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**LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES AND THE  
“PURIFICATION” OF POST-SOVIET TATAR**

More than a decade after the fall of the Soviet Union, transitional post-Communist Russia continues to be fertile ground for investigations of the formation of ethnic identity and the struggle to retain linguistic and cultural integrity in an assimilating society. In this paper I will examine both the language ideologies and linguistic performance of Tatar, a Turkic language currently spoken in Tatarstan by one quarter of its four million residents,<sup>1</sup> and the role that language plays in ethnic self-identification and nationhood. Using data gathered during ten months of fieldwork in Kazan, the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan,<sup>2</sup> I will demonstrate that Tatar identity, in particular as constructed through linguistic performance, is inextricably linked with orientation towards or away from Russian language and culture, such that the integrity and cultural “purity” of post-Soviet Tatars – thought by many to be necessary for the survival of the Tatar language, culture, and nation – is equated with de-Russification. De-Russification, the removal (or “purification”) of salient Russian influence, is expressed in various ways by Tatars in present-day Tatarstan – for example, by choices

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<sup>1</sup> Tatar is also spoken by several million people throughout the territories of the former Soviet Union.

<sup>2</sup> This fieldwork was made possible by grants from the International Research and Exchange Board and the Academy for Educational Development.

in attire, food and alcohol consumption, and sexual mores – but here my focus will be exclusively on purification and de-Russification as expressed in ideological discourse and linguistic performance.

Language ideologies can be understood as the “mediating link between social structures and forms of talk” and “rooted in or responsive to the experience of a particular social position.”<sup>3</sup> These language ideologies are never simply about language; rather, they are, “about the construction and legitimation of power, the production of social relations of sameness and difference, and the creation of cultural stereotypes about types of speakers and social groups.”<sup>4</sup> Ideologies, including language ideologies, are reproduced by practices, practices that can be institutional, semi-institutional, and everyday, found in governmental and educational institutions, advertisements, the media, literature, art, and more.<sup>5</sup> “These reproduction practices may result...in *normalization*, i.e., a hegemonic pattern in which the ideological claims are perceived as “normal” ways of thinking and acting.”<sup>6</sup> The language ideology that I call that “Tatar discourse of purity” can be defined as a “counter-hegemonic discourse.”

The Tatar language and culture have been under stress from Russian since the fall of the Kazan Khanate in 1552. Intensification of this stress during the Soviet period, with its emphasis upon assimilation of minority peoples, seems to have begun a multi-generational language shift, where the population of Tatar speakers shrinks with every successive generation. However, since the declaration of Tatarstan’s autonomy in 1990, the Tatarstani government has been legislating “promotive” language policies in an attempt to put Tatar on more equal footing with Russian, such that Tatar is now one of the Republic’s two official languages and Tatar language study is compulsory in primary and secondary school. Even so, in post-Soviet Tatarstan there remains an asymmetry between the use and usefulness of Tatar and Russian: Russian is the “normal,” “unmarked” language that can be used in all functional domains, while Tatar usage is “marked,” limited,

<sup>3</sup> Kathryn Woolard and Bambi Schieffelin. *Language Ideology // Annual Review of Anthropology*. 1994. No. 2. Pp. 55, 58.

<sup>4</sup> Debra Spitulnik. *Mediating Unity and Diversity: The Production of Language Ideologies in Zambian Broadcasting // B. Schieffelin, K. Woolard, and P. Kroskrity (Eds.). Language Ideologies*. New York, 1998. P. 164.

<sup>5</sup> J. Blommaert. *The Debate is Open // J. Blommaert (Ed.). Language Ideological Debates*. Berlin/New York, 1999. Pp. 1-38.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* P. 10-11.

and “particularized.”<sup>7</sup> The particularization of Tatar and normalization of Russian can be interpreted as part of the Soviet hegemonic process, which was produced and reproduced both in official institutional practice and in individual practice. The attempts by the Tatar intelligentsia to reclaim ground in the new post-Soviet social and political order can be seen as attempts to take over the hegemonic process and the standardization of Tatar; to control the reproduction practices of ideologies and thus make *Tatar* ideologies of Tatar language and culture, rather than *Russian* ideologies of Tatar language and culture, the norm. As case studies of language ideologies and ideological debates have shown, languages are often promoted as “a crucial ingredient of national identity (and hence a central ingredient in national mobilization and nation-building),”<sup>8</sup> and Tatar in post-Soviet Tatarstan is no exception.

Language is only one marker of identity for a group, and usually part of a feature cluster that includes descent, history, culture, and religion;<sup>9</sup> as we will see in the Tatar example, invoking one of the identity markers can usually index all the other markers in the feature cluster. Language ideologies are “thrown into high relief” by social inequalities and colonial (and thus also post-colonial) encounters.<sup>10</sup> When a language or language variety that indexes a subordinate group is “revalorized,” that language is usually not only a symbol of group identity, but also emblematic of “political allegiance or social, intellectual, or moral worth.”<sup>11</sup> Post-colonial revalorization of a subordinate language can thus be seen as an attempt to manipulate what Bourdieu has called “symbolic capital.”<sup>12</sup> Tatar language reforms are meant to “add value” (or symbolic capital) to the subordinate Tatar language.

<sup>7</sup> For more on the particularization of Tatar, see the work of Helen Faller, e.g., *The Fallout of Soviet Nationalities Policies with Respect to Tatarstan / Presented at the annual meeting of the Central Eurasian Studies Society, Madison, Wisconsin, October 13, 2001; Repossessing Kazan: Nation-Building after Socialism in Tatarstan, Russia / Ph.D. Thesis, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2003 (in progress)*.

<sup>8</sup> Blommaert. *The Debate is Open*. P. 31.

<sup>9</sup> Jan Blommaert and Jef Verschueren. *The Role of Language in European Nationalist Ideologies // B. Schieffelin, K. Woolard, and P. Kroskrity (eds.). Language Ideologies*. New York, 1998. P. 192.

<sup>10</sup> Woolard and Schieffelin. *Language Ideology*. P. 55-56.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* P. 61.

<sup>12</sup> This is described most fully in Pierre Bourdieu. *Language and Symbolic Power*. Cambridge, 1999.

The Tatar discourse of purity, as is common for post-colonial linguistic purism movements, is based on a "logic of oppositional identity."<sup>13</sup> Explicit linguistic ideologies can affect a language's structure,<sup>14</sup> and linguistic purification can be seen as one way in which a subordinate language can become an "anti-language," a code that is "most distinctive from its socially dominant counterpart."<sup>15</sup> In a well-known formulation of the nation as an "imagined political community," Anderson<sup>16</sup> describes nations as constructions that are inherently limited and bounded, where there is the set of people who are members of the nation and the set of people who are not. Tatar linguistic purism has as its implicit goal the delimitation of a clear national boundary with the creation of a Tatar language that is maximally distinct from Russian.

The Tatar ideology of linguistic purism is both explicit and implicit, and found on both the individual and collective levels. On the individual level, linguistic purism is expressed both through explicit statements that demonstrate the high level of language consciousness of Tatars in present-day Tatarstan, and through the style shifting of individual Tatars. Urban Tatar speakers have a range of styles that can be organized according to level of language mixing, ranging from pure Tatar on one end to pure Russian on the other end, with a variety of mixed styles in between. The styles that are associated with the presentation of a conspicuously Tatar identity are also associated with a lack of language mixing, and the only Russian words found in these styles are conventional loanwords for which there is no native equivalent. On the collective level, discussions of and debates on linguistic purism are found in official language commissions, on television and the radio, and in the pages of the daily press. The majority of the examples of the Tatar discourse of purity presented in this chapter come from the post-Soviet Tatar press, in particular from daily newspapers, and are excerpted from both articles and published letters to the editor. The entire Tatarphone community takes part in this public debate on linguistic purism: articles and letters are written both by journalists and language "experts"

(usually Tatar philologists) and by regular readers of the newspaper who feel compelled to express their opinions; these readers are both urban and rural, and span a wide range of ages.

The press in general plays an important role in ideological debates and in nation building. Anderson suggests that print languages lay the basis for nationalist consciousness in three ways: (1) they create "unified fields of exchange and communication," usually somewhere between the high language used only by the educated elite and the vernacular; (2) they give language a fixed nature, which helps "build that image of antiquity so central to the subjective idea of the nation"; and (3) print languages become languages of power, such that the non-standard languages or language varieties that are not used as print languages become increasingly subordinate.<sup>17</sup> The debates found in the daily press, which often focus reflexively on the language of the daily press, show how critical it is for "ideological and political control to be instantiated in everyday practices."<sup>18</sup> Texts generate their publics, and publics generate their texts,<sup>19</sup> and in the Tatar case, this can be seen most clearly in the dialogue found in the pages of Tatar daily newspapers. The articles cited here represent just a tiny subset of the hundreds of articles published in the post-Soviet Tatar press on the subjects of language, religion, and culture in the years 1990-2001, the years covered by this literature review. The majority of pertinent articles come from several main sources: eleven years of the mainstream paper *Şähri Kazan* 'Kazan City'; the entire five-year run of the cultural newspaper *Mädäni Jomga* 'Cultural Friday'; and several years of the government newspaper *Watanım Tatarstan* 'My Homeland Tatarstan.'

Why, in the logic of language ideologies, does the purity of a language matter? In Corsica, long under French domination, language "came to stand metonymically for the totality of the struggle for nationhood" and was linked to a romantic ideology in which the language of a minority people is inextricably linked with the "soul" of that people.<sup>20</sup> The same is true in the Tatar case, where language, culture, nationhood, and religion form an indexical feature cluster: discourse on one of these features automatically references discourse on the other features, and articles, for example, on religion can transition to discussions of language without any sort of explanatory segue.

<sup>13</sup> Andrea Jaffe. *Locating Power: Corsican Translators and Their Critics* // J. Blommaert (Ed.). *Language Ideological Debates*. Berlin/New York, 1999. P. 61.

<sup>14</sup> Susan Gal. *Language and Political Economy* // *Annual Review of Anthropology*. 1989. No. 18. P. 354.

<sup>15</sup> Woolard and Schieffelin. *Language Ideology*. P. 70.

<sup>16</sup> Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London/New York, 1987. Pp. 6-7.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* P. 44.

<sup>18</sup> Jaffe. *Locating Power: Corsican Translators and Their Critics*. P. 61.

<sup>19</sup> Blommaert. *The Debate is Open*. P. 6.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* P. 12-13.

Fear for the assimilation of the Tatar nation – one of the most prevalent themes in post-Soviet Tatar discourse, seen in articles with titles such as *Öè mengenè yïlda tatar milläte saklanïrmï?* ‘In the third millenium, will the Tatar nation be preserved?’<sup>21</sup> – is also expressed in discourse on linguistic, cultural, and religious assimilation. For example, we find the statement “The preservation of a language means the preservation of a people” in an article entitled *Telebezne, dinebezne sakliyk!* ‘Let’s save our language and our religion!’;<sup>22</sup> here nationhood, religion, and language are explicitly linked in a single piece of writing.

In the ideology found in the post-Soviet Tatar press, language in particular is seen as a metonymic representative of the nation and the barometer of the health of the nation, where the impurity and decline of the Tatar language are seen as representative of the impurity and decline of the Tatar nation as a whole. A typical expression of this metonymic conception claims that “...a people without a language can not be a people in the true sense – its culture, literature, customs, and rituals can only live at a time when the native language is living.”<sup>23</sup> An even more explicit expression of this linkage is found in an article entitled, quite straightforwardly, *Tel saflïgi – millät pak’lege* ‘The purity of a language is the purity of a nation.’<sup>24</sup> The author first draws upon a prominent Russian cultural source as authority: “The well-known Russian writer F. Dostoyevsky said, ‘A language – it is the people.’ So if some kind of language exists and is in use, then the nation owning that language also exists...” He then continues, “If that language, having become entangled with another language...begins to be diluted, then fear for the existence of the nation is born, and the nation steps onto the path to extinction. Therefore the purity of the mother tongue...is perhaps the basic factor deciding the fate of a nation.” This is, in the logic of this discourse, due to assimilation: “A person who has lost his/her native language stops being a member of the nation...s/he has changed into a member of the nation whose language s/he knows and speaks. One or two generations after the Tatars who have forgotten their native tongue will be people who

have become Russian...” Therefore, “the attempt to reanimate, cleanse and develop our native language is a battle for our nation’s purity, safety, non-liquidation, and, in the end, for our independence.” The logic is clear and explicit: (1) speaking or not speaking a language is the marker of a cultural and ethnic boundary, (2) if a language is a people, and the language is lost, then the people will be lost as well, and thus (3) language promotion and purification are necessary for survival of the nation.

The decline of the Tatar language is often described in the Tatar press as externally motivated,

the result of the evil politics of the Russian imperium to drive the Tatar nation into nothingness...Tatar has constantly been derided as a base, savage language, it was removed from all societal and governmental spheres, children’s schools were purposefully Russified, and Tatar writing was forcefully moved to Cyrillic: these were some of the basic methods of the destroyers of the Tatar language. As a result of these aggressive methods against the Tatar language, our young people have stopped respecting our language, alongside the ‘great’ Russian language they have started to consider it weak, pitiful, not useful, and even unnecessary. Of course, this is the result of 450 years of being colonial.<sup>25</sup>

The definition of pure Tatar can be interpreted as based on Jaffe’s “logic of oppositional identity”: pure Tatar is, quite simply, Tatar that is not Russian and expresses no salient Russian influence. Doctrines of linguistic purism often “close off non-native sources of innovation, but usually selectively, targeting only languages construed as threats.”<sup>26</sup> This is true in the Tatar case as well, where the language of the culture and government perceived as a threat to the integrity of the Tatar nation is the target of purification, both in language reform and in the discourse of purity, while influences from languages and cultures not perceived as threatening are either interpreted as congruent with the post-Soviet Tatar identity or not salient to purists.

I will illustrate this with two anecdotal examples, both from individual rather than public discourse. The first is a comment made to me by a young professional male in his mid-30s who seems dedicated to speaking as little Russian as possible – in all the months I knew him, I never heard him say

<sup>21</sup> Rafael’ Mostafin. *Öè mengenè yïlda tatar milläte saklanïrmï?* // *Šähri Kazan*. 1999. June 18. P. 3.

<sup>22</sup> M. Mäjïtov. *Telebezne, dinebezne sakliyk!* // *Šähri Kazan*. 1996. December 7. P. 3.

<sup>23</sup> Razil Välijev. *Telebez khasta khälendä* (Our language is in a sick state) // *Šähri Kazan*. 1992. June 20. P. 3.

<sup>24</sup> Kasïym Fäsakhov. *Tel saflïgi – millät pak’lege* // *Šähri Kazan*. 1994. December 9. Pp. 3-4.

<sup>25</sup> Mökhämmät Mazhar. “H” awazina hälakät yanïy (The letter ‘h’ burns and perishes) // *Šähri Kazan*. 1996. June 2. P. 2.

<sup>26</sup> Woolard and Schieffelin. *Language Ideology*. P. 64.

one Russian word, and he once reprimanded me for speaking Russian with a young Tatar woman who works in the library, saying to me, “She’s a Tatar girl, with a good Tatar name, you should speak Tatar with her, and not Russian.” He brought up the concept of pure Tatar with me when we were discussing a Finnish Tatar who was visiting Kazan for a short time – this Finnish Tatar’s home language growing up in Helsinki was Tatar, the Mishar dialect (albeit transplanted to Finland), and he spoke only a few words of Russian, even after months in Kazan. My friend remarked: “Do you know why I love to hear [him] speak? Because there is not even a hint of Russian, he uses only good Tatar words, the words we all used before the Revolution. Hearing him talk, it is like music to my ears.” This comment is of particular interest in two ways. First, the Mishar dialect, at least as spoken within the boundaries of the Russian Federation, is considered low-prestige and somehow lacking the “richness” of the Middle Volga/Kazan Tatar dialect; this man’s lack of Russian interference, perhaps in combination with the prestige associated with Finland, seemed to supersede the stigma associated with the Mishar dialect. Second, due to the fact that the Helsinki Tatar population emigrated from Russia approximately 100 years ago, before Soviet-era language engineering, this Finnish Tatar does not use most of the Russian borrowings that are standard in present-day Tatar, but rather their pre-Revolutionary counterparts, most of which are in fact Arabic and Persian loanwords. Even so, his speech was assessed as a model of pure Tatar, our first indication of the selective nature of the Tatar discourse of purity – Russian words, borrowed from a language “construed as a threat,” have no place in pure Tatar, but words borrowed from Arabic and Persian, languages and cultures that were historically highly influential for centuries, do.

The second example also involves a decidedly pro-Tatar young male, a 30-year historian and increasingly observant Muslim who studied Arabic in Eastern Africa for several years. After hearing me interviewed on a Kazan radio program, he requested that our mutual friend introduce us, and when we met, he spent several minutes telling me about what his impressions had been while hearing me speak Tatar on the radio. For him, the most prominent aspect of my Tatar was its lack of Russian interference or influence: I had apparently sounded to him like a “young Tatar village girl” who had been “protected” from both the Russian language and from Russians, as if I had lived a “clean village life” and had never spoken a word of [presumably unclean] Russian. Several people with whom I became acquainted after my radio interviews told me that they had interpreted my accent as native, albe-

it a speaker of a different dialect,<sup>27</sup> but this man was the only one to explicitly relate my lack of Russian accent to impressions of pure Tatar girlhood. This idealization of village life, and of the village as protected enclave of Tatariness, is quite a common one, particularly noticeable in Tatar-language comedies and musicals produced in Kazan theaters.<sup>28</sup> After learning that I was studying and recording Tatar, person after person would invite me to visit their village so I would be able to hear pure Tatar as spoken in all-Tatar villages where Tatar is spoken all day, every day, far away from the “corrupt” city and “street language.”<sup>29</sup> Even my Russian cab driver one day suggested to me that if I really wanted to learn Tatar, I should head to the countryside: “You’re not going to hear any real Tatar here,” he said.

### *“Impure” Tatar*

Before examining Tatar linguistic purification movements, I will discuss some of the “impure” Tatar that Kazan’s Tatarphones are surrounded by daily, since this “tainted” Tatar is the backdrop against which “pure” Tatar is set. Although Tatar has been elevated to the level of governmental language, officially on a par with Russian, and is correspondingly seen and heard more in public spaces than in Soviet times, there do not appear to be a sufficient number of fully proficient Tatar speakers to translate or produce all of the public Tatar that is meant to serve as the equivalent to Russian. What this means is that, at least in Kazan, Tatar that is poorly translated from Russian, misspelled, and grammatically incorrect is a constant presence. One example is programs at the ballet and symphony: more than once, I have seen people turn away from the Tatar half of a bilingual program to the Russian half, and complain that it was clear both that the Tatar text was a translation from Russian and that the translator had done a poor job. Letters to the editor complain that both street signs and signs for bus and tram stops are incorrectly spelled or translated, as is signage at museums and galleries.

<sup>27</sup> I should note that it is not that my Tatar is, or was at the time, anything like that of a fully competent native speaker. While my accent is good, my intonation patterns are wrong, my syntax is limited, and my speech not without grammatical errors. People’s willingness to perceive me as a native Tatar says less about my fluency, and more about both their lack of exposure to any accent in Tatar other than Russian, and about the Tatar-language (in)competence of many young Tatars.

<sup>28</sup> Faller. *The Fallout of Soviet Nationalities Policies with Respect to Tatarstan*.

<sup>29</sup> In point of fact, young people in villages do not speak only Tatar all day every day, as became immediately apparent upon my visits.

Letters and articles often focus on problems with the pronunciation of Tatar-specific sounds. Tatar has nine phones that are not found in Russian, three vowels and six consonants, and these phones can cause problems both for Russian speakers and for Tatars who have heavy Russian interference in their speech. The phone [h] in particular seems to be especially emblematic of a sound subject to phonetic interference, and entire articles are devoted to its mispronunciation as Russian [x]: Äy *tatarnıng ränjetelgän mesken “h” awazı* ‘O the offended, poor sound “h” of Tatar’;<sup>30</sup> *Ber awaz tiräsändä* ‘About one sound’;<sup>31</sup> *“H” awazına hälakät yanıy* ‘The letter ‘h’ burns and perishes.’<sup>32</sup>

Spelling problems are another aspect of “impure” Tatar that are made explicit in public discourse in newspaper articles and letters to the editor. For example, one letter writer tells of a prominently displayed billboard in downtown Kazan advertising an international company: the billboard said “good work” in several European languages, one of them Tatar. However, while the phrase was spelled correctly in all the other languages, in Tatar there were two spelling errors – there were six letters in total, and two of them were wrong.<sup>33</sup>

Tatar linguistic purism is opposed to the use of Russian words in Tatar, both as conventional loanwords in Tatar and as Russian words, phrases, or sentences embedded in Tatar discourse. For example, in an article entitled *Ike tellek, imeş* ‘Bilingualism, kind of’, the author tells of an incident where he sits on a train near two older women who are mixing languages for the entirety of the trip – he finds their language “repulsive,” and feels compelled to reprimand them. He tells them, “You, old women... you are returning to the Tatar territory of Arëa [Russian *Arsk*], the soil of Gabdulla Tukay, and you are muddying Tukay’s language, crushing it.”<sup>34</sup> Tukay is the most beloved Tatar national poet; his most famous poem, *I Tugan Tel* ‘O Native Language’, has been set to music and is now the unofficial Tatar anthem. In this discourse, the mixing of Russian in with Tatar is seen as making the language impure, and this impure language, in turn, “muddies” the pure soil of the Tatar territory where Tukay, the ultimate symbol of Tatar

culture, once walked. This relationship of pure language and pure rural space echoes the young Tatar who connected my Tatar speech, which is without Russian phonetic interference, to the “clean” village life of a “pure” Tatar girl: unsoiled language, unsoiled girlhood, unsoiled soil – these are the ideals of the purist doctrines, and, among others, the goals of Tatar linguistic purification and de-Russification.

### *Orthographic reform*

The purification movement that is currently most conspicuous and politically topical is Tatarstan’s recently begun shift from the current Cyrillic alphabet (which includes six Tatar-specific letters) to a Latin-based alphabet, the fourth alphabet in a period of less than 100 years. The new alphabet was ratified in September of 1999, and the ten-year transition period began with street signs and school programs in the fall of 2000. Orthographic battles are common in situations “where identity and nationhood are under negotiation”; this is because “orthographic systems cannot be conceptualized simply as reducing speech to writing, but rather...are symbols that carry historical, cultural, and politicized meanings.”<sup>35</sup> The legal status of the transition to the new alphabet changed frequently during the first half of 2002. Most recently, on November 15, 2002, the State Duma passed the third and final reading of an amendment that prohibits the use of non-Cyrillic scripts by state languages in the Russian Federation – this amendment was provoked directly by the Tatar alphabet shift.

The official justification for the new alphabet, as found in the Tatar version of the law ratifying it, is that it “more accurately represents the particular characteristics of the Tatar language,” and will allow “entry into the system of world communication.”<sup>36</sup> Although both supporters and opposition alike perceive the new alphabet as a statement of pan-Turkic solidarity, due in great part to the new alphabet’s resemblance to the standard Turkish alphabet, and as a move toward the West, based on its resemblance to the Latin-based alphabet of many European languages, it is important to note that the new alphabet is still Tatar-specific – for example, instead of using ‘ä’ and ‘ö’ to represent two of Tatar’s front vowels, the new alphabet retains

<sup>30</sup> S. Gallämov. Äy *tatarnıng ränjetelgän mesken “h” awazı* // Şähri Kazan. 1998. February 29. P. 3.

<sup>31</sup> Ä. Kärimi. *Ber awaz tiräsändä* // Mädäni Jomga. 1999. June 9. P. 11.

<sup>32</sup> Mazhar. “H” *awazına hälakät yanıy*.

<sup>33</sup> Fäniyä Khujamät. *Küngel küze kürmäsä...* (If the soul’s eye doesn’t see...) // Mädäni Jomga. April 16, 1999. P. 18.

<sup>34</sup> Şamil Äkhmätjanov. *Ike tellek, imeş* // Şähri Kazan, March 24, 1997. P. 5.

<sup>35</sup> Woolard and Schieffelin. *Language Ideology*. P. 65.

<sup>36</sup> Mintimer Şäymiyev. *Tatarstan Respublikası Zakonı: Latin grafikası nigezendä Tatar alfavitin torğızu turında* (Law of the Republic of Tatarstan: About the construction of the Tatar alphabet based on Latin graphics). Law passed September 15, 1999: cited as printed in Mädäni Jomga 1999. November 26. P.12.

the two Tatar-specific Cyrillic letters designed to represent these vowels. The chosen orthography can thus be read as a metonymic representative of political and cultural orientation: it states that while the Tatars are aligning themselves with Turkey and the West, they are still distinct from them; as a culture, as a political entity, as a nation. Yurchak,<sup>37</sup> writing on the renaming of newly private businesses in 1990s Russia, notes that the process of renaming public space introduces a "particular new version of social reality" where the authors of the renaming "strive to impose themselves as the legitimate authors, owners, and masters of this reality." In this way, the Russian post-Soviet practice of renaming can be seen as parallel to the Tatar post-Soviet orthographic reform, where the new alphabet can be seen as not only reflecting a new social reality, where Tatars have more political control and greater sovereignty than in the Soviet era, but also as constructing that new social reality; it is a "linguistic innovation designed not only to reflect but also to initiate changes in the social world."<sup>38</sup>

### *Lexical reform: The return of Arabic and Persian loanwords*

Another language purification movement, found at both the individual and collective levels, is ongoing lexical reform by Tatar language planners and language professionals – less politically sensitive and less organized than orthographic reform, and not at all legislated. Soviet linguists, when engaged in the modernization and lexical development of the Soviet Union's more than 200 languages (under the aegis of Lenin's policy), worked towards a goal of transitioning monolingual speakers of minority languages to Russian bilingualism.<sup>39</sup> In the 1930s, Soviet linguists replaced most of the Arabic and Persian loanwords in Tatar with Russian loanwords, such that half of the entries in today's standard Tatar-Russian dictionaries<sup>40</sup> are Russian borrowings; in most cases the entries and the definitions are identical, e.g., the entry for the "Tatar" word *stena* 'wall' gives the Russian definition *stena*.<sup>41</sup> Present-

day Tatar language planners have three main options for the development and modernization of Tatar: (1) return to the Arabic or Persian loanword that was used up until the 1930s; (2) attempt to find a relic form used before or contemporaneously with a Russian loanword; and (3) coin new terminology using native Turco-Tatar stock.<sup>42</sup> The course of action chosen most often has been the first one: a return to the Arabic and Persian loanwords of the past.

Islamic culture significantly influenced what is now Volga Tatar culture for over a thousand years, with economic and political ties established well before the early-10<sup>th</sup> century conversion to Islam of Volga Bulgaria. In the Islamic world, Arabic was the language of not only religion, but also literature, culture and politics, and the influence of Arabic on the predecessors of the modern Tatar language was significant. The first Arabic loanwords date from as early as the 10<sup>th</sup> century, while Persian loanwords date from slightly later.<sup>43</sup> By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century a significant portion of the lexicon of written, literary Tatar was of Arabic origin – and the majority of these words were incomprehensible to those who were not educated in the literary languages of Arabic and Persian (a situation much like that of Ottoman Turkish vs. common Anatolian Turkish in the 19<sup>th</sup> century).<sup>44</sup>

In order to be comprehensible to the reading public, pre-Revolutionary Tatar texts are now presented with glossaries when they are reprinted in post-Soviet newspapers and magazines. For example, excerpts from the first issue of the journal *Şura* printed in honor of the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding in 1908<sup>45</sup> contain 177 words, 32 of which are translated in the glossary

<sup>42</sup> For recommendations on the third course of action see in particular Rasima Şamsutdinova. *Meditinskaja terminologija v Tatarskom iazyke*. Kazan, 2001; Foat Väliyev. *Fänni telme, ällä uram teleme? // Şähri Kazan*. 2001. January 20. P. 2; Ämin Minhaj. *Tatar telenä – tärräkiyat // Şähri Kazan*. 1993. March 24. P. 2.

These choices – retaining loanwords, coining neologisms, or finding archaic or dialectal variants – are quite common in language reform, particularly in post-colonial situations. For parallels in Guatemalan Mayan and Anatolian Turkish, see Julia Richards. *Mayan Language Planning for Bilingual Education in Guatemala // International Journal of the Sociology of Language*. 1989. No. 77. Pp. 93-115; Uriel Heyd. *Language Reform in Modern Turkey*. Jerusalem, 1954.

<sup>43</sup> Uli Schamiloglu, personal communication.

<sup>44</sup> In the Arabic-Persian stratum, the Persian element was approximately 10-12%. M. I. Mäkhmütov, M. I. Tatar ädäbi telenä kergän garäp-farsı elementları // M. I. Mäkhmütov, K. Z. Khämzin, and G. Ş. Säyfullin (eds.). *Garäpëä-Tatarëä-Rusëä Alınmalar Süzlege*. Kazan, 1993. P. 795-853.

<sup>45</sup> In Monjiyä Mädriyeva. "Şura" kingeş digän süz ("Şura" is a word of advice) // *Mädäni Jomga*. September 25, 1998. P. 13.

<sup>37</sup> Alexei Yurchak. *Privatize your Name: Symbolic Work in a post-Soviet Linguistic Market // Journal of Sociolinguistics*. 2000. No. 4 (3). P. 414.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* P. 420.

<sup>39</sup> Wolf Moskovich. *Planned Language Change in Russian Since 1917 // M. Kirkwood (ed.). Language Planning in the Soviet Union*. London, 1989.

<sup>40</sup> For example, F. Ä. Ganiyev. *Tatarëä-Rusëä uku-ukitu süzlege (Tatar-Russian academic dictionary)*. Kazan, 2000.

<sup>41</sup> Of course there were many Russian loanwords in Tatar before the Revolution, but these words were often adapted to the Tatar sound system, e.g., *karawat* < *krovat* 'bed'.

at the end – without this glossary 18% of these excerpts would presumably be incomprehensible to the modern Tatar reader. This lack of comprehensibility of texts written not even one hundred years ago is due to the previously mentioned language engineering that took place from the 1930s onward, where the Arabic-Persian stratum of the lexicon was mostly replaced with Russian borrowings (many of which are themselves borrowings from Latin and modern European languages). This process differed from the Tatar de-Arabicization movement of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century headed by K. Nasıyri in two major ways: first, the 19<sup>th</sup> century movement was grass-roots, while the Soviet-era language reform was institutional and top-down, and second, the 19<sup>th</sup> century movement had as a goal the increased usage of words of native Tatar and Turkic stock, while the Soviet-era reform had an end result of a Tatar lexicon that is half Russian. This relexification of Tatar, in combination with two alphabet changes in quick succession (from Arabic graphics to the Latin-based *Yangalif* in 1928, and then in 1938 from *Yangalif* to the modified Cyrillic script still in use today), caused a significant discontinuity with pre-Revolutionary Tatar culture, perceived by some to be purposeful and discriminatory. While the use of Arabic and Persian loanwords decreased from the 1930s onward, they started appearing once more in the language of the press around the time of *perestroika*, a gesture readily perceived by many Tatars as more than purely linguistic in nature. For example, Safiullina and Fyodorova explicitly link the return of Arabic-Persian loanwords to “the start of democratic changes in the country, due to the influence of the awakening of the people’s national self-consciousness.”<sup>46</sup> They interpret the increased use of archaic Arabic and Persian words as related to “the democratization of society, the revitalization of Islamic observance, the opening of Muslim schools, increased relations with Arabic countries and Turkey, and favorable conditions in our country’s socio-political state.”<sup>47</sup>

Arabic and Persian loanwords in Tatar can be separated into two groups: everyday words that are encountered in regular speech, and words that are used most frequently in literary registers. Words of the first sort, everyday words unmarked for register, were for the most part not removed during the Soviet-era relexification process and are generally felt to be native. In the

<sup>46</sup> Flyora Safiullina and El’vira Fyodorova. *Khäzerge tatar ädäbi telendä garäp-farsı alınmalarınıñ kire kaytu protsessı* (The process of the return of Arabic-Persian borrowings in the present-day Tatar literary language) // *Fän häm Tel.* 2000. No 3.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

1993 introduction to his Arabic loanwords dictionary, Mäkhmutov writes, “This stratum of borrowings... is found not only in the literary language but also in the conversational language of the Tatar population, who perceive this lexicon as their own, as Tatar. Who would say that the words *kitap* [book], *däftär* [notebook], *mäktäp* [school], *iman* [belief], *sabıy* [infant], *sabır* [patience]... and thousands of similar words are not Tatar?”<sup>48</sup>

The majority of the archaic Arabic words that are in the process of being revived in post-Soviet lexical reform, however, are more literary or formal words, words used to describe politics, literature, culture, and religion. Their use is not yet standardized – for example, one can find both *revolutsıia* ‘revolution’ and its Arabic equivalent *inkıylab* in one and the same article<sup>49</sup> – and more importantly, their use is not uncontroversial. Some Tatars resist the idea of replacing Russian words that are now standard in Tatar with Arabic equivalents. For example, one author argues in favor of keeping the word *sliot* ‘gathering, rally’ in the lexicon. He writes, “Let’s not throw out harmonious and meaningful words from our language that have been used for centuries, and fence in and narrow our interactions, impoverish our language. Let’s stay ourselves, and speak with meaningful words understood by us in our own country.”<sup>50</sup> However, sentiments so overtly in favor of retaining Russian loanwords are rarely heard in post-Soviet Tatar discourse. At the other extreme, we find stances such as the one expressed in an article entitled *Bäylänèek süzlärdän arınıyk!* ‘Let’s get rid of intrusive words!’, where the author has a hope that “in time every simple person will live understanding a Tatar language where Arabic and Persian words are heard.”<sup>51</sup> This author (whose name, Kotlıkaläm, which translates to ‘happy pen’, is clearly a pseudonym) deems the Russian words in the Tatar lexicon “parasites,” and suggests replacing them with archaic Arabic and Persian words.

Kotlıkaläm’s article generated several responses, all published in the same paper within the next several months, where the authors advocated a more moderate path in lexical reform. Some philologists would like to differentiate between words that are etymologically Russian and words that have an

<sup>48</sup> Mäkhmutov. *Ot sostavitelia.* P. 8.

<sup>49</sup> For example in Safiullina and Fyodorova. *Khäzerge tatar ädäbi telendä garäp-farsı alınmalarınıñ kire kaytu protsessı*, which is itself in part about the inconsistent use of Arabic loanwords.

<sup>50</sup> Nail Äsrov. *Telebez där’yası saf bulsın* (May the river of our language be pure) // *Şähri Kazan*, June 29, 1999. P. 3.

<sup>51</sup> Imammalik Kotlıkaläm. *Bäylänèek süzlärdän arınıyk!* *Şähri Kazan*, March 15, 1997. P. 3.

"international" origin. In response to Kotlikaläm suggestions, Fazıljanov<sup>52</sup> points out that many the words he had labelled as Russian were actually from Latin (e.g., *orator*, *dokument*, *etika*, *emigrant*), Greek (e.g., *tema*, *genotsid*), and French (e.g., *remont*). Fazıljanov's opinion is that archaic Arabic loanwords are "incomprehensible," and although he concedes that "after being repeated sufficiently often in the press, words like *jömhüriyat* [republic], *ik'tisad* [economics], *mädäniyat* [culture], *fırka* [group], *säyäsi* [political], *täräkkıyat* [development], *mökharır* [editor]...and other words have become almost customary," he believes that "it will be a good long time before they really enter the spoken language."<sup>53</sup>

Other philologists believe, probably correctly, that the average speaker is unaware of the etymologies of most of the loanwords in question, and generally unable to differentiate between words of international origin and those of Russian origin. One such philologist writes:

...many terms are words taken from Greek and Latin. But they are not perceived as such. So they seem to us to be entirely Russian. For example: *protsess* [process], *apparat* [apparatus], *absoliut* [absolute], *avtomat* [vending machine, call-box], *informatsiia* [information] etc. – who wouldn't say that these are Russian words?<sup>54</sup>

His suggestion is "to translate scientific and technological terms into the mother tongue."<sup>55</sup> This preference for using native stock, "Tatar's own resources," is one commonly voiced in discourse on lexical reform, where suggested replacements include "forgotten Turkic words" such as *yazgın* 'secretary' lieu of *sekretar*, and *kiarkhanä* 'factory' in lieu of *fabrika* and *zavod*.<sup>56</sup>

However, the most common course of action has been the return to selected Arabic loanwords, portrayed by supporters as words that were, "in essence, forfeited in the process of Sovietization of the national culture."<sup>57</sup> A great many of the Russian words used in political and cultural discourse

have been replaced in the post-Soviet daily press by their pre-Revolutionary Arabic equivalents: for example, in the realm of politics we find the words *khakimiyat* 'ruling power', *säyäsät* 'politics', *ijtimagiy* 'social', *möstäkıl'lek* 'independence', and many more. These words are quite commonly used in the post-Soviet press, far more often than their formerly-standard Russian equivalents, and their usage is reasonably uncontroversial. However, a complaint that surfaces rather often is that the press is going too far in their use of Arabic words, that there are no established norms, and that words are used inconsistently within the same paper: "the language of the press is moving away from the language of the people. Simple people have begun to say that there is no sense, that they don't understand anything that is written in newspapers and magazines."<sup>58</sup> Complaints about the increasing gap between the language of the press and the language of the people can be found both in articles by philologists and in letters to the editor from ordinary citizens. For example, it is a philologist who writes that:

it has become more difficult to read Tatar newspapers and journals from one end to another in one sitting. After picking up a newspaper and starting to read, you must stop and busy yourself with foreign words that are meaningless in Tatar, and then you remain in thought...<sup>59</sup>

The use of incomprehensible Arabic loanwords is explicitly related to the construction of Tatar identity, as can be seen in the title of this letter to the editor, (most likely ironically) given the title *Min Tatar tügel, akhrısi* 'I am not a Tatar, it would seem':

In the Tatar newspapers and journals that are published these days, I continually encounter words that I just do not know. For example: *näfasät* [moment], *manzara* [view, spectacle], *wäzgiyat* [situation], *ik'tisad* [economics], and others. They aren't in any dictionary... Also, if there are Tatar terms available, skip the Russian words, for example, *problema* [problem], *predpriiatie* [enterprise, business], *faktor* [factor], *sotsiologiia* [sociology] and others. All right, there aren't translations for words like *kıbernetika* [cybernetics] and *kompiuter*

<sup>52</sup> Äkhät Fazıljanov. Don Kikhot bulmiyk inde (Let's not be Don Quixote) // Šähri Kazan, April 16, 1997. P. 3.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Rämzi Nogmani. Tatarä belem alıyk (Let us learn in Tatar) // Šähri Kazan, August 10, 1991. P. 3.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> M. Khäyrullin. Tellärne gamälgä aşıru komitetında (On the committee for the implementation of languages) // Mädäni Jomga. 1998. January 30. P. 11.

<sup>57</sup> Mäkhmutov. Ot sostavitelia. P. 9.

<sup>58</sup> Gölınar Jälälova. Bezgä nindi süz kiräk (Terminaribiz turında uylaşıyk) (Which word do we need? (Let's think about our terminology)) // Šähri Kazan. 1996. October 30. P. 3.

<sup>59</sup> Foat Väliıev. Tugan telne tugaru, yaki terminologik başbaştaklık (The unharnessing of the native tongue, or the tyranny of terminology) // Mädäni Jomga. 1999. June 18. P. 9.

[computer], but for the Russian words written above, there are Tatar terms after all.<sup>60</sup>

Note that the letter writer does not distinguish between Russian words that are of native stock (*predpriiatie*) and Russian words that are themselves borrowings (*problema*, *faktor*, and *sotsiologiya*): she labels them all simply "Russian." Interestingly, the Tatar terms that would be used in place of these Russian terms would either be Arabic loanwords (e.g., *mäs'älä* 'problem') or do not exist (e.g., there is currently no native equivalent for *faktor*) and thus would need to be neologisms. But the letter's author is indeed correct when she states that the Arabic words listed above cannot be found in most Tatar dictionaries, with the exception of special dictionaries of Arabic borrowings, dictionaries that are not commonly available. The first few times that an archaic Arabic loanword is used in a present-day newspaper or journal, it will usually have a translation adjacent to it, either the Russian loanword it is replacing or an explanatory Tatar phrase. However, readers who miss the first few times an archaic Arabic loanword is translated or explained will be left without a means for understanding it, unless they have access to an Arabic dictionary.

Additionally, due in part to semantic fields that do not entirely overlap, or to mismatched polysemy, some of these returning Arabic loanwords are not entirely synonymous with their Russian "equivalents," or are being used differently than they were in the past. For example, the word *mökharir* was used in pre-Revolutionary times to refer to the professions of writer, journalist, author, and editor, but in post-Soviet Tatar is used only as a substitute for *redaktor* 'editor.' Väliyev<sup>61</sup> notes that there is a semantic mismatch that causes *mädäniyat* 'culture' to be used inappropriately as a substitute for Russian *kul'tura*: apparently the Arabic word has a spiritual component that makes expressions like *matdi mädäniyat* 'material culture' inappropriate. And Minhaj<sup>62</sup> does not find *mäs'älä* 'problem' to always be an appropriate substitute for *problema* – semantic nuances differentiate the two, such that they are not sufficiently synonymous to be used interchangeably. He suggests, "Let both the words *problema* and *mäs'älä* be used. The use of words with partially overlapping meanings shows a language's richness." Due to a

lack of either standardization or widely accepted norms, the simultaneous use of both Arabic and Russian loanwords is currently the *de facto* norm. Lexical collocations such as *ijtimagiyy problemalar* 'social problems', where the adjective is a formerly archaic Arabic loanword, the noun is a Russian borrowing of "international" origin, and the plural suffix is Tatar, are emblematic of post-Soviet Tatar linguistic reality.

Tatarstan is far from the only post-imperial republic to engage in linguistic purification movements. A comparison between Tatar and 20<sup>th</sup> century Turkish linguistic purism and language reform is particularly illuminating both because of the similarities in the linguistic history of these two Turkic languages, and because the language reforms in Tatarstan and Turkey have had different results, particularly with regards to Arabic and Persian loanwords.

The ancestors of the modern Turks converted to Islam in the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and lexical borrowing from Arabic and Persian began in the Seljuk empire (1040-1157).<sup>63</sup> The use of what is known as "Ottoman Turkish" as a literary language dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, at which point there were already many Arabic and Persian loanwords in the literary high language.<sup>64</sup> Ottoman Turkish was both a literary and an administrative language, distinct from the vernacular of the people and incomprehensible to them, as it required competence in both Arabic and Persian. By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Ottoman Turkish had been so heavily relexified with Arabic and Persian loanwords, and used so many foreign grammatical morphemes and constructions, that the native Turkic elements in a sentence could be limited to suffixes or the copulas *dî* or *dir*, or there could be no native Turkic elements *at all*. This heavy reliance upon foreign words and grammar continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>65</sup>

Along with the establishment in the 1920s of the rule of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) came both massive and officially sanctioned reform of Ottoman Turkish. Atatürk's stated political ideology called for the creation of a nationalist, secular, populist, and revolutionary republic,<sup>66</sup> where political independence would be mirrored by linguistic independence: in the foreword to a 1930 book, he wrote, "The Turkish nation, which is well able to protect

<sup>60</sup> N. Iskändärova. Min Tatar tügel, akhrisî // Watanim Tatarstan. 2001. February 6. P. 6.

<sup>61</sup> Väliyev. Tugan telne tugaru, yaki terminologik başbaştaklık.

<sup>62</sup> Ämin Minhaj. Süzne alıştıru –Bik jütdi yış (The replacement of a word is very serious work) // Sähri Kazan. 1997. September 3. P. 2.

<sup>63</sup> Geoffrey Lewis. *The Turkish Language Reform: A Catastrophic Success*. Oxford, 1999. P. 5.

<sup>64</sup> Heyd. *Language Reform in Modern Turkey*.

<sup>65</sup> This can be seen in an anecdote found in Lewis. *The Turkish Language Reform*. P. 40.

<sup>66</sup> Heyd. *Language Reform in Modern Turkey*. P. 19.

its territory and its sublime independence, must also liberate its language from the yoke of foreign languages."<sup>67</sup> In the new climate of nationalism, along with the new westward orientation of Turkey, Arabic and Persian loanwords were perceived as a "national disgrace"<sup>68</sup> that had no place in the language of the new secular nation. Linguistic and religious reform went hand-in-hand: 1928, known as the year of *dil inkıylabı* 'the language revolution' is also the year that it was decreed that Islam was no longer the official state religion, and the study of Arabic and Persian as foreign languages was removed from the standard curriculum for secondary-level education in 1929.

A change in orthography played a major role in Atatürk's Turkish language reform. The move in 1928 from an Arabic-based to a Latin-based alphabet has been interpreted as a gesture designed both to break ties with the Islamic East and to facilitate communication with the West.<sup>69</sup> The lexical reform of the Turkish "language revolution" focused on removing Arabic and Persian loanwords and replacing them with "appropriate" equivalents. The process was originally populist in nature, with lexical collection committees set up throughout the republic, committees that managed to gather over 125,000 forms (where 1 form = 1 suggested replacement word) in the space of just one year.<sup>70</sup> Additionally, in the early days of language reform, daily newspapers would publish Arabic and Persian loanwords on their front pages and request native equivalents from their readers. It was discovered that the vernacular and dialects of Turkish could provide native equivalents for concrete terms, but not for abstract ones.<sup>71</sup> The language committee turned to alternative sources for acceptable words: remote Anatolian dialects, Turkic languages spoken outside of Anatolia, pre-Islamic manuscripts, and neologisms.<sup>72</sup>

Here in the Turkish case we once again find linguistic purism with "selective targeting": Turkish was to be purified of Persian and Arabic loanwords, but in addition to the native and semi-native lexical sources listed above, European loanwords were also considered to be acceptable substitutes. One language reformer wrote: "Mark this well: the thrust of the re-

form movement is specifically against Arabic. Arabic words have to be discarded come what may, for this is a generation that is fed up with the domination of Arabic. If the French equivalent were to replace it, that's fine."<sup>73</sup>

The end result of 20<sup>th</sup> century lexical reform in Turkish, which continued up until the 1980s, is that not only is Ottoman Turkish incomprehensible to speakers of modern Turkish who have not studied it specially, but also texts written during the 1930s, the early days of the purification movement, are also incomprehensible, and apparently this unintelligibility is considered to be "normal";<sup>74</sup> for example, the Turkish constitution has been translated and retranslated into modern Turkish several times. Arabic and Persian words were expelled inconsistently – for example, *hakim* 'judge' was replaced by Turkic *yargıç*, but *makheme* 'court' remained<sup>75</sup> – and a significant percentage of the lexicon of written Turkish is still comprised of Arabic and Persian loanwords. As with some of the archaic Arabic loanwords being brought back into usage in post-Soviet Tatar, post-Revolutionary Turkish neologisms often do not precisely match either the semantics or the polysemy patterns of the words they are replacing; for example, *tejrübe etmek* meant 'to experiment', 'to test', and 'to experience', while its replacement *denemek* means only 'to experiment'.<sup>76</sup> Turkish writers and older speakers complain of the lack of synonymic richness and lexical resources in the new languages, and Lewis, who is decidedly critical of the language reform in general<sup>77</sup> contends that it "left the Turks with virtually no choice of levels of discourse."<sup>78</sup>

The similarities and differences between the Turkish and Tatar language reforms can be seen as grounded in the larger socio-cultural and political context. Both reforms are sited within a nationalist project, and the selected targets of the reforms are languages perceived as threats: the Turkish focus was on the purification of Arabic and Persian influence, and European linguistic influences were deemed to be part of "pure" Turkish, while the Tatar focus is on the purification of Russian influence, and Arabic (and to a lesser extent Persian) is deemed to be a part of "pure" Tatar. While the Arabicization of Turkish was done by the Turks themselves, the Russification of Ta-

<sup>67</sup> Lewis. The Turkish Language Reform. P. 42.

<sup>68</sup> Heyd. Language Reform in Modern Turkey. P. 19.

<sup>69</sup> Lewis. The Turkish Language Reform. P. 27; Anderson. Imagined Communities. Pp. 45-46.

<sup>70</sup> Heyd. Language Reform in Modern Turkey. P. 26-27.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. P. 29.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. P. 31.

<sup>73</sup> Lewis. The Turkish Language Reform. P. 118.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. Pp. 142-143.

<sup>75</sup> Heyd. Language Reform in Modern Turkey. P. 43.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. P. 75.

<sup>77</sup> This is clear from the subtitle of his book: "A Catastrophic Success".

<sup>78</sup> Lewis. The Turkish Language Reform. P. 144.

tar was brought about by an imperial (in the sense of the Soviet Empire) government. Additionally, the “break with the past” in post-revolutionary Turkey included a move towards secularism, while the Tatar break with the Soviet past takes the form of a move towards an Islamic identification, albeit not always congruent with religious observance. As a result, the purification movements of these two Turkic languages have had different results with regard to their Arabic loanwords: Arabic influence was rejected and expelled by the Turks as having no place in the post-Ottoman Turkish identity, but is currently being embraced by many Tatars as part of the post-Soviet Tatar identity. While the embrace of the Tatar-language press of Arabic loanwords is not completely uncontroversial, it is, to a certain extent, a fait accompli, and also consistent with the communal creation of a post-Soviet Tatar identity that is buttressed by the return of Islamic observance and by Tatarstan’s increased religious, educational, and socio-economic ties with Arabic countries. This linguistic and ideological reorientation, along with redefinition of the nature and features of post-Soviet Tatar identity, is bound up in the Tatars’ ongoing struggle to resist religious, cultural, and linguistic assimilation into the Russian majority.

## SUMMARY

Статья Сюзан Вертхайм анализирует языковые идеологии в постсоветском Татарстане. Татарский язык находился в течение длительного времени в подчиненном положении по отношению к доминирующему русскому. После провозглашения суверенитета Татарстана татарская интеллигенция прибегает к языковым идеологиям, которые позволяют перевести центр тяжести с русской идеологии татарского языка на татарскую. Важнейшим элементом такого перевода является практика “очищения” языка от русскоязычного влияния, что часто ведет к усилению персидских и арабских заимствований, в тоже время затрудняя коммуникацию, поскольку широкие слои населения не способны быстро адаптироваться к новому языку. Автор анализирует стремление к переводу татарского языка на латинский алфавит в контексте “очищения” татарского языка, понимаемого прежде всего в терминах оппозиции по отношению к русскому языку. В сочетании с реориента-

цией татарской постсоветской идентичности и расширением контактов прежде всего с исламским миром, языковая идеология в постсоветском Татарстане рассматривается автором как отражение стремления к сопротивлению языковой и культурной ассимиляции в русское большинство.