

ROLAND TOPCHISHVILI

GEORGIAN-OSSETIAN LINGUAL-ETHNIC RELATIONS AND LINGUAL SITUATION AMONG THE OSSETIANS OF GEORGIA

After the migration and settling of Ossetians in Georgia the three periods can be distinguished in their lingual development. The first period was the one, when Ossetians were lived in conditions of Georgian statehood. The Ossetians were considered themselves as the citizens of Georgian State and among the representatives of the other ethnic groups were honoured the state language of Georgia. The majority of Ossetians knew Georgian language. In the contact zones many Georgians were also speaking Ossetian fluently. This situation was caused by the existed economic and kinship relation between Georgians and Ossetians.

Till 19 century, after turning Georgia into the Russian colony the lingual situation among Ossetians was changed by the active influence of the Russian government. Russia was spreading the Russian language by force in its colonies. In Georgia Russian government was trying to substitute Georgian language by Russian as the second language for Ossetians. The 19 century and especially its later half became were for many Ossetians the period of adoption of the Russian language. In this period public figures citizens of Georgia made all efforts to assist Ossetians in preserving their own language and ethnic features. In 19th century many Ossetians spoke Georgian for the practical necessity.

The third period is the Soviet one, when the Bolshevik government achieved to alienate Georgians and Ossetians fro each other. In the conditions of total influence of Russian language extensively taught at schools the main part of Ossetian ethnos neglecting to speak Georgian language. Some representatives of Ossetian educated people still speaking and reading Georgian consciously avoid speaking it.