had not lived there, according to one version, until the late Middle Ages, and according to another one, until 1867, which does not fully correspond to reality.

The traumatic memory completely transformed into anti-Georgian during the 1992-1993 war is also reflected in the **Abkhazian discourse practice: in the media, in fiction and scientific literature, in school and university textbooks, on social networks, etc.**

In this regard, remarkable linguistic facts are reflected in the book, the purpose of which was not to express any position on Abkhazian-Georgian relations at all.

This refers to the two-volume Abkhazian-Russian dictionary published in Sokhumi in 2005, compiled by the excellent Abkhazian lexicologist and lexicographer, Doctor in Philology, Professor Vladimir Kaslandzia (1938-2017). He had a good attitude towards the Georgian people and Georgian culture, he knew the Georgian language well, but the war of 1992-1993 destroyed everything, including his polar attitude changing towards the Georgian people: his son was killed in the war, he himself fought with weapons. The scientist's wife succumbed to grief of the son's death. The tragedy caused by the war radically changed V. Kaslandzia, which is clearly seen in his dictionary. In particular, in this work a reader notices a great abundance of illustrative phrases related to war and aggression (the total volume of examples is 12 pages of A4 format), subtextual hinting to Georgian aggression, that the war was started by Georgians and treated Abkhazians badly. We present typical examples only from the first volume of the dictionary. The material is conditionally divided into the following groups:

1. Those words semantics of which is related only to war and aggression. The illustrations are related just to the context of war and aggression, which is completely natural and logical. This vocabulary refers to concepts such as: war, battle, shooting, attack, defense, targeting, killing, wound, explosion, bullet, weapon, rifle, tank, and many others. Consequently, when words denoting such concepts in both languages, Abkhazian and Russian, are accompanied by typical illustrative phrases, this is a mandatory behavior of the lexicographer and is in line with the academism. For this reason we will not name relevant examples here.
2. There are separately Abkhazian **polysemic** words, **one of the meanings of which refers to war and aggression**, but the latter semantics is not basic. In the dictionary, this meaning is given after the **basic meanings** and is illustrated in full compliance with lexicographical rules, which is **natural**. Because of the abundance and ordinary nature, we will not bring the examples of this group either.
3. There are not many cases that aren't in compliance with academism: a. A word is **monosemantic** and relates to peaceful situations as well as war and aggression, but only phrases depicting war, or aggression, are selected as illustrations; b. Out of more than one meaning of the word, **only one non-basic meaning refers to war and aggression, but in the dictionary this meaning is given before the basic one**. This means that the author prefers the semantics of war and aggression. Here are some typical examples:

The word **Авиация** “aviation” is accompanied by the only illustration in the dictionary: **арратэ авиация** “military aviation” (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 53), and aviation can be of passenger, medical, fire, etc.

The word **Абьырак** “slightly more, most” is illustrated by a single sentence: **аиҭахысраан аҭа ируаа раҭьырак тахит** “Most of the enemy soldiers were killed during the shooting” (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 62). It would be better to bring a peaceful typical example, such as: *Most of the students attended the lesson.*

Аилкаанца “essay” The first of two typical examples of the use of the word is **арратэ аилкаанца** “military essay, essay on military matters” (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 83).

The initial semantics of **Аицацара I** is “**pickling (vegetables)**”, and now it is used secondarily **to denote to load a gun, to charge up accumulator, camera, mobile phone,** and others. The dictionary first gives the secondary meanings and their illustrations, then the original semantics: 1. **ашэакь аицацара** – loading a gun; 2. **аккумулятор аицацара** “accumulator charging”. 3. **анаша аицацара** “cucumber pickling “. The explanation should have started with the 3rd meaning, because this is the initial semantics (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 173).

Semantics of **А-вкьара** is “flying by sb/sth”. This single meaning is represented by such a sequence of illustrations: **ахы сывкьейт** “Bullet flew by me”; **машынала дхавкьейт** “Sb’s car flew by us” (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 264).

The word **А-кэблаара** “burn down, turn to ashes” is illustrated in the following order: **аҭа хқытакэи, хакалакькэи ыкэиблаит** “The enemy burned down **our** villages and cities, turned them to ashes”; **абна ыкэрыблаит** “The forest was burned down”. It is true that in the first illustration the author does not name the enemy, but emphasizes that “our (villages) were burned down”. Obviously, Georgians are meant as enemies here (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 548) ...

4. This group includes the words the vast majority of typical realizations of which **do not have the semantics of war and aggression, but are explicitly given in the context of war and aggression**, namely, the subjects of the phrases are soldiers and enemies, chronotope (place and time) is related to war, the tools of action are weapons and equipment, etc.

The word **Аакынџаара** means “to remove down sth quickly”. In the dictionary it is accompanied by the only illustration related to a gun: **ишэакь аакынџааны, адэахы дындэылкьейт** “Sb quickly removed the rifle down [from the wall] and

rushed out” (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 29). The whole context of the phrase clearly indicates an alarming situation.

The only illustration of the word **Ааонаххра** has exactly the same subtext: **аоны дааонаххын, ишэакь аакейџаан, адэахы дындылкъейт** “Sb rushed into the house, grabbed a gun and rushed out” (Kaslandzia, 29, 2005).

Ааонеибахэара “quick bursting/rushing of many people in the building” is also illustrated by a phrase referring to the military theme: **аруаа иреџуаз џоуку еикэных аоны иааонеибахэейт** “Some armed soldiers burst in the house” (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, pp. 49-50). *For illustration, bursting of the children in the house* could be brought.

The subjects of the illustrative phrase of the first meaning of the verb **Аибаргылара** are wounded people: **ахэца еибаргылейт** “The wounded people put each other on the foot” (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 71). More acceptable would be if the subjects were children, sportsmen, the elderly, or invalids.

The word **Ганрацэала** “multifaceted/versatile” does not fully require its use in the war context, but the dictionary states: **ашэкэџоџы аибашьра ахтыскэа ганрацэала ихартэааны иааирџшит** “The writer presented the story of the war versatile and fully” (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 71).

The interjection **Иахауей**, which denotes dream, desire is accompanied by the only illustration of such a type: **иахауей, абас шэакьк сыманда!** “If only I would have such a gun!”

5. Many illustrations of word are actually slogans characteristic of military and political propaganda; for example:

Азэызацэык «the only one» is illustrated as follows: **азэызацэык дызмазгы Аџсадгьыл ахьчара ирышьтит** «Even those who had the only [son] were sent them [sons] to defend the homeland» (Kaslandzia, 46, 1, 2005).

Анаџалбейт „Oh dear!; this damned; surely, possibly” **анаџалбейт, иахэызрыма хаџсадгьыл!** “Don’t lose our country!” **анаџалбейт, ара узлатэоузеи, Аџсадгьыл ашэартара иштагылоу умбазои?** “This damned! What are you doing here?! Do you not see that the homeland is in danger?” (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 192).

[А-зейџшзаара] “commonality of something”: **ари адгьыл зегы иахзейџшуп,** **уи ахьчарагы зегы иахуалџшьоуп** “This land belongs to all of us, and its protection is the sacred duty of all of us!” (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 415).

А-зейкэырхара «saving something for someone else»: **хара хэар хаџсадгьыл**

хзейкэдырхейт «Our young people saved our homeland» (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 414).

[А-зхиазаара] “readiness”: айбашьра хтахым, аха айбашьра хэхиоуп! “We do not want a war, but we are ready for war!” (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 424) ...

6. It is quite common in the dictionary that to emphasize and reinforce the tragedy, the illustrative phrase of neutral connotation includes words with aggressive connotations, or war-related ones, which were not necessary, at all. Rough situations are often described in examples of such artificial hyperbolization:

Аицэара «cutting in two, cutting in half»: маанала деиоитэейт «He cut the man in two with a dagger, cut in half» (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 182).

А-зынхара «choosing something for someone»: ичкэынцэа азэ иоуп изынха, егырт айбашьрафы итахейт «The only son is left to sb, the rest died in the war» (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 433).

А-лажьра «throwing something in something»: ажэлар абомбақэа рыларыжьбит «People were thrown down bombs» (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 610).

А-лапжьэра I «blasting inside»: ажэлар алафэым рылапжьижэейт «He blasted up a grenade among the people» (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 618).

А-мпыцасра «dying in somebody’s arms, dying in one’s arms»: аруабы иыза дшикыз димпыццэсит «A friend died in soldier’s arms» (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 687) ...

7. The author of the dictionary often refers to himself or his family as a victim of war:

Айбабара «seeing each other»: сцэи сарей афронт ағы хайбабейт «My son and I saw each other at the front» (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, pp. 68-69).

Аицтахара «dying together»: хачкэынцэа айбашьрафы еицтахейт «Our sons died together in the war» (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 164).

Анацалбейт «Oh, If only... would that»: анацалбейт, сычкэын снайфэапцшында! «If only I would see my son’s face!»

А-bomb “bomb”: айбашьраан хэсны абомба ақэхайт “A bomb fell on our house during the war”; **хақалақь абомбақэа аларыжьбит** “Our city was bombed” (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 252).

А-зейкэырхара «saving something for someone else»: айбашьраан сгэыла снапшырақэа зегы сэейкэлырхейт “During the war, a neighbor woman saved all my manuscripts” (Kaslandzia, 1, 2005, p. 414) and others.

If we observe the examples above, we will clearly see what terrible tragedy the ideological apparatus of the Russian Empire and Soviet Union befell the Abkhazian

people: on the basis of theory “Divide and Rule” the historically ungrounded belief about the autochthony of Abkhazians on the territory of Abkhazia instilled in the collective memory of the Abkhazian people, false mythologemes of the attempts of Georgians to georgianize Abkhazians, to persecute the Abkhazian language and culture, concealing the face of a real enemy and making Georgians as the only enemy reached a catastrophic scale among Abkhazians. Vladimir Kaslandzia’s precedent is **sad, very thought-provoking, painful and alarming one.**

We’d like to draw a reader’s attention to one issue as well: in general, along with pure **pragmatic function**, a bilingual dictionary has a **teaching one**: it should be used not only by adult readers, but also by pupils and students to have better knowledge of one of the two languages. When young Abkhazian reader, who may not have been born during the 1992-1993 war, is taught the history of Abkhazia at school with official anti-Georgian and biased textbook written in hatred language of O. Bgzhba and S. Lakoba, elderly parents and acquaintances also tell exaggerated stories about the “violence of the invading Georgians” and the dictionary compiled to teach the Russian language presents Georgians as enemies it will be strongly engraved in the labile mind of a young reader as a firm postulate that Abkhazia really belonged only to Abkhazians and Georgians are sadists, abusers and appropriators of other people’s land. Abkhazian youth grown up in this way will discover it difficult to find common language with Georgian coeval, and thus, the hostility will deepen.

PART II.¹⁰⁶

**THE STATE OF THE ABKHAZIAN LANGUAGE THROUGH THE EYES
OF ABKHAZIANS AND GEORGIANS**

(field material analysis)

§1. Language histories of Abkhazians living in Tbilisi

One of the goals of our project (OTG-I-19-1128) was to interview the views of representatives of Abkhazians and Georgian-Abkhazian families living in Tbilisi and Acharia on the functioning and ecological status of the Abkhazian language. In this section, we will analyze the interviews recorded via direct questions, which reflect the linguistic stories of Abkhazian women living in Tbilisi. Some of the respondents are IDPs, and some of them raised Georgian-Abkhazian families here long before the war.

Both mother and father of respondent I.O. are Abkhazians and spoke Georgian during the the interview; Sh.P. – Georgian from mother’s side spoke in Russian; L.A. - Georgian from mother’s side, spoke in Georgian; I.K. - Georgian from mother’s side spoke Georgian and Russian. All four are married to Georgians.

The study material is divided into the following issues:

1. Language environment of ancestors and family:

Respondents emphasize that their ancestors were monolingual Abkhazians who did not know any other language except Abkhazian one. Later in school, or because of the need for job, they mostly mastered Russian as a second language, rarely Turkish. They also studied Georgian and Megrelian in different environments. As it can be seen from the interviews, in the first half of the 20th century, Abkhazian and Georgian languages served as family ones for Abkhazians, but Russian, which was the language of education, gradually rushed in the family space. For example, the family spoke only Abkhazian when a wife was Abkhazian. Our material shows that Abkhazian men spoke Georgian or Russian spouses in Russian. One of them spoke Russian to his Georgian wife, even though he knew both Georgian and Megrelian. Therefore, the widespread use of Russian in Abkhazia at that time also affected the language environment of the family and the communication language with the children was partly Russian.

106. The author of second part of the work is S. Chaava.

The fact narrated by the third respondent is noteworthy: older family members used Turkish as a secret language in order to prevent Abkhazian-speaking little ones from understanding what was said in Abkhazian. In contrast, these and other interviewers repeatedly point out that today the older generation in the family uses Abkhazian as a secret language - what is said cannot be understood by children.

The history of the fourth respondent, of Georgian origin, is different, in particular, the years-old relations with Abkhazians, the complete assimilation of the features characteristic of their life and the turning of the Abkhazian language into a native language led to a change of ethnic identity – Georgian adopted Abkhazian identity.

2. Mother tongue, language of instruction and language competence:

All four women studied in Abkhazian schools until the 5th grade, and then continued the education in Russian. Respondents note that Georgian was not taught as a subject in Abkhazian schools at all. At the Tbilisi Theater Institute, as well as in the Abkhazian sector of the Sokhumi Pedagogical Institute, better to say in Abkhazian-speaking group, classes were conducted in Russian, although Abkhazian lecture delivered lectures in stage speech for Abkhazian student. Therefore, the Abkhazian school and Abkhazian sector of the higher education institution actually meant teaching in Russian using Abkhazian elements. According to the respondents, in addition to the fact that Russian was the language of education for them, Russian also played the role of a communication language between Abkhazian pupils and students in schools and institutes. For example, in the villages of Abkhazia, Abkhazians were mostly spoken, but in the cities, even in the Abkhazian school, Russian was spoken more often.

Thus, the use of the Abkhazian language as a family language and in a small dose in schools was not enough to study this language thoroughly, to disseminate it more widely, as in Abkhazia Russian was the basic communication language, was spoken in educational or public institutions.

The first three Abkhazian women graduated from institutes in Tbilisi and the fourth - in Sokhumi. They learned at Georgian, Russian and Abkhazian sectors. Abkhazian is the native language for all four. Along with Abkhazian, Georgian is also a native language for **L.A.** All respondents consider Abkhazian as their mother tongue because it is the language of their nationality, but **I.O.**, **Sh.P.** and **I.K.** find comfort in speaking Russian. The feeling of comfort is due to the fact that they were educated mostly in

Russian and additionally the Soviet language policy, according to which Russian was a prestigious and the communication language between peoples of different nationalities. According to the respondents, such a language policy covered not only Abkhazia, but whole Georgia. They, especially **I.K.**, try to support this view with examples (sometimes with false ones) and thus to justify their excessive use of the Russian language. This is kind of self-justifying because it is easier for them to speak Russian.

As can be seen from the interviews, the influence of the Russian language was very strong in Abkhazia. This is confirmed by the fact that even **after 27 years of exile, not infrequently, Abkhazia's Georgians and Abkhazians still communicate with people of their own nationality in Russian.** Speaking this language seems nostalgic for them, it is associated with a happy period, youth in Abkhazia. The strong influence of the Russian language is also reflected in their linguistic behavior.

Thus, the respondents' narrative confirms once again the fact that the use of Russian as the language of education and lingua franca has greatly weakened the functioning sphere of the Abkhazian language. Moreover, over the times, the Russian language moved from the outdoor to the family space, and restricted the Abkhazian language there as well.

1. Language situation in Abkhazia before 1992:

All four respondents recall the introduction of Georgian as the language of education in the upper grades of so-called Abkhazian schools. They talk about a few issues related to this fact:

1. High school students found it difficult to master a Georgian language unknown to them and thus some had to leave the school;
2. Abkhazian students found it difficult to get used to the abolition of teaching in Russian language, as this language had already become the main, prestigious and interethnic language for them;
3. Abkhazian children were often taught Georgian by unqualified teachers.

It is obvious that the sudden changing of the language of education in schools has caused great dissatisfaction among Abkhazians, and this attitude remains unchanged to this day, as the people of different generations inevitably mention this fact in a reproachful tone and consider it a restriction of ethnic and linguistic rights of Abkhazians. Of course,

it is completely unknown to them that this action was planned neither in Tbilisi nor in Sokhumi but it was a provocative part of the overall Soviet policy.

This action became the most painful fact for the Abkhazians due to the Soviet ideological manipulations and overshadowed the painful actions of sudden changing of scripts in 1926, 1928 and 1954. This made the generations of Abkhazians forget even deeper and worse fact: their mother tongue was limitedly taught from the 5th grade until the introduction of Georgian as a language of instruction, and even after the introduction of Russian instead of this language and it continues to this day when in the supposedly independent Abkhazia only Abkhazian language and Abkhazian literature are again taught in Abkhazian schools, while all other disciplines are again taught in Russian which destroys the linguistic self-consciousness of Abkhazians and, consequently, seriously damages the ethnic identity. The above means that the wrong attitude towards reality has become a stencil in the Abkhazian society and the orientations are mixed.

During the interviewing, Abkhazian women discuss three features of the situation of the Abkhazian language in Abkhazia before their deportation. In particular, in their opinion:

1. Abkhazians from Gudauta mostly spoke only Abkhazian, they studied Russian at school, and rarely knew Georgian or Megrelian.
2. Abkhazians from Ochamchire knew Russian and Megrelian on an almost equal level with Abkhazians, in some cases - Georgian.
3. Abkhazians from Sokhumi knew Abkhazian less and spoke in their mother tongue less, their main language was Russian.

None of the women mentioned that Georgians and Abkhazians had problems in their relations due to the language barrier. In some cases, Georgian members of the mixed family knew the Abkhazian language, as well. According to the respondents, it was desirable for Abkhazian students to learn Georgian as one of the subjects in Abkhazian schools, and for Georgian students to learn Abkhazian. They emphasize that at that time there were friendly, kinship and good neighborly relations between Georgians and Abkhazians, as well as representatives of other ethnic groups living in Abkhazia. Here, too, the tendency to idealize the past is evident, as respondents prefer to recall good moments from the past.

According to the respondents, the widespread use of the Russian language began in the 60s and 70s, which is partly true. In fact, the positions of the Russian language among

Abkhazians have been strengthening since the second half of the 1950s, and in the 1960s and 1980s this process had already reached its peak. Since the 1960s the use of Russian as the language of proceedings, official meetings and speeches of politicians has further strengthened the positions of the Russian language and possibilities of its wider use.

2. On the modern Abkhazian language:

Respondents assess the situation of the Abkhazian language in Abkhazia differently. The first respondent believes that the Abkhazian language is in a deplorable state and that Abkhazians themselves should take care of it from their families, parents should teach Abkhazian to their children from an early age. It should be noted that this respondent often visits Abkhazia and knows the situation there better. In addition, **I.O.** emphasizes the need for the involvement of the Georgian state in the saving process of the Abkhazian language. According to this respondent in Abkhazia, schools and kindergartens use the educational resources created by Georgian and Abkhazian teachers and scientists of this side of Enguri river and they ask for more help towards this direction. The respondent could not say exactly how the Georgian state should be involved in the ongoing processes in occupied Abkhazia.

According to other respondents, Abkhazian is now more widely spoken in Abkhazian towns, as Abkhazians who moved from rural areas to urban ones speak their own language after the 1992-1993 war. Parents are also trying to teach their children Abkhazian, they are more eager to teach Abkhazian better in schools and kindergartens. It should be noted that, although Abkhazians who fled to the city en masse after the war speak predominantly Abkhazian only in the family, but since the majority of the population in the towns use Russian outside the family and the school is a russifying tool, it is expected that the children of former villagers will soon move to Russian.

The respondents mention that the Russian language used to hinder the development of the Abkhazian language. Now, it is true that Abkhazians want to learn Abkhazian more, but they still mostly use Russian. According to them, Abkhazian is strongly taught in schools and high institutions, but they still study in Russian, speak Abkhazian, but write in Russian. These views do not reflect the harsh reality in Abkhazia, about which Abkhazian scholars often write.

Unfortunately, our respondents also do not see the fact that as Prof. T. Gvantseladze often repeats, neither textbook nor teaching resource can save the Abkhazian language unless enhanced teaching of this language becomes universal and compulsory for Abkhazian kindergartens, all grades of schools and all branches of universities.

3. Own children's language:

Due to various objective and subjective reasons, the Georgian children and grandchildren of the respondents do not know the Abkhazian language. They grow up in a Georgian environment, so mothers could not teach them better their mother tongue, although it would have been possible to achieve better results if they had worked with children from an early age.

Thus, the linguistic stories of Abkhazian women living in Tbilisi as part of our project are more or less similar. They know their mother tongue at different levels, but all four still consider Abkhazian as their mother tongue. Unfortunately, our respondents could not pass the Abkhazian language knowledge to their children and grandchildren.

Abkhazian women try their best to make a positive impact on Georgian-Abkhazian relations, actively support important issues for the relations between Abkhazians and Georgians. For example, I.O. and L.A. together with their Abkhazian and Georgian colleagues take care of the development of the Abkhazian language and culture: translate books from Abkhazian into Georgian and vice versa, teach Abkhazian to interested people, inform them the linguistic, ethnographic and cultural characteristics of Abkhazia and Abkhazians, broadcast TV and radio programs in Abkhazian language, create printed and electronic versions of the resources needed for teaching Abkhazian language. The listed activities are a good examples of how Abkhazians living in Tbilisi care about preserving and developing their mother tongue.

Analysis of the recorded materials demonstrate that:

1. Before the Abkhazian war, the geography of the use of the Abkhazian language was divided as follows: Abkhazian language was mostly well spoken in the villages of Gudauta and Ochamchire districts, and to a lesser extent - by Abkhazians living in Sokhumi;
2. Most Abkhazians recognize Abkhazian as their mother tongue, and in most cases by this they underline their ethnicity more than their language knowledge;

3. Of other languages Abkhazians knew Russian, Turkish, Georgian (mostly Megrelian). They studied Russian and Turkish because of their education and job. The inhabitants of Gudauta knew Russian better than Abkhazian, while Abkhazians living in Ochamchire besides Abkhazian knew Megrelian well (in some cases, literary Georgian, or rarely Svan). It can be said that most of the Abkhazians were bilingual, trilingual and less quart-lingual;
4. Sometimes Abkhazian man started speaking in Abkhazian, but continued in Russian or Megrelian. The switching of language codes depended on place, person, and nature of the topic. Respondents often mention that when speaking about family and household issues, they communicate in Abkhazian, and when on global, political, or business topics - they preferred Russian;
5. From the 20-30s of the 20th century, in Abkhazia there functioned so-called Abkhazian school, which meant that teaching was conducted in Abkhazian language up to the fourth grade, and in the following grades - in Russian. Students were not taught Georgian, and Abkhazian was not taught in Georgian schools. Respondents also note and we agree that knowledge of each other's languages would have a positive impact on Georgian-Abkhazian relations;
6. Most of the disciplines in the Abkhazian sector of Abkhazian higher education are taught only in Russian. The reason was named the lack of Abkhazian-language textbooks and of qualified staff, although this was exactly the similar case in all Soviet autonomies and was part of the communist language policy;
7. Excessive use of Russian language in the field of school and higher education has greatly weakened the Abkhazian language functioning, as the Russian language has penetrated into the family environment and gained the status of a family language along with Abkhazian, and today is trying to be dominant in the family;
8. The sudden transfer of teaching from Russian to Georgian in the upper grades of so-called Abkhazian schools since 1945 has become a **psychological stress** for students and their families and has caused great dissatisfaction among Abkhazians. The ignorance of real initiator of this act and general tendencies in the Soviet Union in the relevant period turned **Georgians** into trauma – making aggressors **among Abkhazians and a false stereotypical myth that this act had been planned in Tbilisi was disseminated**. It turned out that even in that short period, Abkhazians managed to learn Georgian at a certain level, which made their relations with Georgians easier;

9. During the Soviet period in Abkhazia as well as throughout Soviet Union, the main communication language was Russian. In addition to educational space, Russian has become a universal language of proceedings, culture, science and interethnic relations in Abkhazia;
10. The prestige nature of the Russian language and the transformation of Russian into the main language of education for Abkhazians have affected the linguistic competence of Abkhazians. In particular, the number of knowledgeable Abkhazians has decreased over time, although official statistics indicate almost 100% knowledge of the mother tongue. Abkhazians made a pragmatic choice in favor of the Russian language, thus reducing the Abkhazian language knowledge quality and the number of scholars. It was not enough to enroll children in Abkhazian schools, as the mostly Russian-speaking environment hindered the full functioning of the Abkhazian language;
11. Increased use of Russian also affected the ecology of the Abkhazian language, as some lexical entries entered from Russian had correspondences in the Abkhazian language;
12. Migration of Abkhazians from village to the city is not enough to increase the functioning sphere of the Abkhazian language and develop the language, as the recognition of Russian as the official language in Abkhazia together with Abkhazian and the language policy planned by Russia greatly harms and hinders the use of Abkhazian. The process of weakening the positions of the Abkhazian language in Abkhazia since the Soviet period remains unchanged;
13. Abkhazians actively use the Russian language in communication with each other, in the education system, culture, art, science, digital world... When communicating on social networks, they mostly write in Russian. Russian still remains a “comfortable” language for Abkhazians;
14. The high influence of the Russian language is reflected in the lexical stock of the Abkhazian language, chaotically entered foreign terms denoting modern technical innovations are systematically established, which poses a threat to the ecological sustainability of the language;
15. Knowledge of the modern Abkhazian language among people of different generations is as follows: Abkhazian is mostly well or average spoken by people over 50, Abkhazians under 30-40 age know the average Abkhazian, often understand but cannot speak, and younger generation has little or no knowledge;

16. Due to the Soviet period and the current language situation, the older generation is unable to pass knowledge of the mother tongue to children. Due to this, the positions of the Abkhazian language are intensively weakened;
17. The analyzed material confirms that the Abkhazian language is indeed an endangered language that needs to be promoted, cared for and saved. As Abkhazians living in Tbilisi point out, Abkhazians need help from the Georgian state, constitutional duty of which is to take care of the Abkhazian language as one of the state languages along with the Georgian one.

§2. Language biographies of teachers of Abkhazian language in public schools of Abkhazia AR

The present section presents the interviews of Abkhazian and Georgian teachers of Abkhazian language of IDP public schools under the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, which depict their language biographies and issues related to the teaching of the Abkhazian language.

From 2015-2016, the Abkhazian language is taught in 5 public schools of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Abkhazia AR - in Tbilisi (2 schools), Zugdidi (2 schools) and Senaki (1 school), as well as in 2 public schools of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports of Ajaria AR (1 in Batumi, 1 in the village of Peria).

Our respondents were:

1. A.K. - teacher of N2 public school of Abkhazia in Tbilisi, Abkhazian, from Ochamchire district;
2. A.G. – teacher of N7 public school of Abkhazia in Senaki, Abkhazian, from Ochamchire district;
3. D.T. - teacher of N3 public school of Abkhazia in Tbilisi, Georgian, from Sokhumi;
4. Kh.Z. - teacher of N11 public school of Abkhazia in Senaki, Georgian, from Gali district.

The first Abkhazian respondent, **A.K.** was born in 1964 in Ochamchire district. According to the respondent, **A.K.**'s Abkhazian grandfather did not know Georgian, but he had a Megrelian wife with whom he spoke in Megrelian. The situation was similar

in the **A.K.**'s family: the father knew Abkhazian well, but the family did not speak Abkhazian because of his Georgian wife. **A.K.** started learning Abkhazian language in the Abkhazian school from the first grade. She also married Georgian and taught her husband the Abkhazian language. Therefore, three generations of Georgian-Abkhazian family members spoke Georgian, Megrelian, and Abkhazian. It is true that because of the Georgian spouses, the children could not learn the Abkhazian language in the family, but they learnt the mother tongue in the Abkhazian school - this result was due to the fact that the family residential village was Abkhazian. The respondent graduated from the Faculty of Philology at the Sokhumi Pedagogical Institute, specializing in **Abkhazian language and literature**, and by this choice she somehow expressed her attitude towards the mother tongue. **A.K.** speaks almost equally and fluently in Abkhazian and Russian languages, writes and reads in Georgian at average level. Since the respondent has not learned Georgian state language at any level of education, she knows this language less than Russian and Abkhazian.

An Abkhazian teacher living in Tbilisi uses the Abkhazian language in family, with relatives, during lessons and when communicating on social networks. The respondent actively uses the Abkhazian alphabet recorded on the phone, listens to Abkhazian-language news channels and Abkhazian songs. In addition to Abkhazian, the respondent uses Georgian, Megrelian and Russian in communication. Unfortunately, the respondent could not pass knowledge of the Abkhazian language to the next generation – the respondent's own children only understand Abkhazian but cannot speak it.

The second Abkhazian respondent, **A.G.** was born in 1966 in Ochamchire district. As he mentions, his surname is originated from Senaki district, but his ancestors became Abkhazians after moving to Abkhazia. He considers Abkhazian as his mother tongue, he also knows Russian and Georgian languages. He studied in Abkhazian school, received higher education in Russian at the Sokhumi Pedagogical Institute. He learnt Abkhazian language from parents and at school. Currently they live in Senaki district and most of the family speaks Georgian and Russian, sometimes Abkhazian. His own children also know Abkhazian. He: thinks in Russian, Abkhazian and Georgian, has dreams in Russian and Abkhazian, communicates with his neighbors, co-fellows and relatives in Georgian and Russian, watches Georgian and Russian TV channels and radios, reads books in Russian, Georgian and Abkhazian, has Abkhazian books and recently read poetry by Gunda Sakania. He does not use Abkhazian language in social network. He considers Georgian and Abkhazian to be kindred languages and says that the Abkhazian language is developing at a slow pace. The respondent mentions that Russian language

is predominant in Abkhazia and is a priority for Abkhazians. **A.G.** wants to learn the Abkhazian language at a higher level and his family members to know this language very well. According to **A.G.** in Abkhazia, the older family members spoke Abkhazian and Russian to the children, and the traditional Abkhazian rituals were performed in Abkhazian.

As it obvious, Abkhazian teachers of Abkhazian language **A.K.** and **A.G.** mostly use Russian and Georgian languages, rarely, but still, they speak Abkhazian in the family, with relatives and at school. They live in a Georgian environment in Tbilisi and Senaki and still communicate with family members in Russian. It can be said that acquiring large part of education in Russian left a deep trace on the language priorities of the respondents. Even after almost three decades, despite the fact that Russian is no longer a prestigious language on this side of Enguri river and there is no need to use it, Russian still remains the most “comfortable language” for Abkhazian respondents in communication with family and relatives.

The third teacher of Abkhazian language **D.T.** is Georgian. During the interviewing, she spoke Georgian with a Russian accent, periodically using Russian words, rarely Megrelian. **D.T.**’s grandfather Qaraman moved from Guria to Abkhazia a long time ago. He married the wealthy Abkhazian Qaimatkhan Adzinba’s daughter and settled there. Qaraman learned the Abkhazian language. Although he and his descendants did not change their ethnicity, they absorbed the Abkhazian traditions and language.

D.T. was born in 1954 in the village of Beslakhwba, Ochamchire district. His parents were Georgians. They met each other at work, at Beslakhwba school and got married. She told us: *“Georgians lived less in Beslakhuba at that time, but later Abashian Megrelians settled there. On one side of the village, towards Tqvarcheli, Abashian Megrelians lived, and on the other side, towards Akwaskya - Abkhazians. Abkhazians mostly married Megrelian women, so thus basically Georgian-Abkhazian families were formed. In Beslakhwba our neighbors were Abkhazians: Kvekveskiris, Agrbas, Zukhbas, Tarbas, Adzynbas. Mostly the people with Megrelian surnames lived in Beslakhwba: Ruruas, Chkaduas, Zakaraias, Minjias, Kenjias, Paghavas, Taqashvilis, Chitanavas ... Georgians and Abkhazians had excellent relations. Abkhazian married Georgian women and Georgian – Abkhazian ones. Georgian, Abkhazian, Russian and Megrelian were spoken at the wedding - who’d like to. Russian was spoken a bit more in the cities, Russian was used in the villages as well, but everything was in Georgian in a Georgian family. There were families who were interested in learning Georgian, such people had a Georgian mother”.*

According to the respondent, there were almost equal number of Georgians and Abkhazians in Beslakhwa, which naturally created a Georgian-Abkhazian linguistic environment. In particular, Georgian children learned Abkhazian from their Abkhazian neighbors and, vice versa, Abkhazians learned Megrelian from their Georgian friends. They mainly studied Georgian and Russian at school. Finally, Georgians and Abkhazians living in Beslakhwa were more or less fluent in Georgian, Megrelian, Abkhazian and Russian. This example demonstrates that the language situation of this or that village depended on the fact whether which nationalities were in the majority.

D.T.'s Georgian parents enrolled their 5 children an Abkhazian school not to learn the Abkhazian language, but to learn Russian well after the fourth grade. According to the respondent, Georgian language was not taught in Abkhazian schools and Abkhazian was not taught in Georgian sector either. According to D.T., this was due to the decision of the Georgian side, which is not true, since the Ministry of Education in Soviet Georgia was not an independent institution, it was subject to the education system of the Soviet Union. Therefore, the Georgian functionaries of that time could not solve such important issues for the country as language of instruction, teaching these languages in different types of schools. The higher education of the respondent was planned under the same principle of pragmatism, in particular, he graduated from the Pedagogical Institute in Sokhumi, specializing in Russian and Abkhazian languages. He did not study his native Georgian language in any of the schools, and that is why he and his siblings did not know Georgian well. In the artificially created Russian-speaking environment, people had the impression that the well-being of their lives depended on the knowledge of this language, so they diligently studied it. In their view, the Russian language was a guarantee of a happy and secure future.

It is obvious that during the Soviet period, pragmatically minded Georgians and Abkhazians had the same language choice in favor of the Russian language and to the detriment of the Georgian and Abkhazian languages. The example of D.T. was not a separate case, it was the Soviet general linguistic tendency of the time, which eventually formulated Georgians and Abkhazians living on the polyethnic side as Russian-speaking people.

According to D.T., Georgian, Abkhazian and Russian languages were used in various fields of culture in Abkhazia. The respondent tries to show that the Abkhazian language has no borrowings, that Abkhazians speak mainly Abkhazian in Abkhazia. Clearly, this is his subjective, embellished opinion and is not true.

Like other Abkhazian language teachers, **D.T.** believes that teaching of Abkhazian

in Georgian schools should start at the elementary level, as it is more easier for children in junior class to learn the complex Abkhazian language than for the older school pupils. However, it should be noted that the primary school student must first master the mother tongue at a high level and then learn any other language.

The fourth respondent **Kh.Z.** spoke Russian, Georgian and Megrelian. After the 1992-1993 war, her family moved to Russia for a few years and attended a school there, while from the 5th grade she continued education at the Gali Russian-language school. The respondent spent her childhood and adolescence in post-war Abkhazia.

As **Kh.Z.** notes, she did not learn Georgian anywhere at school, she learned this language from the neighbor's children, who went to school on this side of Enguri river. **Kh.Z.**'s mother asked her to learn Georgian, but due to financial lack she could not go to a private teacher and managed to learn only Georgian letters.

According to the romanticized statement of the respondent, Georgian students were taught the intensified Abkhazian language in a Russian school, which she evaluates positively, but in reality it is **formality in the conditions when the teaching of this language even in so-called Abkhazian schools, practically contributes to the russifying process.** It is also essential that the **occupation regime encourages Gali's Georgians to learn the Abkhazian language, but prohibits them from learning their mother tongue - Georgian. This is true apartheid and is aimed at accelerating the denationalization and russification of the Gali's population.**

In 2007 Kh.Z. enrolled in the Sokhumi Abkhazian State University in the Russian sector of the Faculty of Pedagogy. After graduating from university, she started working as an educator in a kindergarten in Gali. The director of the kindergarten, an Abkhazian woman, offered her to teach Abkhazian to the children. In 2016, Kh.Z. got married in Zugdidi and taught Abkhazian and Russian languages at the 11th Public School of Abkhazia A.R. Kh.Z. considers the study of the Abkhazian language by Georgian students as a means of friendship and rapprochement between two peoples.

Thus, the recorded material shows that all four Abkhazian language teachers acquired secondary and higher education in Abkhazia, namely, the first three before the exile, and one - in the Gali district after the war. Among them noteworthy and especial is the Georgian respondent D.T., who studied in Abkhazian school and chose the specialty of Abkhazian language and literature in a higher education institution. The specialty of two Abkhazian teachers was Abkhazian philology.

Linguistic competence and language biography of all Georgian and Abkhazian teachers is as follows:

- All four respondents name mother tongues as the language of their nationality;
- The language of their secondary and higher education was Russian;
- They studied Abkhazian language in school and high school;
- All four respondents know Russian better than their mother tongue;
- No one has learned Georgian at any teaching stage;
- Self-learning in Georgian, of course, will prevent teachers from using the comparison method of two languages in the teaching process of Abkhazian.

Thus, it turns out that during the Soviet period, **Georgians and Abkhazians living in Abkhazia had the similar russifying linguistic environment, and due to the teaching in small doses of native languages in schools and the preference for Russian, they eventually became Russian-speaking citizens.**

Although Georgian students are currently being taught the Abkhazian language in the former Georgian schools in the occupied territories, this is still a **pure ideological-political action and will not bring positive results** due to the following reasons:

1. Teaching the Abkhazian language even in so-called Abkhazian schools is imperfect and accustoms Abkhazian students not to think in their mother tongue, but in Russian, to perceive the world through the prism of the Russian language.
2. Against the background of depriving Georgian children of the right to learn their mother tongue, shifting the focus on learning the third, Russian language will not be of use to Abkhazian in any way, on the contrary.
3. To learn another language well is most fruitful when the mother tongue is the mainstay of the learning process, but in the Gali district Georgian language is prohibited in the learning process.

The mentioned circumstances mean that **Abkhazian language teaching in Gali is a formality and will be ineffective.**

Georgian and Abkhazian teachers living on this side of Enguri river are trying to make Georgian schoolchildren love and teach Abkhazian. In the learning process, they actively use the e-learning programs created by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Abkhazia AR, the Abkhazian language textbooks, dictionaries and other audio and video materials compiled jointly by Georgian and Abkhazian authors, they create a

variety of visuals for more effective Abkhazian language teaching. However, there are many problems and the most important of them are two things: **lack of professional teachers who know both languages and non-existence of textbooks compiled in Georgian.**

§3. Ethnic and linguistic identity of Abkhazians living in Ajaria

The section discusses some of the interviews with the descendants of Abkhazian Muhajirs living in Ajaria, in which we have identified two issues, namely:

1. Abkhazian surnames and ethnic identity;
2. The state of the modern Abkhazian language.

We used the answers of three typical Georgian-Abkhazian family members for analysis from the material we collected. These are:

1. I.A. - Abkhazian by father, Georgian by mother;
2. G.Ch. - Abkhazian by father, Georgian by mother;
3. T.G. - Georgian by father, Abkhazian by mother;

Abkhazian surnames and ethnic identity:

According to the respondents, despite the fact that together with Georgians they lived in the environment of people of different nationalities, Abkhazian Muhajirs (the majority) chose Georgians as marriage partners and created Georgian-Abkhazian families.

According to our observations, members of Georgian-Abkhazian families living in Ajaria, Tbilisi, Poti, Zugdidi, Tsqaltubo and other cities, as well as members of pure Abkhazian families, do not like to focus on ethnicity and often state that nationality does not matter. In our opinion, focusing on this issue and claiming that there was no difference between people of different nationalities before should be caused by the logical fear that, if this issue is raised, a third force may intervene in Abkhazian-Georgian relations again and intensify relations between Georgians and Abkhazians. We should not forget that members of the mixed Georgian-Abkhazian and purely Abkhazian

families living on this side of Enguri river are suffering painfully and intensely from the great tragedy that has befallen Abkhazia, and this is not surprising at all - these people consider themselves an integral part of both peoples and they are not indifferent to this issue.

Members of mixed families say that like the representatives of different parts of Georgia, in particular, Imeretians, Gurians, Kakhetians are not differ from each other, just Abkhazians should not be differ from other Georgians either. For example, according to **G.Ch.:** *“Megrelians, Abkhazians, Svans, Ajarians - we are all one ... There are no difference between Gurian, Svan or Megrelian ... We are all Georgians, aren't we ?!”* Of course, putting the issue that way is conditioned by the same reason that was discussed in the previous paragraph, but the fear that the third force will not oppose us again, **is not justified to “prove” that the Abkhazian (or Apswa) is the very same Georgian as Megrelian, Ajarian and Gurian...**

The respondent made the following explanation about his surname of Megrelian origin: *“People of my surname are Abkhazians and they are Megrelians. In old times there was a child giving (i.e. entrusting baby to a wet-nurse, morduoba – boy's tutoring - S. Ch.). Some may have taken the mother's surname”*. This means that simultaneously he is Abkhazian and Georgian, like a large part of other georgianized Abkhazians. According to the second respondent, most of the **Abkhazians living in Ajaria are Abkhazians only by Abkhazian surnames** in other respects **they are Georgians**.

According to the respondents, Abkhazians living in Ajaria have the following surnames: **Atsamba, Alkhorba, Muskhajba, Reizba, Agrba, Kaitamba, Katiba, Agumba, Selimba, Azhiba, Ashamba, Arsia, Kutelia, Chatanava, Naqopia, Chazmava ...**

Respondents are mistaken when they think that the older generation of Abkhazians have mostly the following Abkhazian names: **Adile, Ibragim, Hasan, Beslan, Malkhaz, Alkhaz, Asida, Ramida, Nazim, Kadyr, Arif, Sherif, Rauf, Aritsa, Almaskhan, Naime...** Considering these names as Abkhazian ones is based on the fact that the respondents think that since **these names were brought by their ancestors who had come to Ajaria from Abkhazia, it means that as if these Oriental names are really Abkhazian.**

In Ajaria, since the 60s and 70s of the 20th century Abkhazians gave their children the names that were common among the Georgians of that period, although most of the popular names at that time are not really Georgian at all, they are either Turkish, turkified Arabic or European ones.

State of the Abkhazian language:

According to the information obtained from the respondents, the following types of language situation are evident in Abkhazian and mixed families living in Ajaria:

1. The descendants of the Muhajirs (the generation of grandparents) knew the Abkhazian language perfectly 30 years ago, but this knowledge gradually weakened over time. The Abkhazian language was disappearing especially rapidly in mixed, inter-ethnic families, and the number of such families was gradually increasing, which was natural at a time when the number of Abkhazians in the entire population of Ajaria and Batumi was very low and is still low. **Most of the Georgians who were Abkhazians by mothers studied Abkhazian, but those Georgians by mothers could not learn their mother tongue. Therefore, the preservation of the Abkhazian language was depended more on Abkhazian mothers and grandmothers;**
2. There were very few Abkhazians among the older generation who knew only Abkhazian and did not speak any other language;
3. Abkhazians living in Ajaria during the Soviet period knew Abkhazian, Georgian and Russian languages;
4. Abkhazian families mostly speak Georgian, in Ajarian dialect;
5. Part of the middle generation understands Abkhazian but can no longer speak it;
6. Most of the new generation does not know Abkhazian, they can only say a few words;
7. Abkhazians unanimously state that the Abkhazian language is being lost in Ajaria;
8. Abkhazian functions as “secret language” only among older and middle-aged Abkhazians;
9. According to the respondents, Abkhazians living in Ajaria mix Turkish words when speaking Abkhazian, Abkhazians living in Ochamchire - Megrelian, and *“Gudautian Abkhazian speak more purely and [their speech] is more difficult”*;
10. Abkhazian language was not taught in schools in Ajaria before, now it is taught in two schools: in village Peria and Batumi N14;

11. Abkhazians living in Ajaria use the following **language markers** to indicate the “degree of Abkhazian nationality” and knowledge of the Abkhazian language: **indigenous Abkhazians, pure Abkhazian family, cool Abkhazians, soft Abkhazians, nationalist Abkhazians, speaks pure Abkhazian, knows pure Abkhazian;**
12. The descendants of the Muhajirs underline their ethnic identity mostly only by surnames of Abkhazian or Megrelian origin brought from Abkhazia;
13. Some of them believe that they are both Abkhazians and Georgians;
14. Literacy in Abkhazia is very rare among Abkhazians in Ajaria, although the introduction of Abkhazian language teaching in two public schools has somehow broken the ice;
15. Respondents note that “Abkhazian language is being lost catastrophically”;
16. Most Abkhazians living in Ajaria have Georgian-Abkhazian families and mostly use Georgian in communication: literary language - very rare, and the Ajarian dialect - daily.

In Ajaria, the Abkhazian language is endangered language and this is due to various factors, namely:

- Georgian-Abkhazian families are unable to pass to the Abkhazian language from the older generation to the younger one;
- Abkhazian language spoken only in a narrow socium - in the family and in communication with Abkhazians - is gradually losing its former positions in families;
- In the past, the older and middle generations of Abkhazians knew Abkhazian well, but this language was used in family and close relative circle. They needed Georgian and Russian languages in the official environment at work, outside the family, as there was Georgian-speaking environment (neighbors, relatives, work, public or private institutions) with which they communicated, Georgian and Russian was the language of instruction. These reasons led to the fact that a large part of them became trilingual;
- Most young Abkhazians almost do not know the Abkhazian language. They speak Georgian and choose and learn the English or Turkish languages they need for their future careers;

- It is important and noteworthy that currently Abkhazian language is taught in one Sunday and two public schools, where the Abkhazian language is mastered along with Abkhazian children by interested Georgians. It needs to be supported by state, private or non-governmental structures, in order to arouse the desire of the Abkhazian youth to learn the language of their nationality to survive the Abkhazian language and to pass it from generation to generation.

§4. Linguistic and ethnic biographies of young members of Georgian-Abkhazian families

Using the Zoom platform and direct questions, we recorded interviews describing the language biographies of two young respondents. The first of them is Abkhazia's Abkhazian T.Kh. living in Tbilisi (Georgian by mother), and the second A.J. - descendant of Abkhazian Muhajirs living in Batumi (by mother - Abkhazian, by father - Georgian).

T.Kh. was born in 1991. According to his narration, his great ancestors were exiled to Turkey during the muhajiring, but they returned to Abkhazia again. Grandfather of the respondent's Abkhazian grandfather, grandfather's father and grandfather married to Abkhazia's Georgians (Megrelians). T.Kh.'s family is from Ochamchire. Mother's ancestors moved from Lechkhumi and settled in Abkhazia, in the village Tsagera. After the war, T.Kh.'s family moved to Russia, but their grandmother returned them to Georgia a few years later for fear that the children might be russified. Thus, since 1996, T.Kh.'s family has been living in Tbilisi. The respondent acquired secondary and higher education in Georgian. He studied history and archeology at Tsereteli Kutaisi State University.

Respondent's ancestors - grandfather and father knew the Abkhazian language well, but because of the Georgian (Megrelian) grandmother born in Abkhazia, the family mostly spoke Russian and Megrelian. Due to the long absence of the fathers in the house, due to the language data of the grandmother and mother, Russian and Megrelian were spoken more often in the family, so the men could not pass perfectly their native language knowledge to their children, even though the grandfather and father spoke and taught their children Abkhazian.

Turning the Russian language into a family language was due to the fact that it was the language of instruction for family members and the most common language in Abkhazia at that time. Consequently, Russian “everywhere and with everyone needed language” easily and gradually substituted the Abkhazian language in the family space.

The linguistic situation of **T.Kh.**’s family changed radically after settling in Tbilisi - the whole family was in a Georgian-speaking environment. Due to this, Georgian became the main spoken language. The respondent has the right attitude towards the language of his nationality, wants to learn for himself and to teach his child. The information provided by **T.Kh.** is noteworthy about his **Abkhazia’s Abkhazian relatives, whose main communication languages are still Abkhazian and Russian. It seems that the age and psychological complex of those individuals (“Abkhazian is a difficult language and I cannot learn it”) prevent them from converting from the long-ago forced Russian language to mother tongue.** The respondent rightly thinks that the uncontrolled Russian words entered the Abkhazian language and the excessive use of the Russian language threatens the preservation and dissemination of the Abkhazian language.

T.Kh. is one of the exceptions, along with some other young Abkhazians, for whom the Russian language is not the main communication means. He considers himself a full-fledged citizen of Georgia and the Abkhazian and Georgian languages are equally native to him. **He greatly appreciates the warmth and attention of the Georgians and responds with the same kindness.**

T.Kh.’s uttered phrase is emotional and painful: “We remained fewer, than it is necessary”, because, generally, maintenance and development of any language is depended on the number and will of people speaking this language.

The second respondent, **A.J.** is a descendant of Abkhazian Muhajirs living in Batumi. He spoke to us in Georgian.

Linguistic competence of the older (grandparents) generation: The main character of the respondent’s story is his grandfather, Akaki Tsitsba, respected man in Batumi. He was also educated in Russian, but his language choice was different and pleasing. In particular, Russian was not his first language and he used this language only to speak to his Russian wife, although he taught her Abkhazian. In other cases, he spoke Georgian and Abkhazian to his siblings, grandchildren and relatives. **A.J.**’s story shows that **A. Tsitsba** spoke four languages equally: Abkhazian, Russian, Georgian and Turkish. It is

noteworthy that A. Tsitsba's Abkhazian coeval relatives also understood Abkhazian, but they could not or did not speak their mother tongue. In all probability it was their purposeful behavior to better integrate into the Georgian-speaking environment and prepare their descendants for this environment as well. According to the respondent, the Abkhazian language was well spoken by grandfather's older relative - father of Gechbas. According to this particular example, it can be said that the older generation of Abkhazians living in Batumi 20 years ago knew the Abkhazian language better and probably spoke it better. Nowadays, knowledge of the language is more rare in the generation of A.J.'s grandfather - they understand their native language but cannot speak in it.

Linguistic competence of the middle (parents) generation: The generation of A.J.'s parents living in Batumi shows a transitional picture: for those who were educated in Russia, Russian seems to be a "comfortable language", while the other part of them prefers Georgian. The positions of the Abkhazian language are weakened: both groups understand Abkhazian but cannot speak it. The middle-aged people also speak several languages: Russian, Georgian and Abkhazian, possibly Turkish and any European language. It can be said that the grandparents more or less passed the knowledge of the mother tongue to their own children and grandchildren, but the small-dose knowledge of the Abkhazian language of the parents was passed to a lesser degree to their future generations.

Linguistic competence of the young (children) generation: Young and more younger Abkhazians either do not know the Abkhazian language at all, or know little and cannot speak it. From the specific examples cited by **A.J.**, it can be seen that the descendants of the Muhajirs know Georgian better, while the Abkhazians living in Abkhazia know Russian better. **In Abkhazia, the priority of language is determined by the consequences of language policy, and in Ajaria - by the language environment and daily contacts. Despite this difference, the majority of both groups consider Abkhazian as their mother tongue, thus marking their ethnic identity.** Thus, according to the research narrative, it can be concluded that:

1. The respondent accurately described the situation of his family, relatives, Batumi and the village Angisa;
2. The majority of the older and middle generation of the descendants of Abkhazian Muhajirs living in Ajaria more or less speak the Abkhazian language but cannot speak it;

3. A small number of young and more younger descendants of Muhajirs knows their native language but cannot use it;
4. Knowledge of the mother tongue is accumulated in an extremely narrow circle of people of different ages and its usage even in the family space is rare;
5. Unfortunately, the Abkhazian language is endangered language in Batumi and surrounding villages. Along with various factors, the main reasons for this reality are: **mass Georgian-speaking environment, frequent Georgian-Abkhazian marriages, destruction of small compact Abkhazian settlements as a result of intensive urbanization, very low number of Abkhazians, complex nature of Abkhazian language, attitude of Abkhazians towards their mother tongue** and low prestige of this language compared to Georgian and Russian languages;
6. For most Abkhazians living in Ajaria, **the first language is Georgian, in particular, the Ajarian dialect of the Georgian language** (some of them recognize Georgian as their mother tongue, along with Abkhazian). For some older and middle-aged Abkhazians, Russian is the first or second language, which is not the case with the young generation; Among the representatives of all three generations there are those know Turkish and any European language;
7. At this stage, Abkhazians living in Batumi underline their ethnic identity only by recognizing the Abkhazian language as their mother tongue, or by the Abkhazian surname they have.

In addition to the facts described by the young respondents, we obtained official statistics on Abkhazians living in Ajaria, namely: according to the 2002 census conducted by the Georgian National Statistics Office, a total of 3,241 Abkhazians were registered in the territory controlled by Georgia and 1,442 - in Ajaria. Descendants of Abkhazian Muhajirs mainly lived in Batumi and Khelvachauri municipality, in other municipalities their number did not exceed 50. In 2002, 99% of Abkhazians living in Georgia, including Ajaria, recognized Abkhazian as their mother tongue, although most of them practically do not know the language.

§5. Ethnic and linguistic characteristics of the descendants of Abkhazian Muhajirs living in Turkey

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we were not able to organize a scientific expedition in the Republic of Turkey envisaged by the project. So in Tbilisi we talked to Aleko Kvakhadze, a researcher at the Rondeli Foundation, who in the pre-pandemic period was in vilayets of Turkey where Abkhazians live. According to the respondent, the largest compact settlement of Abkhazians is in Hendek district, where there are more than 20 Abkhazian villages. In other provinces and districts, Abkhazians live in smaller groups.

According to A. Kvakhadze, the descendants of Abaza, Ubykh and Circassian Muhajirs, as well as Georgians (Gyurcyu's) live near Abkhazians. For example, there are several Ubykh villages in Sapanja district, but the Ubykhs there have forgotten the Ubykh language and speak Abkhazian. Abkhazians and Abazas are considered to be one people by the locals, which is due to the fact that in the Turkish language since the 16th century there is a term Abaza (pl. Abazalar "Abazas"), which refers to both Abazas and Abkhazians.

Giving a name of the oiconyms existed in Abkhazia to the villages founded by the Abkhazian Muhajirs clearly indicates that the Muhajirs did not want to forget their homeland. The unofficial, oral use of these names to this day once again confirms their attitude towards the historical past.

According to the respondent, in the Black Sea region, in Samsun and in Sinop, the Abkhazian language is almost no longer spoken, as the Circassian and Abkhazian populations were assimilated easier there. They remember their ethnicity but know the language no longer.

According to the researcher, there are about more than 200 Abkhazian and Abaza villages in Turkey, but recently the number of people there has sharply decreased due to urbanization and various reasons.

A. Kvakhadze also told us the following: *"Knowledge of the Abkhazian language also depends on where they lived. If they lived by the roadside, it was easier for them to assimilate and lose their language, but those living far from the central areas retained their language, but here the processes are the same as in other ethnic minorities in Turkey. Abkhazian is the language of their ancestors, their identity. They worry about that the new generation knows the language no longer. They see the loss of this language as an inevitable event. There are some enthusiasts, but most do not know the language. If they have a daughter-in-law brought from Abkhazia, the children know Abkhazian."*

Young people contact with each other in Turkish. Some are trying to learn. The elders told me that when they talked about ordinary issues, they used Abkhazian, when they talked about serious topics, they moved to Turkish. The older generation went to school, then went to the army, then stayed in the village and worked either as a tractor driver, or in a factory, or on arable land. Many told me that they did not know Turkish until they were 5 years old. They say, that sometimes it is difficult for them to remember some words [Abkhazian words]. Those over 50 say that they learnt Turkish after entering the school. One of them told me: "Abkhazian is a secret language for me, when we want our children not to understand something, then we communicate with each other in Abkhazian". There are enthusiasts who teach Abkhazian to their children. The next generation went to the big cities, to the construction business, so those above 40 know the language well, those from 20 to 40 years old understand, but they cannot speak and those under 20 do not know it at all... The inscriptions in the villages are in Turkish. There is a cafe "Gagra" in the city of Adapazar. You can see a restaurant, a shop "Apsni", "Amra", "Amza" ... Absolutely everyone [in the villages] knows their last name. They have a high historical memory ... Most of them have changed Turkish surnames. Through the court some managed to be registered as Avidzba, etc. But it is a very complex and expensive procedure and not everyone has the means to do it. On the gravestones of the dead who died after the 90s, Turkish and Abkhazian surnames, such as Aguchba, Adleiba, Avidzba, are written in brackets... This is related to the 90s and the rise of national self-awareness. Such things are less common in the past, before only Turkish surnames were written. According to the local law, everyone should have the similar tombstone, but the inscriptions are not controlled".

Based on the oral information on the situation of the Abkhazian language in Turkey, we get the following picture:

1. Preservation of the Abkhazian language among Turkish Abkhazians depends on the specific geographical area of their residence. In particular, Abkhazians living far from central and urbanized areas, or in compact settlements, retain the language more;
2. The Abkhazian language may exist for them under the following status: the language of the fathers; the language of the ancestors; **the language of identity; the secret language; the family language** ... but the Abkhazian language is not stuated as the **language of instruction** and **business**;

3. The older generation still knows the mother tongue, the middle generation understands but cannot speak, while the majority of the younger generation does not know it at all. Turkic-speaking environment, mixed marriages, low number of Abkhazians in the population, anti-minority language policy previously implemented by the state, only the Turkish-language education system, Turkic-speaking “ocean” of the population do not allow the Abkhazian language to be widely used among Abkhazians. Due to these reasons, the small functioning area of the Abkhazian language and social-age strata are intensively declining;
4. There are too few individuals or groups strive to preserve their mother tongue. They study for themselves and create special educational conditions for other Abkhazians so that they can learn the Abkhazian language at least at the elementary level;
5. The older generation of Abkhazians used to learn Turkish after entering school. The situation was similar until the middle of the 20th century. Even minors knew only their native Abkhazian, and now even preschool children do not know Abkhazian, which, unfortunately, is an indisputable symptom of the rapid death of the Abkhazian language. Perhaps the same will happen in Abkhazia;
6. The middle-aged people who settled in big cities were unable to maintain their native language. Turkish became a priority for them. The situation was similar in Abkhazia, where the Russian language replaced the Abkhazian language;
7. In Turkey and A.R. of Abkhazia, other languages entered the family from outside eventually became the main threat to the disappearance of the Abkhaz language;
8. The following also indicates the difficult situation of the Abkhazian language:
 - a) young people are not able to pronounce characteristic Abkhazian sounds;
 - b) they can only use Abkhazian when speaking about everyday issues and they switch to Turkish when talking about serious topics;
 - c) for most Abkhazians, Abkhazian is a “secret language” so that younger members of the family do not understand the content of the conversation;
 - d) Abkhazian language is a marker of ethnic identity for most Abkhazians, a **fictitious mother tongue** that can no longer be spoken properly;

9. Now the Abkhazians living in Turkey have the right to study Abkhazian language in schools and universities, but the implementation of this initiative is hindered by insurmountable barriers, and the state does not remove these barriers;
10. Abkhazian names inscribed on the shopsigns of cafes of Turkish Muhajirs and of various institutions, Abkhazian surnames written on tombstones, attempts to restore Abkhazian surnames, surviving village names, preservation of compact Abkhazian settlements, and strong desire to marry Abkhazians or other Caucasians clearly indicate how strong is their desire to preserve historical memory and fear of losing their ethnic identity. The above examples prove that the descendants of Abkhazian Muhajirs living in Turkey are still actively trying to somehow preserve the Abkhazian ethnic and linguistic identity.

გამოყენებული ლიტერატურა

REFERENCES

ავიძბა, 2019 - Б. Авидзба. Как менялся абхазский алфавит. <http://sputnik-abkhazia.ru/news/20151216/1016532559.html>

ავტორხანოვი, 1990 – А. Авторханов. Империя Кремля. Советский тип империализма. Вильнюс, 1990.

ანჩაბაძე, 2018 – Документы по истории Абхазии. XIX - начало XX века. Тбилиси, 2018.

აფხაზები აჭარაში, 2018 - აფხაზები აჭარაში. წარსული და თანამედროვეობა. ბათუმი, 2018.

აფხაზეთის..., 2004 - აფხაზეთის და სამხრეთ ოსეთის ავტონომიური რეგიონების სტატუსი საქართველოს შემადგენლობაში (1917-1988). პოლიტიკურ-სამართლებრივი აქტების კრებული. თბილისი, 2004.

აფხაზური ლიტერატურის..., 1986 - აფხაზური ლიტერატურის ისტორია. წიგნი პირველი. სოხუმი, 1986 (აფხაზურ ენაზე).

აჩუგბა, 2010 – Т.А. Ачугба. Этническая история абхазов XIX-XX вв. Этнополитические и миграционные аспекты. Сухум[и], 2010.

ბარგანჯია, 2019 – С. Барганджия. Абхазский в Босфорском университете: в Турции абхазский учат абхазы и иностранцы. <https://abaza.org/abkhazskiy-v-bosforском-universitete-v-turtsii-yazyk-uchat-abkhazy-i-inostrantsy> .

ბლაჟბა, 1967 – Х.С. Бгажба. Из истории письменности в Абхазии. Тбилиси, 1967.

გავაშელიშვილი, 2004 - ა. გავაშელიშვილი ა. საქართველოს რესპუბლიკის ეროვნული საგანმანათლებლო პოლიტიკა (1918-1921). თბილისი, 2004.

გამახარია, გოგია, 1997 – Дж. Гамахария, Б. Гогия. Абхазия – историческая область Грузии (Историография, документы и материалы, комментарии). С древнейших времен до наших дней. Тбилиси, 1997.

გამახარია, 2005 - ჯ. გამახარია. აფხაზეთი და მართლმადიდებლობა (I ს.-1921 წ.). თბილისი, 2005.

„განათლება“, 1920 - ერთი მასწავლებელთაგანი [ფსევდონიმი]. უსათაურო სტატია. ჟურნალი „განათლება“, N2, 1920.

გასვიანი, 1998 - გ. გასვიანი. აფხაზეთი. ძველი და ახალი აფხაზეთი. თბ., 1998.

გვანცელაძე, 1996 - თ. გვანცელაძე. აფხაზეთის ქართველური ტოპონიმი: გაგრა. „ქართველურ ენათა სტრუქტურის საკითხები“, ტ. VI. თბილისი, 1996.

გვანცელაძე, 2000 - თ. გვანცელაძე. ტოპონომთა მასობრივი ცვლა აფხაზეთში 1864 წლის შემდგომ. „იბერიულ-კავკასიური ენათმეცნიერება“, ტ. XXXIV. თბილისი, 2000.

გვანცელაძე, 2008 - თ. გვანცელაძე. აფხაზეთის ეთნიკური ისტორიის ლინგვისტური საფუძვლები: ძირითადი პრობლემები. თბილისი, 2008.

გვანცელაძე, 2009 - თ. გვანცელაძე. წარმართობის, ქრისტიანობისა და ისლამის ამსახველი ლექსიკა აფხაზურ ენაში. - ბიბლიური და არქეოლოგიური კვლევის ამერიკულ-ქართული ინსტიტუტის ბიულეტენი (Bulletin of the AGIBAS). ივ. ჯავახიშვილის სახელობის თბილისის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტი, კორნელის უნივერსიტეტი (აშშ), # 7, 2009, გვ. 78-81.

გვანცელაძე, 2011 - თ. გვანცელაძე. აფხაზური ენა. სტრუქტურა, ისტორია, ფუნქციონირება. თბილისი, 2011.

გვანცელაძეები, 2013 - გ. გვანცელაძე, თ. გვანცელაძე. ენობრივი სიტუაცია ენგურ-ყუბანის შუამდინარეთში უძველესი დროიდან XVI საუკუნემდე. – „ქართველური მემკვიდრეობა“, ტ. XVII. ქუთაისი, 2013.

გვანცელაძეები, 2017 - გ. გვანცელაძე, თ. გვანცელაძე. ტოპონიმიკური ომის ძირითადი ასპექტები აფხაზეთის ავტონომიურ რესპუბლიკასა და ცხინვალის მხარეში (1921 წლიდან დღემდე). - „ქართველური მემკვიდრეობა“, ტ. XXI. ქუთაისი, 2017.

გვანცელაძეები, 2017ა - გ. გვანცელაძე, თ. გვანცელაძე. ძირითადი სოციოლინგვისტური პროცესები ამჟამინდელ აფხაზეთში. - “Les langues et leur territoire. Entre conflit et cohabitation”. Sous la direction de: Mzago Dokhtourichvili, Julie Boissonneault et Ali Reguigui. Série monographique en sciences humaines, 19. Sudbury, Ontario, Canada, 2017, pp. 391-416.

გვანცელაძე, ტაბიძე, გითოლენდია, ჭავჭავაძე, 2011 – Т. Гванцеладзе, М. Табидзе, Т. Гитолендия, С. Чаава. Основные аспекты идентности абхазов, живущих в Аджарии. Тбилиси, 2011.

გვანცელაძე, ტაბიძე, გითოლენდია, ჭავჭავაძე, 2011 – Т. Gvantseladze, M. Tabidze, T. Gitolendia, S. Tshaava. Basic Aspects of Identity of the Abkhazians Living in Ajaria. Bbilisi, Publishing House Universal. 2011

დადგენილება 324, 1938 – Постановление от 13 марта 1938 г. N 324 «Об обязательном изучении русского языка в школах национальных республик и областей». СНК СССР, ЦК ВКП(б).<http://www.consultant.ru/cons/cgi/online.cgi?req=doc&base=ESU&n=23269#08666568174493305>

ლოკუმენტები..., 1992 – Документы свидетельствуют. 1937-1953 гг. Сборник материалов. Составители: Б.Е. Сагария, Т.А. Ачугба, В.М. Пачулия. Сухум[и], 1992.

ენის კანონი, 2007 - <http://presidentofabkhazia.org/upload/iblock/bf5/O-Gosudarstvennom-yazyke-Respubliki-Abkhaziya.pdf>

ვახუშტი, 1973 - ვახუშტი ბატონიშვილი. აღწერა სამეფოსა საქართველოსა. ქართლის ცხოვრება. ტ. IV. თბილისი, 1973.

ვიკიპედია, აგაფოდორი: [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%90%D0%B3%D0%B0%D1%84%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%BE%D1%80_\(%D0%9F%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%BE%D0%B1%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B6%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%B9\)](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%90%D0%B3%D0%B0%D1%84%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%BE%D1%80_(%D0%9F%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%BE%D0%B1%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B6%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%B9))

ვიკიპედია, აზერბაიჯანული ენა: https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%90%D0%B7%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%B1%D0%B0%D0%B9%D0%B4%D0%B6%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%B9_%D1%8F%D0%B7%D1%8B%D0%BA#%D0%9F%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%8C%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B-D%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%82%D1%8C

ვიკიპედია, თალიშური ენა: https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A2%D0%B0%D0%BB%D1%8B%D1%88%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%B9_%D1%8F%D0%B7%D1%8B%D0%BA

ვორობოვი, 1938 – Ник. Воробьев. Всесоюзная перепись населения 17 декабря 1926г. Краткий обзор организации и производства. В/О «Союзпечать», Москва, 1938.

ზაცივა, 2016 – Н.С. Зайцева. Становление горской системы обучения на Северо-Западном Кавказе. Журнал «Молодой ученый», №8 (112), апрель – 2, 2016. <https://moluch.ru/archive/112/28743/>.

ზანთარაია, 2019 – Т. Зантараиа. Абхазские фамилии для получения больших прав? <https://www.livepress.ge/ru/2019-05-11-09-09-59/article/29987-2019-07-29-05-59-23.html>

ზუხბა, 1988 - ს. ზუხბა. აფხაზური ზეპირსიტყვიერება. აფხაზურიდან თარგმნეს ავთანდილ არაბულმა და თეიმურაზ გვანცელაძემ. თბილისი, 1988.

ინალ-იფა, 1965 – Ш.Д. Инал-Ипа. Абхазы. Второе переработанное, дополненное издание. Сухуми, 1965.

იონეს სახარება 1, 1912 - Ixaqitu Исус Христос Евангелиа цкъа Матфеи, Маркозvi, Иоаннvi ирыкнытэ. Печатано по благословению Святъшаго Правительствующаго Синода и высокопреосвященнаго Иннокентия, архіепископа Карталинскаго и Кахетинскаго, Экзарха Грузии. Қарт – Тифлиси, 1912.

იონეს სახარება 2, 1990 - Апъшьаѿыра. Иоанн икынтэ Ажэабжь Бзиа. Хара ихакуиту Исус Христос Иажэабжь Бзиа Иоанн ишаницаз еиѿш. «Алашара», Аѿуа, 1990, аѿбатэи атыѿыра.

ისაევი, 1978 - М.И. Исаев. О языках народов СССР. Москва, 1978.

კასლანძია 1, 2005 – В.А. Касландзия. Абхазско-русский словарь. Т. I. Сухум[и], 2005.

კასლანძია 2, 2005 – В.А. Касландзия. Абхазско-русский словарь. Т. II. Сухум[и], 2005.

კასლანძია, ჯონუა 1, 2016 - В.А. Касландзия, Б.Г. Джонуа. Русско-абхазский словарь. Т. I. Сухум[и], 2016.

კასლანძია, ჯონუა 2, 2016 - В.А. Касландзия, Б.Г. Джонуа. Русско-абхазский словарь. Т. II. Сухум[и], 2016.

კასლანძია, ჰაშბა, ლაკაშია, 2003 – А.М. Касландзия, А.М. Хашба, Н.Т. Лакашиа. Вместо предисловия. წიგნში: В. Б. Кураскуа. Абхазская национальная школа (1921-1958). ელ. ვერსია იხ.: http://www.apsnyteka.org/k/ab hazskaya_natsionalnaya_shkola_1921-1958/index.html

კვარჭია, 1985 _ В.Е. Кварчия. Ойконимы Абхазии в письменных источниках. Сухуми, 1985.

კვარჭია, 2002 _ ვ. კვარჭია. აფხაზეთის ტოპონიმის სიხშირე, 1985 (აფხაზეთის ენაზე).

კილბა - Э.К. Килба. О диалектной базе речи батумских (ферийских) абхазов (1). К проблеме садзского диалекта და К проблеме реконструкции исторического садзского диалекта абхазского языка. სტატიები განთავსებულია შემდეგ ბმულზე: http://apsnyteka.org/1218-kilba_statji.html

კლინიკოვა, სავენკო, 2010 – М.В. Клычникова, Е.А. Савенко. День утверждения Устава Общества распространения православного христианства на Кавказе. Общество становления православного христианства на Кавказе. «Ставропольский хронограф на 2010 год», Ставрополь, 2010. <http://www.skunb.ru/node/5628>

ლეჟავა, 1989 – Г.П. Лежава. Изменение классово-национальной структуры населения Абхазии (конец XIXв. – XXв.). Сухуми, 1989.

ლეჟავა, 1997 – Г.П. Лежава. Между Грузией и Россией. Исторические корни и современные факторы абхазо-грузинского конфликта (XIX-XX вв.). Москва, 1997.

ლომთათიძე, 1944 - ქ. ლომთათიძე. აფხაზური ენის ტაპანთური დიალექტი (ტექსტებითურთ). თბილისი, 1944.

ლომთათიძე, 1954 - ქ. ლომთათიძე. აფხაზური დიალექტი და მისი ადგილი სხვა აფხაზურ-აბაზურ დიალექტთა შორის (ტექსტებითურთ). თბილისი, 1954.

მარი, 1936 - Н.Я. Мара. О языке и истории абхазов. Л., 1936.

მაჭავარიანი, გულია, 1892 - К. Мачавариани, Д. Гулия. Абхазская азбука. Главнейшие молитвы и заповеди на абхазском и церковно-славянском языках. Тифлис, 1892.

მელქონიანი, 2009 – Р. Мелконян. Отуречивание топонимов в республиканской Турции. 2009. http://www.noravank.am/rus/articles/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=1973

მოსახლეობის..., 1929 - მოსახლეობის სრულიად საკავშირო აღწერა 1926 წლის. საქართველოს სოციალისტური საბჭოთა რესპუბლიკა. განყოფილება 1. ეროვნება, დედა ენა - წლოვანება - წერა-კითხვის ცოდნა. ა.ს.ფ.ს.რ. სტატისტიკის ცენტრალური სამმართველო. ტფილისი, 1929.

მოსია, 2013 - გ. მოსია. ნარკვევები აფხაზური ლიტერატურის ისტორიიდან. თბილისი, 2013.

ნარკვევები, 2007 - ნარკვევები საქართველოს ისტორიიდან. აფხაზეთი უძველესი დროიდან დღემდე. თბილისი, 2007.

ნარკვევები, 2009 - Очерки из истории Грузии. Абхазия с древнейших времен до наших дней. Тбилиси, 2009.

პაპასქირი, 2007 - ზ. პაპასქირი. ნარკვევები თანამედროვე აფხაზეთის ისტორიული წარსულიდან. ნაკვეთი II. 1917-1993. თბილისი, 2007.

პაპასქირი, 2010 – З. Папаскири. Абхазия. История без фальсификации. Издание второе, исправленное и дополненное. Тбилиси, 2010.

ჟირნოვი, 2021 – «Грузинское население интеллектуально и экономически деградирует». Как в СССР ковались межнациональные проблемы. «Коммерсант», 17.01.2021. Е.Жирнов.https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/4651740?fbclid=IwAR07Ba-9m9oXbbCc1OACK0h6-XQ4CwdJi3Nilbnf4uA-_SPmBOKSvZ9CLFEI

რეგიონული..., 2002 - რეგიონული კონფლიქტები საქართველოში - სამხრეთ ოსეთის ავტონომიური ოლქი, აფხაზეთის ასსრ (1989-2001). პოლიტიკურ-სამართლებრივი აქტების კრებული. კრებულის შემდგენელი და მთავარი რედაქტორი თ. დიასამიძე. თბილისი, 2002.

როგავა, 1960 - გიორგი როგავა. ზოგი გეოგრაფიული სახელის შემადგენლობისათვის. თსუ შრომები, ტ. 93. თბილისი, 1960.

როგავა, 2002 - გივი როგავა. რელიგია და ეკლესია საქართველოში XIX-XX სს. თბილისი, 2002.

როზენი, 1846 – *Ossetische Sprachlehre nebst einer Abhandlung über das Mingrelische, Suanische und Abchasische* von Dr. Georg Rosen. Berlin, 1846.

რომანოვი 2014 - აფხაზური ენის პირველი ლექსიკონი. ვლადიმერ რომანოვი. აბაზური ლექსიკონი. ლექსიკონის ტექსტი გამოსაცემად მოამზადა, აფხაზური დიალექტური ფორმები აღადგინა, წინასიტყვაობა და გამოკვლევა დაურთო პროფესორმა თეიმურაზ გვანცელაძემ. მეორე შეესებულებული გამოცემა. თბილისი, 2014.

საბა, 1983 - სულხან-საბა ორბელიანი. მოგზაურობა ევროპაში. „ქართული პროზა“, ტ. V. მეჩვიდმეტე-მეთვრამეტე საუკუნეთა მწერლობა. თბილისი, 1983.

საბჭოთა საქართველოს..., 1931 - საბჭოთა საქართველოს 10 წელი. 1921-1931. ს.ს.რ. სახელმწიფო საგეგმო კომისია. სტატისტიკური კრებული. ტფილისი, 1931.

საქართველოს დასახლებული..., 1990 - საქართველოს დასახლებული პუნქტები და მოსახლეობა (სტატისტიკური ცნობარი). საქართველოს სსრ სტატისტიკის სახელმწიფო კომიტეტი. თბილისი, 1990.

საქართველოს მოსახლეობის..., 1991 - საქართველოს მოსახლეობის ეროვნული შემადგენლობა. სტატისტიკური კრებული. საქართველოს რესპუბლიკის უზენაეს საბჭოსთან არსებული სოციალურ-ეკონომიკური ინფორმაციის კომიტეტი. თბილისი, 1991.

სემიონოვა, 2012 – В.В. Семёнова. Травматическая память как мобилизационный ресурс коллективной идентичности. «Социология и общество: глобальные вызовы и региональное развитие. Материалы IV Очередного Всероссийского Социологического конгресса». Москва, 2012.

სერდიუჩენკო, 1955 – Сердюченко Г.П. Язык абазин. Известия Академии педагогических наук РСФСР, выпуск 67, Труды Института национальных школ АПН РСФСР и Черкесского научно-исследовательского института, Москва, 1955.

სრულიად საქართველოს..., 1926 - სრულიად საქართველოს 1923 წლის სასოფლო-სამეურნეო აღწერის ჯამები, ნაწილი II. დემოგრაფია. ნაკვეთი I. სოფლობრივი ჯამები. თფილისი, 1926.

უსლარი, 1887 - П.К. Услар. Этнография Кавказа. Языкознание. Абхазский язык. Тифлис, 1887.

უსლარი, დანართი, 1887 - П.К. Услар. О распространении грамотности между горцами. წიგნში: Этнография Кавказа. Языкознание. Абхазский язык. Тифлис, 1887.

ქაპბა, 2016 – А. Капба. Из истории Горской школы. 15.05.2016 г. <https://sputnik-abkhazia.ru/Abkhazia/20160515/1018215391.html> .

ციფშიძე, 1994 - ი. ციფშიძე, რჩეული თხზულებანი. თბ., 1994.

ყურასქუა, 2003 - В. Б. Кураскуа. Абхазская национальная школа (1921-1958). ელ. ვერსია იხ.: http://www.apsnyteka.org/k/abkhazskaya_natsionalnaya_shkola_1921-1958/index.html

შაგიროვი, 1989 – А.К. Шагиров. Заимствованная лексика в абхазо-адыгских языках. Москва, 1989.

ჩირიკბა, აფხაზთა განსახლება - В.А. Чирикба. Расселение абхазов и абазин в Турции. http://apsnyteka.org/file/Chirikba_Rasselenie_abkhazo-abazain_v_Turtsii_.pdf .

ჩირიკბა, 2019 – В.А. Чирикба. Дискуссия о государственном языке в Абхазии в 20-х годах XX века в связи с современным положением абхазского языка. «Вестник Академии Наук Абхазии», №9, Серия «Гуманитарные науки». Сухум[ი], 2019.

ჩიქობავა, 2018 - არნ. ჩიქობავა. იბერიულ-კავკასიურ ენათა შესწავლის ისტორია. წიგნში: არნ. ჩიქობავა. შრომები. ტ. XIII, თბილისი, 2018.

ცხადაია, 2000 - პ. ცხადაია. გვარები და გვართა დასახლებანი სამეგრელოში. თბ., 2000.

ძიძარია, 1982 – Г.А. Дзидзария. Махаджирство и проблемы истории Абхазии XIX столетия. Сухуми, 1982.

წერეთელი, 1985 - ა. წერეთელი. ჩემი თავგადასავალი. „ქართული პროზა“, წიგნი IX. თბილისი, 1985.

ჭაავა, 2020 - ს. ჭაავა. საქართველოს ენობრივი სიტუაცია საარქივო მასალების მიხედვით (XX საუკუნის 20-იანი წლები). დისერტაცია ფილოლოგიის დოქტორის ხარისხის მოსაპოვებლად. თბილისი, 2020.

ჭიჭინაძე, 1907 - ზ. ჭიჭინაძე. სიტყვები და წერილები ყოვლად სამღვდელო ალექსანდრეზე. თბილისი, 1907.

ხორავა, 2004 - ბ. ხორავა. აფხაზთა 1867 წლის მუჰაჯირობა. თბილისი, 2004.

ხორავა, 2013 – Б. Хорава. Мухаджирство абхазов 1867 года. Тбилиси, 2013.

ჯანაშია, 1959 - ს. ჯანაშია. შრომები, ტ. III. თბ., 1959.

ჯანაშია, 1985 - ს. ჯანაშია. გიორგი შარვაშიძე. კულტურულ-ისტორიული ნარკვევი. წიგნში: გიორგი შარვაშიძე. ლირიკა, ეპოსი, დრამა. აკად. სიმონ ჯანაშიას რედაქციითა და ნარკვევით. მეორე გამოცემა. თბილისი, 1985.

ჰაუგენი, 1972 - The Ecology of language. Essays by Einar Haugen. Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1972.

საარქივო მასალები:

ცსია, ფ. 493, აღნ. 1, ს. 160. ფ. 2.

ფ. 488, აღნ. 1, ს. 26 487, ფ.

ISBN 978-9941-9771-0-7



9 789941 977107