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# ALPHABET CHANGES IN SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA AND COMMUNIST CHINA

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**I**N an earlier article in the R.C.A.S. Journal I surveyed the alphabetic changes which have occurred in Soviet Central Asia in the past thirty-five years as well as those which have taken place more recently in Mongolia and Communist China.<sup>1</sup> This article included information available up to the autumn of 1955. Since that time some new information on Soviet Central Asia has become available and there have been several further developments of interest in both the Soviet Union and China.

The shortcomings of the Cyrillic alphabets now in use in Soviet Central Asia have become increasingly clear. Recently a leading Soviet journal has printed a proposal for unification of the alphabets of all the Turkic peoples. In China alphabetic and language reform has been implemented with almost as much speed and determination by the Communist authorities as they have applied to agricultural collectivization. A far-reaching reform of the Chinese character system is under way, and a Latin alphabet is being introduced with the announced intention that it will replace the character system entirely in a few years. Minority nationalities of south and southwest China are being given Latin alphabets of the same type that is to be used by the Chinese themselves. In Inner Mongolia the shift over to the Cyrillic alphabet is being accelerated, and it has now been decided that the Cyrillic alphabet will likewise be adopted for the languages of the various peoples of Sinkiang. Of all the Inner Asian regions, Tibet alone still remains unaffected by Communist plans for alphabetic and linguistic reform.

The present article is based on information available up to the beginning of 1957.

## I. SOVIET CENTRAL ASIA

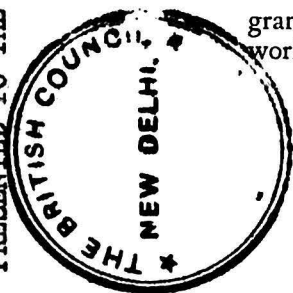
The prominent Soviet Turcologist, Baskakov, devoted the last portion of his long article, "The Turkic Peoples of the U.S.S.R.—the Development of their Languages and Writing," which appeared in 1952,<sup>2</sup> to the unsolved problems of the Turkic languages. Among them he mentioned the proper selection of dialects as bases for the literary languages, the establishment of rules for handling new words and the construction of proper grammatical terminology. He also outlined a number of measures necessary for the improvement of existing alphabets and standardization of spelling, and went so far as to suggest that the alphabets of the various Turkic languages be co-ordinated to bring them "as close as possible to Russian and thus remove present inconsistencies." He concluded his articles with a statement remarkable for its sycophantic smugness:

"Execution of all these tasks has been made possible by the programmes and methodological instructions set forth in J. V. Stalin's works of genius."



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Stalin soon passed from the scene. It has not been fashionable among Soviet linguists in the years since his passing to cite his "works of genius," but the problems of alphabets and dialect bases for the Turkic languages have remained. Questions of assimilation and handling of new words have still not been settled. There seems to be a tendency toward considering some of these problems from a common viewpoint, but Soviet Turcologists have been careful not to go too far.<sup>3</sup> The problem of alphabetic reform remains one of the most controversial issues.

An interesting example of the kind of discussion that has occurred is provided by a linguistic conference which was held in the Karakalpak A.S.S.R. in September, 1954.<sup>4</sup> The conference was attended by such notables as Baskakov and the archæologist Tolstov. It seems to have been devoted primarily to the problem of reform of the Karakalpak alphabet.

The Karakalpak language is spoken by about 185,000 people in the Karakalpak A.S.S.R. The Karakalpaks and their language are more closely related to the Kazakhs than to the Uzbeks, and before the Revolution formed part of the old Khanate of Khiva. In the Soviet era they have always formed part of the Uzbek S.S.R. The Karakalpak language fared worse than the other Central Asian Turkic languages in the Cyrillic alphabetic reform of the late 1930's.<sup>5</sup> The Cyrillic alphabet, as applied to each language, had to have as many separate and distinct features as possible. It was the lot of the Karakalpak language to receive an awkward spelling system in which the exact pronunciation of certain vowels<sup>6</sup> was indicated not by the letters themselves but by the forms of adjoining consonants or an extra letter (the Cyrillic "hard sign") added to the end of words or syllables. For the other Central Asian Turkic languages diacritical marks or slightly altered forms of the basic letters were used for these sounds. The Cyrillic alphabet as applied to Karakalpak was far less satisfactory than either the earlier reformed Arabic or Latin alphabets had been.<sup>7</sup>

This alphabet, which was adopted in 1940, apparently proved so impractical that the necessity for reform had to be recognized. The September, 1954, conference discussed the problem of alphabetic reform in detail. The inadequacy of the original Karakalpak Cyrillic alphabet was sharply condemned.

"The great shortcoming of current Karakalpak orthography, as many speakers mentioned, is the fact that it does not reflect the phonetic structure of the Karakalpak language . . . The question of modifying and making more precise current Karakalpak orthography is most urgent, as was noted unanimously by all speakers."

A revised alphabet with separate letters for each vowel sound was proposed by K. U. Ubaidullaev, and all those present at the conference approved the revisions. It was agreed that the new alphabet would be presented for confirmation to the Council of Ministers of the Karakalpak A.S.S.R. after the reactions of the Academy of Sciences of the Uzbek S.S.R. and of the Institute of Linguistics of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. had been obtained.

The report on the conference contains two other features worthy of note. K. U. Ubaidullaev, who proposed and explained the revised alpha-

bet, adhered to the usual position in respect to Russian words. "Russian-international words which have come into the Karakalpak language must be written as they are written in Russian." There was some mention of a common approach to all of the Turkic languages:

"As for the question of the correct method of writing compound words, speakers during the discussion came out in favour of writing them separately in the overwhelming majority of cases. During the discussions the necessity of studying the question of joined and separate words on a common plane for the whole group of Turkic languages was mentioned by many speakers."

The second Turkmen Linguistic Congress held in October, 1954,<sup>8</sup> brought forth many proposals which, although they seem not to have been accepted, testify to the relative instability of the alphabetic and linguistic situation in this Central Asian republic. One of the participants proposed that three new letters be added to the Cyrillic alphabet as now used for the Turkmen language. His suggestion was turned down because "this change in Turkmen spelling would not be justified in practice because the number of errors made by students in writing would probably increase to a marked degree." On the other hand, another participant in the Congress proposed that seven letters—all required to write Russian words but not necessary to represent Turkmen sounds—be dropped from the Turkmen alphabet. This proposal was rejected "because increasing or decreasing the number of letters in the alphabet . . . would unavoidably lead to a significant change in Turkmen spelling."

Although the participants in the Congress seemed to have diagnosed a wide variety of alphabetical and linguistic difficulties and suffered from no lack of suggestions for improvements, the Congress as a body was reluctant to make any changes for fear that these would cause still more complications. On the question of spelling of words taken from Russian, the Congress apparently had no alternative but to confirm the party-line position:

"Great attention [was given] to the principles of correct writing of words taken from the Russian language, and the opinion was expressed that they should be written as they are written in Russian and not as these words are pronounced in the Turkmen language. A difference in the way of writing them not only introduces confusion and encourages illiteracy in parallel study in schools of the Russian and Turkmen languages but also puts a brake on the cultural development of the Turkmen people."

While words taken from Russian continue to be written as in Russian when used in Turkmen, they must nevertheless take Turkic morphological and grammatical endings. Lists of words cited by some of the speakers give interesting examples of the strange results that this Russian-Turkmen mating has produced: *tekhnikalyk redaktor* (technical editor), *burzhuazlyk dovlet* (bourgeois government), *liberallyk*, *liberalchylyk* or *liberalizmchilik* (all meaning "liberalism"), *opportunistlik*, *opportunistchilik* or *opportunizmchilik* (all meaning "opportunism").<sup>9</sup>

One has the impression that the Second Turkmen Linguistic Congress

cleared up very little of the confusion confronting the Turkmen in writing their language. The Congress apparently concluded that it was impossible to decide how certain words such as *dostluk/dostlyk* ("friendship") should be spelled. The Turkmen Stalin prize winning author Kerbabaev suggested that one uniform way of spelling the names of towns be adopted so that there would not be different Russian and Turkmen spellings for many of them (Tashauz/Dashkhovuz, Kara-Kala/Garygala), but no decision seems to have been made on this question either.

Problems similar to those which have beset the Karakalpakhs and the Turkmen also trouble the other Central Asian peoples. Since the present form of their alphabets and to a considerable degree even their literary languages have been forced upon them, it is not surprising that these peoples are not content with them. It would be natural for the Russians as well as for some of the native peoples to attempt to find a solution for some of these problems on a common plane. Until recently this has been strongly discouraged, for it has been Communist policy to emphasize the separateness of each nationality and to discourage meaningful political and cultural contact between them. Against the background of Russian Communist policy in Central Asia during the past two decades, the suggestion that a unified Turkic alphabet again be considered is a noteworthy development. *Sovetskoe Vostokovedenie* in September, 1956, published an article making such a proposal.<sup>10</sup>

Relatively little is known about A. K. Borovkov, the author of the article. He seems to be one of the less prolific Soviet Turcologists. It is in keeping with Soviet practice to choose a person of relatively secondary stature to open a controversial discussion. An editorial note appended to the article states:

"In publishing the present article the editors request readers to express their ideas on the question raised by A. K. Borovkov."

This kind of note attached to an article on a controversial topic in a Soviet journal usually indicates that an official decision has been taken to permit some degree of "public discussion" in a field where changes may be made. It is a kind of ritual peculiar to the Communist system. If the "discussion" does not go well, if a shift of line occurs, the author of such an article may even be condemned for raising a controversial issue. Borovkov takes no undue chances. His article is written in such cautious fashion that his thoughts often seem inconsistent and muddled. He devotes the first part of his article to praise of the Cyrillic alphabet. He points out that the Cyrillic alphabet, as used by Slavic languages other than Russian, has additional letters which might well be considered for use in non-Slavic languages, and mentions two additional letters used in Ukrainian, five used in Serbian and one diacritical mark used in Belorussian as examples. One expects this line of thought to reappear later in the article; but the author does not return to it. The main point which he seems to have intended to get across in his article is that unification of the alphabets of practically all the non-Slavic languages of the U.S.S.R. would be desirable. Successful earlier experience with the unified Latin alphabet is mentioned in support of this point of view toward the end of the article:

"The experience of the earlier Latin alphabet demonstrated convincingly that the unification of the Turkic, Mongolian and several other alphabets is completely possible and appropriate. The 'Yanalif' typewriter and the typographical machines were standardized to such an extent that they could be used at the same time by practically all the national republics and regions using the unified script. At the present time the situation has become so complicated that for relatively minor differences in alphabets it is in nearly all cases necessary to change the keyboards of typewriters and printing machines. Reading of literature in related languages has also been made difficult."

The author tries to justify the changes he proposes primarily on practical grounds in terms of financial savings in the production of typewriters and the operation of printing machines. He is very cautious about referring to the fact that the current highly varied alphabets hamper communication between closely related Turkic peoples. Only at one other point is this problem directly mentioned:

"Different methods of applying the Russian alphabet could not help showing up in the results. For example, the phonetically extremely similar Karakalpak and Kazakh languages (practically only one sound, 'h,' distinguishes them, being present in Karakalpak and absent in Kazakh) are completely different in writing: The alphabets in both languages are different; the orthographic solution of identical features is accomplished in different ways."

The fact that related minorities in the U.S.S.R. are hindered in communicating effectively with each other—in reading each other's newspapers and books—because of the deliberately contrived alphabets which they have been forced to use since the late 1930's is not by itself likely to be regarded as sufficient reason to introduce an alphabet applicable to the great majority of minority languages, Turkic and otherwise.

Borovkov gives a vivid picture of variations in the use of letters and application of spelling principles in the various Soviet Turkic languages. While in addition to the normal Cyrillic alphabet, the Kirgiz language employs three supplemental letters, Uzbek uses four, Kazakh nine and Uigur as written in Kazakhtan eight; the revised Karakalpak alphabet requires six additional letters. Borovkov dwells on the alphabetical misadventures of the Karakalpaks at some length. It appears from what he writes that the changes in Karakalpak orthography recommended at the 1954 linguistic conference were adopted soon afterward.

Borovkov's conclusions are not clear. He proposes a revised system of six pairs of vowels which he says would be adequate for all the Turkic and Mongolian languages, but he shies away from proposing a complete system of consonants. He states that diacritical marks should be avoided and cites a condemnation of them by the Russian Academy of Sciences in 1924 in support of his point of view, but he nevertheless concludes by recommending the use of diacritical marks for vowels and a system of hooks and other odd appendages for some Cyrillic consonants which seem far more objec-

tionable (and awkward for typing and printing) than diacritical marks. He never makes clear his position on the spelling of Russian words adopted by the minority languages, and although his article supposedly deals only with the Turkic languages he usually talks in terms of all minority languages.

Concluding his article, Borokov again mentions the financial gains which a unified alphabet would bring, points to the disadvantages of private initiative in changing alphabets and states:

“It would be extraordinarily timely to request the Soviet of Nationalities of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. to take upon itself the direction of this great and complicated task.”

The Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. and least of all its Soviet of Nationalities has never yet been entrusted with the direction of any task of importance. Borokov's naïve hope that it might undertake the working out of a unified Turkic Cyrillic alphabet would seem to have little chance of realization. It is curious that Borokov's article has up to now (end of January, 1957) neither been commented on nor echoed in other articles in the daily press or in Soviet learned journals reaching the West. It appeared at a time when the post-XXth Congress “thaw” was beginning to slacken. A sharp brake was put on the rewriting of history, *e.g.* at the end of 1956.<sup>11</sup> Plans for readjusting the Central Asian alphabets may have to be postponed while Party bureaucrats reimpose conformity in more important fields of academic endeavour.

Alphabetic changes in Central Asia would be of little interest if they were not actually reflections of basic political problems. The Soviet claim that Communism has brought political emancipation to the peoples of Central Asia and has resulted in an unprecedented flowering of native cultures seems questionable in face of the fact that not even in the most basic aspects of the cultural life of these peoples—the languages which they use and the alphabets with which they write them—has stability been achieved. No wonder Central Asian literature is so barren. Few works of value have been produced during the whole Soviet period. Even the Soviet dispensers of Stalin and Lenin prizes seem to have difficulty in finding Central Asian works worthy of the honour.

“. . . Central Asian literature is not merely backward, but provincial. It has not only to observe the ceremonial of deferring to Marxist principles—and this it does without real understanding—but also to defer to Russia and to Russian literature.”<sup>12</sup>

Central Asian writers can hardly be expected to have overcome all the other obstacles they face when they cannot even be sure which form of their languages they should use or of the alphabet in which they must write. In the Western World and the freer portions of Asia it is the creative writers and the foremost journalists who, more than any others, set current literary standards for their languages. With Communists it is otherwise. Committees of “experts” and conferences and congresses of “cultural workers,” dominated by Party bureaucrats, decide these questions. They are constantly undoing and redoing what they have done a few years before. The result is linguistic and alphabetic chaos. Under such condi-

tions cultural progress which occurs is not likely to be visible on the surface of the life of these regions. Only when fetters of Communist control are appreciably loosened, are we likely to gain a real measure of the cultural capabilities of the Central Asian peoples.

## II. COMMUNIST CHINA

Plans for reforming the Chinese language have gone ahead rapidly. Chinese Communist language policy has now become clear. The "Conference on the reform of Chinese Writing," which was held in Peking from October 15-23, 1955, decided that for the immediate future Chinese characters would be simplified and the "National Language" based on the northern (Peking) dialect would be popularized throughout the country. The form of writing would be changed from vertical to horizontal. Finally, preparations would be made for eventual change to a completely phonetic alphabet.<sup>13</sup>

It was reported at the conference that six projects for alphabetic systems for Chinese had been completed. Four of these were "national," *i.e.* based on symbols deriving from the character system; one was based on the Cyrillic alphabet and one on the Latin alphabet.

"Many delegates representing the press and different sectors of cultural work referred to the harm caused by the complicated character system in different fields (telegraphy, typing, typography, schools and anti-illiteracy campaigns, scientific terminology, dictionaries, etc.). From these speeches it is apparent that the demand for the reform of the system of writing and the simplification of the characters has actually become general."<sup>14</sup>

A professor from the Central Academy of National Minorities remarked upon:

"... the unanimous demand of the Miao and other national minorities for simplification of the character system. The complicated Chinese system of writing discouraged minorities from studying Chinese, he said, and made it difficult to draw them into Chinese culture."<sup>14</sup>

The year 1956 brought rapid implementation of most of the decisions of the October, 1955, conference. In January newspapers and publishing houses began printing characters horizontally, from left to right. The State Council approved the establishment of a central working committee to popularize the northern dialect on January 28.<sup>15</sup> On February 10 the State Council gave approval for experiments to be made with a thirty-letter alphabet based on Latin script. At the same time it was decreed that the northern dialect exclusively must be taught in all schools starting in the autumn of 1956. By 1960 it was expected that most students would be able to use the National Language with complete effectiveness. Army cadres and military schools were ordered to shift over to use of the northern dialect within one year. In minority areas henceforth only the northern dialect of Chinese would be taught, in addition to the local native language.

A programme for simplification of the most commonly used characters was initiated in earnest. Newspapers had already experimented with simplified characters in 1955. Further efforts toward simplification of characters continued throughout 1956. The use of certain complex characters is now forbidden, groups of simplified characters have been made mandatory for newspaper use and alternative characters regarded as unnecessary have been proscribed. By mid-1957 it is estimated that about 1,700 simplified characters should be in use. By the end of 1958 it is hoped that approximately half of the 6-7,000 characters in regular use will have undergone the simplification process. As new lists of simplified characters are promulgated their use becomes mandatory for newspapers and general public purposes. Only in the printing of ancient texts is the use of the older forms of characters permissible.<sup>16</sup>

At the 8th Party Congress in September, 1956, Wu Yu-Chang, Chinese Communist Party Central Committee member and President of the Chinese People's University stated that for the time being changes in the written language would be confined to further simplification of characters. He estimated that it would take three to five years of trials before a phonetic alphabet could be universally introduced. Meanwhile, discussion of the alphabet proposed in September continued in the press and in academic circles. At least one contribution to the discussion was made by a Soviet author,<sup>17</sup> who advocated the use of a total of thirty-seven signs, mostly Latin, some Cyrillic, instead of the thirty in the officially proposed Chinese version. His advice seems not to have been taken, for on November 21 it was announced that the draft plan for the new Chinese Latin alphabet (presented for discussion in February) had been completed and that even the additional letters which had originally been proposed had been dropped.<sup>18</sup>

Like the efforts for reforming the Chinese language, plans for reform of the various minority languages have also gone ahead rapidly. A conference on reform of the minority languages was held in Peking from December 6-15, 1955. This conference directed that the work of providing alphabets for languages which have none must be completed before 1960. In languages where written scripts are defective, improvements or changes will be made. It was decided to send seven working teams to various parts of the country to supervise work on minority languages. A Soviet expert, Serdyuchenko, gave a report on Soviet experience in creating written languages for minority peoples.<sup>19</sup>

In south and south-west China the Communist authorities have gone ahead rapidly to devise new alphabets for the minority peoples who live in these regions. Practically all these languages are structurally akin to Chinese. The Latin alphabet apparently is being used for most of them. Since the Latin alphabet is eventually to be adopted for Chinese, employment of it among minority groups of south and south-west China and the spread of literacy among them should facilitate eventual Sinicization.

It was announced in November that the revised Miao script would be based on the Latin alphabet.<sup>20</sup> In Yünnan a linguistic committee has been set up to supervise changes among the non-Chinese nationalities of the region, numbering over 2,000,000 people. The committee has announced that it plans by the end of 1957 to achieve a "uniform and systematic



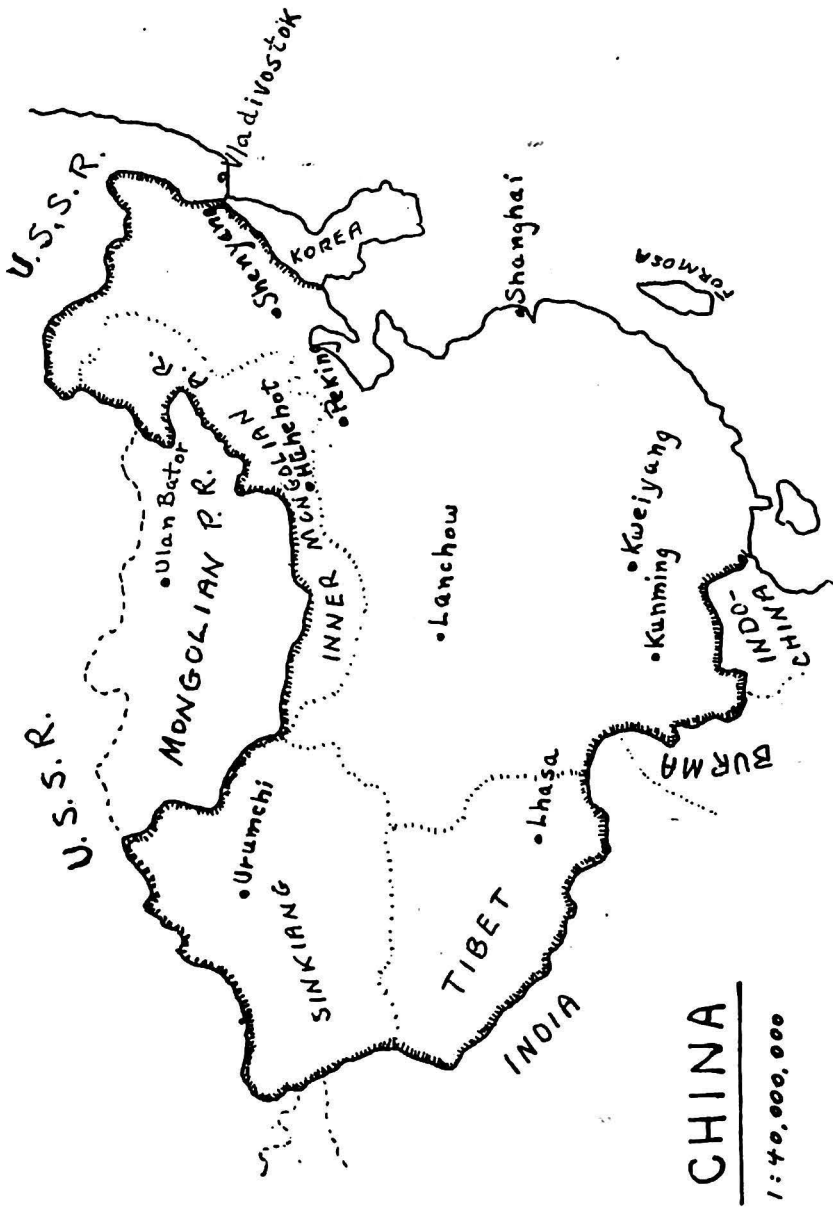
formulation" of the more than a dozen languages of the region and to devise appropriate phonetic alphabets for them.<sup>21</sup>

Early in 1956, it was decided that the plan for applying the Cyrillic alphabet in Inner Mongolia should be speeded up. Four, instead of the previous six years are now to be allotted for completion of the plan.<sup>22</sup> A conference on implementation of the new plan took place in Hühohot, capital of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, May 22. Soviet experts attended.<sup>23</sup> It was announced in November that popularization of the new alphabet had actually got under way in Inner Mongolia in July. Seven thousand teachers were said to have been trained and a million textbooks prepared. It was calculated that an illiterate person could master the new alphabet and be able to read after six months' study. One hundred thousand persons were said to be proficient in the new alphabet by November, 1956.<sup>24</sup>

While the Latin alphabet is to be widely applied among minorities living along the southern and south-western borders of China, the Cyrillic alphabet is being introduced not only in Inner Mongolia but also among all the non-Chinese peoples living in north-western China, the area which is now officially designated the "Sinkiang-Uigur Autonomous Region." A conference on alphabetic reform for this region was held in Urumchi in August. It was decided that Cyrillic alphabets would be adopted for the Uigurs, Kazakhs, Kirgiz and Sibos.<sup>25</sup> Whether these Cyrillic alphabets will be different from those already in use among Uigurs, Kazakhs and Kirgiz who live in Soviet Central Asia was not announced, but it is implied by the fact that the official report of the conference specifically stated that Uzbeks and Tatars in Sinkiang would adopt the same Cyrillic alphabets used by their kinsmen in the U.S.S.R. The Uigurs, numbering more than 3,500,000, and the Kazakhs, numbering nearly 500,000, form, together with the nearly 500,000 Chinese who live there, the basic population of Sinkiang.<sup>26</sup> The Mongols of Sinkiang, it was decided, would use the same Cyrillic alphabet that is being introduced in Inner Mongolia. The conference did not decide on the alphabet to be adopted by the Tajiks of Sinkiang, and for some of the other smaller groups it was agreed that further research should be done before a final decision could be made. In view of the general adoption of Cyrillic script for all the principal languages, it seems unlikely that any deviations from it for the small groups will be tolerated.

The 240 participants in the conference met from August 15-22. There is no mention of the attendance of Soviet experts, but it seems likely that one or two should have been present. Their reports may appear in Soviet linguistic journals during the coming year. On the last day of the Urumchi conference, Saifuddin, Chairman of the Government of the Sinkiang-Uigur Autonomous Region, addressed the participants. He told the conference that all problems could not be solved immediately and that further efforts would have to be made to carry out more scientific research work after the conference :

"The current languages of the Sinkiang nationalities all have a long historical background. They have made important contribu-



tions to the development of their national cultures as well as to the enrichment of the culture of the Motherland. They have also contributed largely to the consolidation of national unity. But on the other hand, these languages in their present written forms have various defects: The forms of words are variable, there are complicated supplementary signs and they are generally inconvenient in handwriting, furthermore they cannot fully represent the entire spoken languages of the different nationalities and therefore in daily use as well as in publications, newspapers and books the users are confronted with many difficulties. They certainly cannot meet the requirements of Socialist cultural construction. When the new written languages based on the Slavic alphabet are popularized, all these handicaps will be removed. It will also facilitate the learning of the languages by the cadres of other nationalities, particularly the Han Chinese, and will enable the cadres of the different nationalities in the Autonomous Region to better help each other and learn about each other."<sup>27</sup>

No timetable has been announced for the introduction of the new alphabets in Sinkiang. The pace will probably not be slower than that now set for Inner Mongolia. To judge by the speed with which they have proceeded in other fields, agricultural collectivization, *e.g.*, the Chinese Communists will waste no time implementing their plans for alphabetic and linguistic changes in all parts of China. No doubt they hope to profit by previous Soviet experience and avoid some of the mistakes which Russian Communists have made. There is little evidence, however, that they have studied the current alphabetic problems of the Soviet minorities very deeply.

An interesting problem which the Chinese will sooner or later have to face is the question of Russian borrowings in the Soviet versions of Turkic and Mongolian languages closely related to those spoken on Chinese territory. In the Soviet minority languages new words which are of Russian origin or represent Russian versions of international words of western origin have the practical justification that they facilitate communication with Russians and the learning of Russian. This would not necessarily be the case in China, where it would be natural to use Chinese borrowings instead and where non-Chinese minorities would be expected to learn Chinese, rather than Russian, as a second language. The use of the Cyrillic alphabet would not in itself facilitate the learning of Chinese if Chinese is eventually to be written in a Latin alphabet. Though the Chinese Communists will most likely proceed rapidly in carrying out alphabetic and linguistic changes, their progress will not necessarily be smooth. They may eventually create a situation, among their non-Chinese peoples at least, as unsettled and unsatisfactory as that which exists among many of the Asian nationalities of the Soviet Union.

Imperfect as some of the new alphabets being devised in China may be, they will nevertheless contribute greatly to the spread of literacy. A large proportion of the population of China, including large numbers of the minority peoples, may be expected to master the arts of reading and writing

during the next decade or two. There is no reason to assume that the Chinese Communists will be any less successful than the Soviets have been in extending the benefits of elementary education to a rapidly increasing number of their people. During the first two or three decades the spread of literacy and education probably facilitates the consolidation of Communists in power. This seems to have been the case in the U.S.S.R. Eventually, however, the effects of these advances become to some extent reversed. Soviet Communists are now beginning to sense a challenge to their monopoly of political power from the younger generation they have educated with such great care. The challenge is likely to become more serious as time goes on. Another generation of Chinese Communists may have to cope with the same kind of problem in their country.

## REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> See "Politics and Alphabets in Inner Asia," R.C.A.S. Journal, January, 1956, pp. 29-51.
- <sup>2</sup> *Voprosy Yazykoznaniya*, June, 1952.
- <sup>3</sup> The first volume of a comparative grammar of the Turkic languages appeared in late 1955: Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., *Issledovaniya po sravnitel'noi grammatike tyurkskikh yazykov, I—Fonetika*, Moscow, 1955, pp. 334. (See my review in R.C.A.S. Journal, January, 1957, pp. 70-72.)
- <sup>4</sup> Reported in *Voprosy Yazykoznaniya*, #3, 1955, pp. 146-48.
- <sup>5</sup> By 1940, when the Cyrillic alphabet was adopted, the Karakalpak language had already undergone three alphabetic reforms in the previous sixteen years: a reformed Arabic alphabet was in effect from 1924 to 1928, a Latin alphabet from 1928-38, a slightly altered Latin alphabet from 1938-40.
- <sup>6</sup> The typical Turkic "umlaut" vowels—ä, ö, ü.
- <sup>7</sup> N. A. Baskakov, *Karakalpakski Yazyk*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1952, pp. 127-32, gives a detailed description with extensive examples of the various Karakalpak alphabets.
- <sup>8</sup> Reported in *Voprosy Yazykoznaniya*, #2, 1956, pp. 147-51.
- <sup>9</sup> Actually, of course, few of these "Russian" words are of Slavic origin at all. They are common international terms, forced upon Turkmen and most other non-Slavic languages of the U.S.S.R. in Russian garb, a form which often makes it much more difficult for them to be phonetically and grammatically assimilated than if they had been acquired by more natural processes. Cf. footnote <sup>26</sup> in "Politics and Alphabets in Inner Asia," R.C.A.S. Journal, January, 1956.
- <sup>10</sup> A. K. Borovkov, "K voprosu ob uniifikatsii tyurkskikh al'favitov v S.S.S.R.," in *Sovetskoe Vostokovedenie*, #4, 1956, pp. 101-10. (Approved for printing September 8, 1956.)
- <sup>11</sup> See Alexander Dallin, "Recent Soviet Historiography" in *Problems of Communism*, #6, 1956, pp. 28-30.
- <sup>12</sup> For a discussion of recent problems of Central Asian Writers see "The Central Asian Writers' Congresses" in the *Central Asian Review*, #2, 1955, pp. 150-63. The judgment cited above is from the concluding portion of this article.
- <sup>13</sup> Report in *Voprosy Yazykoznaniya*, #2, 1956, pp. 131-36.
- <sup>14</sup> Report in *Sovetskoe Vostokovedenie*, #1, 1956, pp. 180-83.
- <sup>15</sup> N.C.N.A. Peking dispatch, January 28, 1956.
- <sup>16</sup> Lin Han-da "Über die Reform der Chinesischen Schriftsprache" in *Die Länder der Volksdemokratie* (Berlin), #51, 1956; Wolfgang Franke, "Die Schriftreform in China," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, April 28, 1956; "Language Change in China Outlined," *New York Times*, August 5, 1956.
- <sup>17</sup> I. N. Gal'tsev, "K proektu foneticheskovo al'favita kitaiskovo yazka" in *Sovetskoe Vostokovedenie*, #3, 1956, pp. 104-08.
- <sup>18</sup> N.C.N.A. Peking dispatch, November 21, 1956.
- <sup>19</sup> N.C.N.A. Peking dispatch, December 15, 1955.
- <sup>20</sup> N.C.N.A. Kweiyang dispatch, November 8, 1956

<sup>21</sup> N.C.N.A. Kunming dispatch, November 24, 1956.

<sup>22</sup> N.C.N.A. Peking dispatch, February 10, 1956.

<sup>23</sup> N.C.N.A. Peking dispatch, May 26, 1956.

<sup>24</sup> *Jen Min Jih Pao*, Peking, November 25, 1956.

<sup>25</sup> A small Manchu-related people, settled primarily in the Ili Valley, numbering approximately 10,000.

<sup>26</sup> According to statistics given by S. I. Bruk in his article "Etnicheski sostav i razmeshchenie naseleniya v Sin-tszyanskom Ugurskom Avtonomnom Rayone Kitaiskoi Narodnoi Respubliki" in *Sovetskaya Etnografiya*, #2, 1956, pp. 89-94, these three groups together form 94.6 per cent. of the total population of the region. For further information on the composition of the population of Sinkiang, see the abridgement of the Bruk article in the *Central Asian Review*, #4, 1956, pp. 433-37, and the chapter "The Peoples of Sinkiang" in O. Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, Boston, 1950, pp. 103-51.

<sup>27</sup> N.C.N.A. Urumchi dispatch, August 27, 1956.



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K. G. P.

