

LANGUAGE

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General information about Azerbaijani language

Azerbaijani language is the state official language of Azerbaijan and the mean of linguistic communication of the 8 million population of the country (2001).

Besides, Azerbaijani is also spoken by 20 million Azerbaijanis residing in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Several millions of Azerbaijanis reside in Russia, USA, Turkey and Western Europe. Regardless of their current country of residence, Azerbaijanis still can understand each other easily. There are over 30 million speakers of Azerbaijani at present.

Genealogically, Azerbaijani language belongs to the Turkic group of languages and, together with closely associated Turkish, Turkmen and Gagauz languages, forms the southwestern group of Turkic languages.

From the traditional-morphological and typological point of view, the Azerbaijani language belongs to the group of agglutinative languages. Unlike inflexion languages, all words of Azerbaijani as well as other agglutinative languages are lexically and grammatically independent units: grammatical meanings and grammatical relations are built by monosynaptic inflexions which follow the stem and the root of a word.

Early Alphabets in Azerbaijan

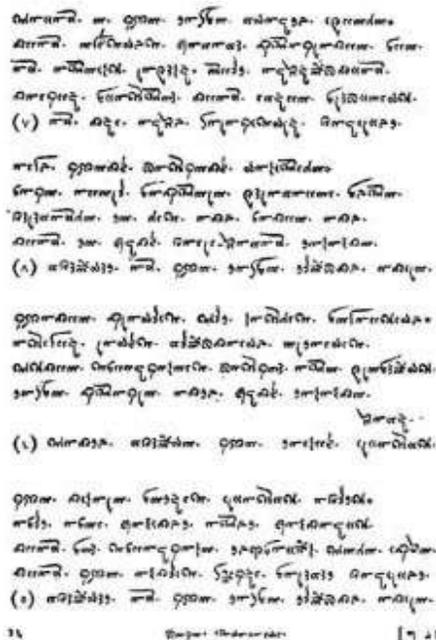
Few countries have gone through as many alphabet changes as Azerbaijan. In the 20th century alone, it has officially used four different scripts. Prior to that time, especially before the Arabic script was introduced in the 7th century, various other alphabets were used. Many examples of these scripts - especially those beginning with medieval times - are on display at the Institute of Manuscripts in Baku. Despite the fact that the Arabic script was in use between the 7th century and 1929, few young people in the Azerbaijan Republic can read it these days, even though their grandparents grew up learning it at school.

Early Scripts

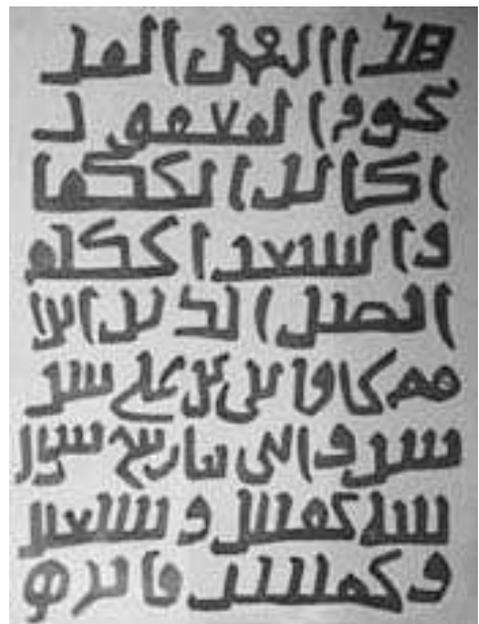
Visiting Baku's Institute of Manuscripts and seeing their exhibits of manuscripts in various alphabets is like taking a walk back through time. One of the earliest alphabets in the region was a cuneiform script, made up of wedge-shaped characters, which were created by pressing a stylus into clay. According to ancient Assyrian and Greek sources, this script was used in Southern Azerbaijan (Kingdom of Manna) during the 9th century BC. Nowadays, this region is in contemporary Iran. Next have been come an ancient Syrian and Aramaic (not Armenian) script that was used by the Medeans that lived there between the 6th and 1st centuries BC. Unfortunately, samples of these two scripts are not available at the Institute. But we do have books in our archives written in a variant of the Aramaic (the so-called "Pahlavi" or "Avestian" alphabet) that was widespread in Southern Azerbaijan, Iran and Central Asia during the first centuries AD (before Islam came to the region). The Avesta, the holy book of the Zoroastrians (the ancient religion of Azerbaijan and Iran), was written with the Pahlavi script. Pahlavis (Partheans) were the ancient tribes from Afghanistan and Central Asia that conquered Iran and Azerbaijan in the 3rd century B.C. However, the Pahlavi books kept in our Institute are editions of the Avesta that were reprinted at the beginning of the 20th century; they're not originals.

Beginning in the 4th century AD, natives of Northern Azerbaijan (Caucasian Albania) began using an Albanian script. While there are no extant manuscripts in our Institute from this time period, there are some monumental Albanian stone carvings on exhibit at the Museum of History of Azerbaijan (Taghiyev Museum) nearby.

Avestian alphabet or Pahlavi script Old Turkic.



Ancient script of the 12th century.



Language and alphabet of Albania

According to ancient authors, in Albania there existed 26 languages and dialects. At the same time, the country is assumed to have had an independent Albanian language. Hippolytus of Portus (the 3rd century AD) writes that "the only tribes that had their own languages were Mags, Caspians...., Iberians". When Christianity was adopted by Albanians, authorities started to open up church schools all over the country for the propagation and studying of Christianity. Church authorities decided to set up an alphabet consisting of 52 letters that was utilized mainly for church books, and then for secular documents and books too. In the course of struggle between the Armenian and Albanian churches, Albanian church books were mostly burnt and the alphabet almost stopped to be used. With the lapse of time, the alphabet was forgotten. Since that time some books have been preserved in the form of translated Armenian and "edited" versions (for example, "History of Agvan" by Moses of Kalankatuyk), as well as in separate inscriptions in the Albanian alphabet made on pottery and stone objects. The biggest, according to the quantity of inscriptions (80 symbols), was a stone inscription of the 5th -6th centuries AD found in Mingechevir. On the stone, two peacocks are portrayed looking at "a life tree". Scientists unsuccessfully tried to decipher these and other inscriptions. Recently another attempt to read the stone inscription with peacocks was made by an employee of the Ministry of Culture, Vagif Asadov. Almost at the same time a Georgian scientist Zaza Aleksidze makes an unbelievable discovery. He found the Bible of St. Catherine of the 6th century in its translation into the Albanian language, written in Albanian alphabet, and proposed a variant for its reading. There were many evidences of the fact that the territory of Caucasian Albania was inhabited by Turks and other peoples closely related to them. As the language of church in the country belonged to one of the Albanian languages, the Turkic language remained in the shadow. After the adoption of Islam and when the Southern Caucasus was invaded by Seljuks, the Turkic language rises up to leading positions.

A stone capital with Albanian inscriptions. Mingechevir. 5th-6th centuries. Caucasian Albania. Museum of History of Azerbaijan.



Old Turkic

The nomadic Turkic tribes that inhabited Azerbaijan between the 4th and 8th centuries AD used a runic script, which is also indigenous to some of the Germanic peoples of Northern Europe, Britain, Scandinavia and Iceland. Examples of this type of writing can be found carved on the Garga Dashi rocks near the Nuvadi settlement. Azerbaijanis resided in this district of Megri in contemporary Armenia before they were ousted about ten years ago. Carvings in the runic script have also been found in the North Caucasus Mountains and Altay. This alphabet has been carefully studied and documented.

Runic alphabet used by the nomadic Turkic tribes that inhabited Azerbaijan between the 4th and 8th centuries AD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
⊕	⊖	⊗	⊘	⊙	⊚	⊛	⊜	⊝	⊞	⊟	⊠	⊡	⊢	⊣	⊤	⊥	⊦	⊧	⊨
⊕-⊖	⊖-⊗	⊗-⊘	⊘-⊙	⊙-⊚	⊚-⊛	⊛-⊜	⊜-⊝	⊝-⊞	⊞-⊟	⊟-⊠	⊠-⊡	⊡-⊢	⊢-⊣	⊣-⊤	⊤-⊥	⊥-⊦	⊦-⊧	⊧-⊨	⊨-⊩

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⊩-⊪	⊪-⊫	⊫-⊬	⊬-⊭	⊭-⊮	⊮-⊯	⊯-⊰	⊰-⊱	⊱-⊲	⊲-⊳	⊳-⊴	⊴-⊵	⊵-⊶

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⊶-⊷	⊷-⊸	⊸-⊹	⊹-⊺	⊺-⊻	⊻-⊼	⊼-⊽	⊽-⊾	⊾-⊿	⊿-⊠	⊠-⊡	⊡-⊢	⊢-⊣	⊣-⊤	⊤-⊥	⊥-⊦

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⊦-⊧	⊧-⊨	⊨-⊩	⊩-⊪	⊪-⊫	⊫-⊬	⊬-⊭	⊭-⊮	⊮-⊯	⊯-⊰	⊰-⊱	⊱-⊲	⊲-⊳	⊳-⊴	⊴-⊵	⊵-⊶	⊶-⊷	⊷-⊸	⊸-⊹	⊹-⊺

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⊺-⊻	⊻-⊼	⊼-⊽	⊽-⊾	⊾-⊿	⊿-⊠	⊠-⊡	⊡-⊢	⊢-⊣	⊣-⊤	⊤-⊥	⊥-⊦	⊦-⊧	⊧-⊨	⊨-⊩	⊩-⊪	⊪-⊫	⊫-⊬	⊬-⊭	⊭-⊮

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⊮-⊯	⊯-⊰	⊰-⊱	⊱-⊲	⊲-⊳	⊳-⊴	⊴-⊵	⊵-⊶	⊶-⊷	⊷-⊸	⊸-⊹	⊹-⊺	⊺-⊻	⊻-⊼	⊼-⊽	⊽-⊾	⊾-⊿	⊿-⊠	⊠-⊡	⊡-⊢

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⊰-⊱	⊱-⊲	⊲-⊳	⊳-⊴	⊴-⊵	⊵-⊶	⊶-⊷	⊷-⊸	⊸-⊹	⊹-⊺	⊺-⊻	⊻-⊼	⊼-⊽	⊽-⊾	⊾-⊿	⊿-⊠	⊠-⊡	⊡-⊢	⊢-⊣	⊣-⊤

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⊰-⊱	⊱-⊲	⊲-⊳	⊳-⊴	⊴-⊵	⊵-⊶	⊶-⊷	⊷-⊸	⊸-⊹	⊹-⊺	⊺-⊻	⊻-⊼	⊼-⊽	⊽-⊾	⊾-⊿	⊿-⊠	⊠-⊡	⊡-⊢	⊢-⊣	⊣-⊤

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
⊰	⊱	⊲	⊳	⊴	⊵	⊶	⊷	⊸	⊹	⊺	⊻	⊼	⊽	⊾	⊿	⊠	⊡	⊢	⊣
⊰-⊱	⊱-⊲	⊲-⊳	⊳-⊴	⊴-⊵	⊵-⊶	⊶-⊷	⊷-⊸	⊸-⊹	⊹-⊺	⊺-⊻	⊻-⊼	⊼-⊽	⊽-⊾	⊾-⊿	⊿-⊠	⊠-⊡	⊡-⊢	⊢-⊣	⊣-⊤

Уникальные и редкие аллографы

History of the appearance of written literary language

The Turks who make up the ethnic foundation of the Azerbaijani people appeared in the territory of the present Azerbaijan long before our century and in the early first millennium along with other numerous tribes were the ancient residents of these lands. The appearance of a nation of Turkish origin and speaking Azerbaijani language and the transformation of this language to a means of communication was a long process, covering several centuries.

With the increase in the number of Turkish tribes as well as their economic, political and cultural influence the language was enriched and thus ethnic groups, that manage to preserve their ethnic and anthropological peculiarities even nowadays, united into a nation with a unique culture and language.

The Azerbaijani language is one of the languages that had passed a long path of development. Regarding the epos Kitabi Dede Gorgut as the unwritten pattern of our literature, the age of the language serving the people as a means of communication can exceed 1300 years. Some materials point out that the history of written literary language of Azerbaijan commences with 13th century.

Through the 800 years of its development, the Azerbaijani literary languages had passed through two main periods. The old period covers the 13th up to 18th century, while that one referred to as a new one started since 18th century and continues up to present times.

The first stage is notable for a vast area of the usage of the Azerbaijani language. The palace and military Azerbaijani language used by Djelairids, Qaraqoyunlus, Aggoyunlus and Sefevi states was the literary language of the Asia Minor. The Azerbaijani language of this period differed from that of the new period not by its extra linguistic and linguistic properties.

The vocabulary of the language of the first period was distinguished by the predominance of words of Arabic and Persian origin. The styles of the language of that period, especially the predominant genre of poetry and various stylistic devices caused the inflow of a great number of loan words in the literary Azerbaijani language. The establishment of schools of realism and realistic literary method and the formation of the latter as a leading creative caused disappearance of the loan words that did not join the vocabulary of the language.

Moreover, the words of the Azerbaijani language, derived from the Osmanly language (shimdi (now), shoyle (such), shu (this, that), kendi (oneself) abandoned the language in the new period. That resulted from the full completion of the process of Turkish languages differentiation.

The language of two periods differs by its phonetics. Thus, the new period was marked by the stabilization of the system of phonemes in the literary Azerbaijani language. The interchange of vowels o//a, and consonants h//q//x peculiar of the first period resulted in winning of the first (o and h) in the second period.

The similar processes occurred in grammar. The interchange of inflexes of accusative case -yi, -y1, -yu, -yü//ni, -n1, -nu, -nü typical of the literary language of the first period disappeared in the second period. The inflex of the future tense of the verb -isər was replaced by the inflex -acaq//-əcək.

In the old Azerbaijani language word combinations mainly built on Arabia and Persian syntactic models: fəslı-gül (gül fəslı, blossoming season), tərki-təriqi-eşq (eşq तरीqinin (yolunun) tərki, abandonment of the path of love), etc. In such constructions the attribute preceded the determinate. The second period is characterized by quite opposite process: the determiner is always used before the defined.

In the first period the complex composite sentences with a subordinate clause, placed within the principal one, while in the second period such kinds of sentences were replaced by participle constructions.

Both periods are themselves divided into a number of stages

The first period of the development of Azerbaijani language passed two stages:

- 1) formation of the literary language (13th-14th cc)
- 2) flourish of the classical language of poetry (15th-18th cc)

The second period covers three stages:

- 1) nationalization of the literary language (18th century)
- 2) establishment and development of the national language (19th-early 20th cc)
- 3) present-day stage (20th-early 21st cc)

The new period

The second period was marked for the flourishing of the Azerbaijani language especially within the stage of the establishment and development of the national language. Along with poems the language was used in creating literary works, publishing newspapers and magazines and even in a number of official documents and scientific research. At that time foreigners, Russian and Germans displayed a great interest to this language and some of them started learning it. These were Russian poets Lermontov, Bestujev-Marlinski, German oriental scientist Bodonshtedt. The latter learned Azerbaijani language from the Azeri poet Mirza Shafi, translated his poems to German and published them in a separate book. Though the dictionaries of the old Azerbaijani language were compiled and grammatical researches were conducted in the Middle Ages, the scientific works and text-books began to appear in the 19th century. Most famous of them is the work "General grammar of Turkish-Tatar language" by Mirza Kazymbey. The text-books by M.Vezirov, L.Buqagov, Q. Makarov, M.L.Mamedov, S.M. Ganiyev related to the Azerbaijani language were also written in Russian. L.Budaqov also compiled a dictionary in two volumes (Сравнительный словарь турецко-татарских языков). The valuable work "Fənni-sərfi-türki" ("The grammar of Azerbaijani language") by M.Ashrafly is also written in Azerbaijani.

The 20th century was the flowering as well as the problematic period in the development of Azerbaijani language. At that very time Azerbaijani language faced a great problem. Since the beginning of the century three trends emerged in the literary Azerbaijani language. These are mainly related to the language of literary creations and press.

1. The first trend attempted to bring the literary language as closer to the colloquial language as possible. This is proven by creative activity of Molla Nasreddin magazine and its collaborators (Dj. Mamedguluzade, A.Haqverdiyev and others). These creations do not differentiate between literary language and colloquial language and dialects. Such language is more understandable to ordinary people.

2. the trend mainly focusing on the establishment of a literary language resting on the traditions of oil Azerbaijani language and the language of Osmanly Turks. This trend was mainly adhered by a number of magazines and newspapers as Fyuzat and Heyat and mainly by their collaborators (A.Guseynzade, Sabribeyzade and others). Yet, the people do not find it easy to understand such a language. This language almost did not differ from the old Turkish language.

3. the trend, which propagandized the establishment of a literary language based on the norms of a literary language and understandable by everyone. This language was one not influenced by any dialect. It was created by such writers and poets as A.Shaig, Dj.Djabbarly, S.Guseyn, A.Sahhat. This situation lasted from early century till the 1930th.

The third stage of the development of Azerbaijani language was marked by the attachment of the status of the state language to it.

The national leader of the Azerbaijani people Heydar Aliyev played a great role in the declaration of Azerbaijani language the state language of the country. It is well known that Heydar Aliyev commenced his activity in the sphere of the state language with his first day of ruling the country (1969)

Heydar Aliyev who had a profound knowledge of literary and colloquial Azerbaijani language, of its rich vocabulary and easily used its grammatical capacities, delivered brilliant speaker at a number of meetings as the celebration of the 50th jubilee of the Baku State University, the party conference of the same higher school and at other meetings held at a high level, thus gaining a great respect and love.

He was perfectly aware of the fact that the respect and love he gained excited love and respect to the state language of Azerbaijan. All that created the atmosphere leading to the establishment of a state language.

In 1977-1978 the leadership of the country faced a number of problems. As we know the new Constitution of USSR was approved in 1977. That very Constitution had to be an example to the new constitutions of all the countries and in fact it did. Yet the constitution did not contain an article on a state language. The newly approved constitutions of different republic did not cover this issue either.

The situation in Azerbaijan was quite different. Heydar Aliyev continued his struggle for the Azerbaijani language to be declared the state language. The country leader could not bear the fact that the language is not

incorporated into the constitution. Attracting the intellectuals and the entire population to the struggle, he put all efforts into it and overcame all obstacles with brevity.

Heydar Aliyev, making a report at the seventh session of the Supreme Council of the Azerbaijan SSR, devoted to the draft constitution of the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic (the basic law) and the results of the national discussion, proposed the following amendment to the 73rd article: "Azerbaijani language is the state language of the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic".

Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic provides for the use of the Azerbaijani language in the State and social bodies, educational institutions and other establishments of Azerbaijan and promotes its comprehensive development.

The constitution of 1978 proves that Heydar Aliyev really cared about his nation and his native land.

The Constitution of independent Azerbaijan, accepted through national voting confirmed Azerbaijani language as the state language of the country: Article 21, The State Language.

The state language of the Azerbaijan Republic is Azerbaijani language. Azerbaijan provides for the development of the Azerbaijani Language.

Heydar Aliyev, who always attached a great importance to his native language and had a profound knowledge of it, considering the situation, created at the turn of the new period of the state language development, signed a decree "On perfection of measures for the use of the state language" on June 18, 2001.

The said decree, along with reflecting the achievements of the language through the history of its development also determined existing problems of the language and pointed out the ways of their resolution.

Some of these ways have already implemented successfully. The decree of President of the Azerbaijan Republic Ilham Aliyev signed on January 12, 2004 "On the publishing of mass media in Latin alphabet in Azerbaijani language will, undoubtedly, settle all the problems connected with the alphabet.

Each of the three stages of the second period had its own peculiarities. As mentioned above, at present, the Azerbaijani language is used not only in Azerbaijan but also in Iran and Iraq. Folklore creations testify that the languages used by Azerbaijanis residing in these countries, do not differ much. However, the difference lies in literary languages and it's mainly reflected in printed literary creative works, newspapers and magazines, radio and TV programs. The difference is caused by historical and social reasons.

A war between Iran and Russia resulted in signing two agreements Gulustan (1818), Turkmenchay (1827) which divided Azerbaijan in two parts. Thus, for nearly 200 years, two parts of one nation live separately and in quite different conditions and environment. Both Iran and Russia did not admit the relations between the two parts of the nation. Though Azerbaijan established definite relations after gaining independence, yet the difference is too deep especially in languages.

Like other spheres, the difference lies also in literary language. The language of independent Azerbaijan still contains traces of Russian language, while the language of South Azerbaijan is influenced by the Persian language. At present, literary language of North and South Azerbaijan still differ in vocabulary, phonetics and in some way grammar (especially, in syntax)

These differences are caused by some extra linguistic factors. Though Azerbaijan has been the part of Russia till 1991, the Azerbaijani language has been taught in secondary schools, institutes and universities for 76 years. The researches in the sphere of Azerbaijani language, its history and dialects were conducted intensively and hundreds and even more creative works were devoted to this topic in Azerbaijani language. It's possible to say that the most famous literary creations of all the nations beginning from the literature and philosophy of Ancient Greece up to present-day literary and scientific creations have been translated in Azerbaijani language. At present the textbooks on all subjects (mathematics, physics, chemistry, medicine, etc) are written in Azeri or translated from other languages.

Except for one or two newspapers and magazines, Azerbaijani language almost is not used in South Azerbaijan.

The 3-4 centuries gap between Azerbaijanis and Iraq Azerbaijanis, remoteness of areas and disconnection caused the literary language to step on quite different paths. The literary language of Iraq Azerbaijanis is much influenced by the language of the present-day Turks.

In recent years the formation and development of language of those residing in different countries is much influenced by the attempt to bring it closer to the literary language of Azerbaijan and the process is hoped to be successful.

Modern Azerbaijani Language as one of the Turkish languages has a specific grammatical and phonetic properties. Due to the existence of the law of harmony in this language, front vowels (i, ü, e, ə, ö) and back vowels (I, u, a, o), differing by the place of formation can not be used within the same word. (except for words like işıq, ıldırım beginning with vowel i): at the same time the front vowels can not be used with velar consonants (k, q, ğ, x), while back vowels can nor follow dorsal consonants (g, k).

The Azerbaijani language consists of 15 vowel and 25 consonant phonemes. These 40 phonemes are marked with 32 letters of the Azerbaijani alphabet.

There are 9 short (i, ü, e, ə, a, o, u, ı) and 6 long (i:, e:, ö:, ə:, a:, u:) vowels in Azerbaijani language. Long vowels are not typical of this language and are mainly found in loan words.

As a rule, phonetic accent falls on a last syllable. Phonemic accent does not depend on the lexical meaning of a word: 'alma (an apple)-alma' (don't take).

The vowel ı and consonant ğ are not used at the beginning of a word in Azerbaijani language.

The morphological system of Azerbaijani language includes notional parts of speech (nouns, adjectives, numerals, pronouns, adverbs, verbs) and secondary (postpositions, conjunction, particles, modal words, interjection).

Nouns are characterized by the categories of number, possession, case and can be used as a predicate. These categories are typical of other substantiated parts of speech.

The category of case consists of 6 cases (nominative, possessive, dative, accusative, ablative, prepositional). The verb has five tenses (the past indefinite tense, past declarative tense, present tense, future suppositional tense, future complete tense) and 6 forms of mood (order, wish, condition, necessity, importance, predicate).

Depending on the relations between subject, object and predicate, verbs can be used in five grammatical voices (active, passive, reflexive, causative, interaction).

According to the syntactical rules of Azerbaijani language, subject is used at the beginning of a sentence, predicate at the end, while attribute precedes the word it modifies.

In Azerbaijani language words are forming by cksmith), üzümçü (Vine-grower), təbliğatçı (propagandist); dəmirçilik (the profession of blacksmith), üzümçülük (vine-growing), təbliğatçılıq (propaganda); dolça (a can), qazança (a pan) otluq (grassland), meşəlik (woodland) qaldırıcı (lifting), endirici (drawoff) ; sevinc (joy), gülünc (smile); yavaşca (slowly, carefully), indicə (just) and syntactical ones (otbiçən (hay-maker), vaxtamuzd (time work), boyunbağı (necklace), gündoğan (east), sarıköynək (oriole), əlidolu (with the hands full (of), adlı-sanlı (celebrated, famous), qırxayaq (centipede), beşaçılan (rifle having five charges), etc).

To date Azerbaijan uses the Azerbaijani alphabet, established on the basis of Latin letters.

Depending on the areas of usage of literary Azerbaijani language, it combines four main styles: official style, publicistic style, belles-letters and the style of scientific prose. To date all the styles are on highly developed.

Great changes occurring in political, scientific, cultural life of the country caused the rapid increase of terms in the vocabulary of Azerbaijani language. This process is observed in all styles, especially in official and scientific styles and in some way in the publicistic style.

The dialects of the Azerbaijani language consist of four groups: 1) eastern group (Baku, Quba, Shamakhi, Lenkeran, Mugham dialects); 2) western group (Ganja, Qazakh, Karabakh and Ayrym dialects); 3) northern group (Sheki, Zagatala-Qakh dialects); 4) southern group (Nakhichevan, Ordubad dialects).

Alphabet transition. The Latin script: A chronology.

On December 25, 1991, Azerbaijan's Milli Madjlis (Parliament) officially adopted a modified Latin script for their Azeri alphabet. It was one of the first decisions of the new Parliament-and one, needless to say that met with immense controversy.

Alphabet changes are not new to Azerbaijan; this was the fourth time this century it had been changed. Latin replaced Arabic in 1928, followed by Stalin's imposition of Cyrillic in 1938, which remained until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. No matter how revolutionary and daunting the task, it was not a new idea.

In fact, if you count the slight modifications and "corrections" that have been made to individual letters in both Latin and Cyrillic during this century, then there have been at least 10 occasions when the alphabet has been changed.

Historical Precedence

By the early 20th century, the Arabic alphabet had been in use by Azerbaijanis for more than 1,000 years. Unfortunately, this script could not express the nuances of sounds in the Azeri language. So by the late 19th century, the question of alphabet change became a major topic of discussion among the intelligentsia.

Writer and playwright Akhundzade (who died in 1878) advocated for change as did Jalil Mammadgulzade, editor of the satiric magazine, "Molla Nasraddin," in the early 1900s, but both of these reformers were severely attacked by the clergy.

In 1918, the question again arose with the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan. However, this government was so short-lived (only 23 months) that it did not have sufficient time to resolve the issues of the alphabet change.

In 1920, the Bolsheviks took power and pressured for Latin. Latin was beginning to be used simultaneously with Arabic. For example, the newspaper "Yeni Yol" (New way) used Latin exclusively.

In 1924, Nariman Narimanov, a leader in the Bolshevik government that was set up in Baku, succeeded in passing a resolution for all official documents to be written in Latin.

In 1926, the First Congress on Turkology was held in Baku, and scholars from all over the world participated. At this conference, the conclusion was reached that, given the sound patterns in the Turkic languages; Latin was the optimal alphabet to express these sounds. Ataturk began a successful alphabet reform in Turkey in 1928, replacing Arabic with a modified Latin script which is still in use today.

In 1928, a committee known as "Yeni Alif" (New Alphabet) was established in Moscow to deal with alphabet issues, and that same year, Latin was adopted for all the Turkic people of the USSR (Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan). At that time, the alphabet was sufficiently standardized among these Soviet-Turkic languages to facilitate communication. Such legislation fostered the cultural union of the Turkic people.

Cyrillic Imposed

But by the late 1930s, Stalin sensed that these Turkic-speaking nations could threaten Soviet power if they united. To eliminate such a possibility, he rescinded the Latin alphabet policy and forced all Turkic people to adopt Cyrillic (1939-1940). Moscow further confounded the possibility of their communicating with each other by

XX ƏSRDƏ AZƏRBAYCAN ƏLİFBASINDA EDİLMİŞ DƏYİŞİKLİKLER
 CHANGES IN AZERBAIJANI ALPHABET WITHIN 20TH CENTURY

Modified ¹ Arabic after Islam	Old Latin ² 1929-1938	Cyrillic ³ 1939-1991 (earlier types)	New Latin 1991-date (earlier types)	Examples (in new Latin translations)
ا	A - a	А - а	A - a	Ana (mother)
ب	B - b	Б - б	B - b	Baş (head)
پ	C - c	Ч - ч	C - c	Can (soup)
چ	Ç - ç	Ч - ч	Ç - ç	Çay (tea)
د	D - d	Д - д	D - d	Daş (stone)
د	E - e	Е - е	E - e	Ev (house)
ه	Ə - ə	Ә - ә	Ə - ə (A-ä)	Əl (hand)
ف	F - f	Ф - ф	F - f	Fil (elephant)
گ	G - g	Г - г	G - g	Göz (eye)
غ	Q - q	К - к	Q - q	bağ (garden)
ح	H - h	Һ - һ	H - h	Hara (where)
خ	X - x	Х - х	X - x	Xaç (cross)
ای	I - i	И - и	I - i	ilan (snake)
ئ	E - e	Е - е (b - u)	I - i	İdrəm (thunder)
ژ	E - e	Ж - ж	J - j	jale (dew)
ک	K - k	К - к	K - k	Kim (who)
ل	L - l	Л - л	L - l	Lale (tulip)
م	M - m	М - м	M - m	Maral (deer)
ن	N - n	Н - н	N - n	Nar (conspicuous)
نو	O - o	О - о	O - o	Oru (there)
ئی	Ə - ə	Ө - ө	O - ö	Örgə (corner)
پ	P - p	П - п	P - p	Pay (share)
ق	Q - q	Т - т	Q - q	Qar (snow)
ر	R - r	Р - р	R - r	Rəqs (dance)
س	S - s	С - с	S - s	Sən (you)
ش	Ş - ş	Ш - ш	Ş - ş	Şən (cheerful)
ت	T - t	Т - т	T - t	Tənri (god)
ئ	U - u	У - у	U - u	Uca (tail)
ئ	Y - y	У - у	U - ü	Urak (heart)
و	V - v	В - в	V - v	Variq (assistance)
ی	Z - z	З - з (a)	Y - y	Yay (summer)
ز	Z - z	З - а	Z - z	Zirva (peak)
ح	-	-	ʿ (apocroff)	Maʿlum (known)

¹Modified Arabic script is still in popular use in Southern (Iranian) Azerbaijan.
²Conversion to Latin was proposed in 1922, but it was not officially established till 1929.
³Latin Alphabet continued to be in use till mid-40s and after adaptation of Cyrillic.

assigning different characters for the identical sounds in their languages which did not exist in the Russian language. For example, there were seven different letters created in Turkic Cyrillic scripts to represent the one sound /ng/ that is found in the word, "English." So it became nearly impossible for readers of these related languages to communicate with each other through the written word.

The movement for the revival of Latin became quite pronounced after January 19, 1990-referred to in Azerbaijan as "Black January"-when Soviet troops descended with their tanks and killed innocent people on the streets of Baku. Moscow feared Azerbaijan's growing independence movement and wanted to crush it.

In addition to Latin, Cyrillic and Arabic, even Old Runic (an alphabet of the 7th and 8th centuries) was discussed as a possibility, Latin, however, generated the most interest.

Parliament Opts For Latin

Parliament's efforts to adopt the Latin alphabet were met with great resistance particularly by those opposed to Azerbaijan's independence movement. So many confused ideas were circulating about scripts and languages. Some argued that adopting the Latin alphabet would cause Azerbaijan to become dependent on other nations, meaning Turkey, Europe and the West. Some even suggested that the Azeri language would be absorbed into Turkish and disappear shortly afterwards if it were changed.

Some religious leaders claimed that the Arabic script was "the alphabet of Islam."

This confused some people into thinking that, by learning the Arabic script, they would be able to understand the Arabic language. Others feared that when symbols for specific letters changed, the sound would change, as well.

However, when pro-Arabic contenders saw that their arguments were being refuted scientifically and they were losing the debate, they united with pro-Cyrillic forces against those advocating Latin.

President Heydar Aliyev was one of the strong advocates for the new Latin.

Slow Transition

The transition from Cyrillic to Latin has been rather slow. First graders received their Latin alphabet primers in September 1992. In fact, in order to print enough texts, the youth magazine "Ganjlik" sacrificed its August 1992 issue so that the press could run the textbooks instead.

Factors facilitating the progress towards a more widespread implementation of the Latin script:

- The growing computerization of the country.
- The enthusiasm for learning English. The new alphabet is seen as a means to facilitate learning it.
- The government's use of the Latin alphabet in official documents. Also TV (which is state-owned) is playing a major role in this process, as well. Written text on TV has been exclusively in Latin since 1992.
- The desire to integrate into the global community as quickly as possible, influenced by the number of Westerners who are living and working in Azerbaijan.
- The growing understanding that the new alphabet is the most reliable means to unite with other Azerbaijanis (as well as with other Turkic-speaking nations) around the world. Although Azerbaijanis in Iran use the Arabic script, many are familiar with a Western language in the Latin script. Azerbaijanis in the North and South have more common ties through the Latin script rather than Cyrillic.
- The appearance of Latin headlines in newspapers and billboards.
- The support of the older generation who studied Latin in school when they were young.

All of these factors support the belief that the Latin alphabet is establishing itself in Azerbaijan, not necessarily as rapidly as some might wish, but steadily and irreversibly.

The Laws and other acts of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the State language and the Languages' rights

**The Constitution of the Azerbaijan Republic
(November, 12, 1995)**

Article 21. State Language.

The Azerbaijan language shall be the State language of the Azerbaijan Republic. The Azerbaijan Republic shall ensure the development of the Azerbaijan language. The Azerbaijan Republic shall guarantee the free use and development of other languages spoken by the population.

Article 25. Right to Equality.

Every Person shall be equal to the Law and Court. Men and Women shall have equal Rights and Freedoms. Every Person shall have equal Rights and Freedoms irrespective of race, nationality, religion, sex, origin, property status, social position, convictions, political party, trade union organization and social unity affiliation. Limitations or recognition of Rights and Freedoms because of race, nationality, social status, language origin, convictions and religion shall be prohibited.

Article 45. Right to Use Native Language.

Every Person shall have the right to use Native language. Everyone shall have the right to be raised and get an education, be engaged in creative activities in Native Language. No one can be deprived of the right to use Native Language.

Article 127. Principles of Justice.

10. Legal proceedings in the Azerbaijan Republic shall be conducted in the official language of the Azerbaijan Republic or in the language of the population which constitute the majority in the area concerned.

Persons - participants of court examination who do not know the language in which legal proceedings are held shall be guaranteed via the interpreter the right to get fully familiarized with the materials of the case, participate in legislative enactments and speak in the native language in the court.

**Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the renewal of the Azerbaijani alphabet with Latin graphic
(December, 25, 1991)**

As a result of large discussions and scientific disputes and under the recommendation of the first All-Union Turkic congress held in Baku in 1926 Azerbaijan people together with Turkic people accepted the alphabet with Latin graphic. Corresponding to the phonetic structure of Azerbaijan language and making an opportunity for the simplification of the orthographic rules, allowing to eliminate the illiteracy by mass order in a short time and extend scientific, cultural ties between the people Azerbaijan alphabet contrary the will of people and under the pressure of the Center was replaced with Cyrillic alphabet in 1939. This act being the logic continuation of mass repression of 30-s pursued an object to cut short the process of national self-consciousness of Turkic people and to achieve their gradual estrangement and disconnection.

Eliminating this historic injustice the National Board of the Supreme Council of the Azerbaijan Republic decrees:

1. That Law of Azerbaijan SSR "On the transfer of Azerbaijan written language from Latin into Russian alphabet" of July, 11 1939 to be considered from this day as becoming invalid.

2. That the Azerbaijan alphabet including 32 letters with Latin graphic used in Azerbaijan until 1940 to be restored.

Baku, December, 25, 1991

**Decree of the National Board of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
Regarding the regulation of coming into force the
Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the renewal of the Azerbaijan alphabet with Latin
graphic"
(December 25, 1991)**

In accordance with the adoption of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "About the renewal of the Azerbaijan alphabet with Latin graphic" National Board of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Azerbaijan decrees:

1. Azerbaijan alphabet with Latin graphic containing 32 letters with some changes shall be formed up as the following:

2. Renewal of the Azerbaijan alphabet with Latin graphic shall be carried out under the following stages:

In 1992 year:

To carry out the lessons on the new alphabet in the primary classes of secondary schools from September 1.

To organize optional lessons on the new alphabet with Latin graphic in high forms of secondary schools, technical colleges, secondary special and high schools .

To organize lectures on the study of the alphabet with Latin graphic for teachers and other workers in all educational institutions.

To take measures on providence the learning of the alphabet with Latin graphic by typists, proof - leaders, printing - house workers, newspapers and magazines workers, publish - houses workers. Republican newspapers and magazines along with the Russian alphabet shall use the alphabet with Latin graphic.

To provide the conclusion of treaties with plants preparing the printing equipment units, purchasing and erection of such units.

To reconstruct gradually the prints in books and newspapers printing - houses and also in polygraph points of the ministries, institutions and other organizations.

To start reconstructing of shops producing the stamps, blanks and also renew stamps and blanks of all organizations.

To carry out the new edition of maps, to begin the preparing of new sign - boards of towns, districts, villages, streets, ID cards, statistics and other documentation.

To organize lectures on the republican TV propagandizing the alphabet with Latin graphic and its training. Give the names of telecasts, titles, advertisements in a new writings also.

To open the courses for those who want to learn the alphabet with Latin graphic.

To implement the alphabet with Latin graphic in the cultural centers. The scientific - research institutes shall turn gradually to the new alphabet.

To prepare and print by Latin graphic orthographic dictionary of Azerbaijan language.

To create domiciliary training centers on education the alphabet with Latin graphic.

To provide gradually writing of street names, advertisements, institutions and plants names by Latin graphic.

In 1993:

To print on the alphabet with Latin graphic the books for the secondary and high schools .To start the training of the alphabet with Latin graphic in the primary classes of the secondary schools.

To fulfill the implementation of the alphabet with Latin graphic in all spheres of educational system.

To accept the complex of measures in printing houses in accordance with the alphabet with Latin graphic: change the materials, fulfill reduction of the photo and computer systems, technical means of books and newspapers printing - houses in accordance with the new graphic.

To provide the printing of all republican newspapers, magazines, fictions, technical and public and other literature on the alphabet with Latin graphic.

3. To charge to the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan to take the necessary organizational measures on the renewal the Azerbaijan alphabet with Latin graphic.

Baku, December 25, 1991

**Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the state language in the Republic of
Azerbaijan
(December 22, 1992)**

The Republic of Azerbaijan considering the usage of the Turkic language as the state language one of the conditions of its sovereignty cares about appliance, perseverance and development, maintains Azeries living abroad to get the education in their native language and the usage of their national - cultural necessities.

This law establishes the legal status of Turkic language.

This law does not regulate the use of any other languages in interpersonal informal communications.

I. General conditions

Article 1. The state language of the Republic of Azerbaijan is the Turkic language. All governmental establishments run their work in the Turkic language. The Turkic language as the state language of the republic is used in all spheres of political, economic, public, scientific and cultural life and functions for international communication on the territory of the republic. The learning of the Turkic language by the representatives of other nationalities is appreciated and they get support for it.

Article 2. The legal status, the sphere of language usage in the Republic of Azerbaijan and the principles of the adoption of languages spoken by peoples living on its territory are determined by the supreme bodies of state power of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

II. The right of citizens to choose the language

Article 3. The citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan are guaranteed the right to choose the language for education.

Nationalities and ethnic minorities, living on the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan have the right by means of governmental bodies of the republic to organize the pre - schools, secondary schools or separate classes, groups in their native language.

In the educational establishments with the study on any other language, the learning of the Turkic language which is the state language, as necessary subject is provided.

Article 4. The replies to the proposals, applications and complains of the citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan are given in the state language of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Article 5. Jurisdiction matters and notary actions are run in the Turkic language. Persons, participating in the case, who do not know the language, have the right to invite the translator and to participate in the court through the interpreter and take part on their native language.

Article 6. Official documents, ID cards or the information about it (passport, labor book, military book, graduation diplomas, certificates of birth, marriage, death, etc. are filled up in the Turkic language.

Article 7. Workers of service spheres (trade, medical aid personnel, transport, international communication and etc.) shall use state language of the Republic of Azerbaijan during working hours . The evasion of service under the pretext of the lack of language knowledge is forbidden.

III. The language used by the state bodies, organizations

Article 8. The sessions Supreme Council of the Republic of Azerbaijan shall be carries out in the Turkic language. The deputies of the Republic of Azerbaijan of other nationalities in case of not knowing the state language of the Azerbaijan Republic have the right to make statements in their language.

The law drafts and other legal documents submitted to the Supreme Council of the Azerbaijan Republic, its commissions shall be in the state language of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Article 9. The Laws and other legal documents adopted by the National Assembly of the Azerbaijan Republic, its commissions, by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan are published in the Turkic language.

Article 10. The official publications of acts of the state power bodies and authorities of the Azerbaijan Republic and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic are published in the state language of the Azerbaijan Republic.

Article 11. The electoral documents for the elections of the President of the Azerbaijan Republic, to the Supreme Council and local boards shall be prepared in the state language and in this language submitted to the central election committee.

Article 12. The activities of the Azerbaijan Republic state enterprises and organizations shall carry out in the Turkic language.

The texts of the forms, stamps and sign - boards with the name of the ministries, institutions, enterprises, organizations of the Azerbaijan Republic and of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic shall be formed in the Turkic language.

Article 13. For the purpose of providing the uninterrupted work of energy and transport systems (main railroad transport, air, marine, pipeline transport) during the dispatcher talks, preparing of the documents, reference information the Turkic language and the adopted international language shall be used.

Article 14. In the armed forces, internal troops and frontier-guards of the Azerbaijan Republic the state language of the Azerbaijan Republic shall be used.

IV. The language of information and the proper names

Article 15. On the territory of the Azerbaijan Republic and in the mass media besides the state language other languages can be used.

Advertisements, reports, and other visual information can be designed in the state language and if necessary simultaneously on the applicable international language.

The labels of the goods produced in the Azerbaijan Republic, the names of the industrial and food products, their instructions shall be written in the Turkic language and in required cases in the applicable foreign language.

Article 16. The names of populated points, administrative units and other geographical objects on the territory of the Azerbaijan Republic shall be written on the state language, the writings on the maps shall be established by state adopted information publications.

Article 17. The name of the state power bodies, ministries, state committees, institutions,, organizations and their branches shall be written in the Turkic language.

Article 18. The proper name of the citizen of the Azerbaijani nationality of the Azerbaijan Republic consists of his first name, father's name and surname. The father's name shall used along with the words "ogli" and "gizi" . Every citizen has the right to get the surname relating to his nationality.

The writing of the names and surnames of the representatives of other nationalities, living on the territory of the republic do not determined by this law.

V. The responsibility for the breaking the law on the state language

Article 19. The authorized persons of all state bodies, enterprises, institutions and organizations are called to account determined by the legislature of the Azerbaijan Republic in case of breaking the law on the state language.

Baku, December 22, 1992

**Decree of the National Assembly of the Republic of Azerbaijan
On implementation of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan
"On the state language in the Republic of Azerbaijan".**

The National Assembly of the Republic of Azerbaijan decrees:

1. To implement the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the state language of the Republic of Azerbaijan" from the day of its publication.
2. To determine, that until the accomplishment the republican legislature in conformity with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the state language in the Republic of Azerbaijan", the existing legal acts of the Azerbaijan Republic which do not contradict to this law are used.
3. To assign the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan to bring the resolution of the government of the Azerbaijan Republic in conformity with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the state language in the Republic of Azerbaijan".
4. To charge the control for the execution of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the state language in the Republic of Azerbaijan" on the commission on education, science, religion and culture issues of the National Assembly of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Baku, December 22, 1992

Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
On defense of the rights and liberties of national minorities, small numbered peoples
and ethnic groups living in the Republic of Azerbaijan and on rendering state assistance
to the development of their languages and cultures

Taking into consideration the presence of national minorities, small numbered peoples and ethnic groups in the territory of the republic of Azerbaijan, the necessity of creating favorable conditions for their free development,

- further improvement of inter-national relations in the republic, declaring the aim of raising them to the level of requirements of the legal state which is in the process of formation,

- basing on the Article 19 of the Constitution of the republic of Azerbaijan on state sovereignty,

- having in mind the necessity of realization personal liberty, legal equality of all the citizens irrespective of their properties, races and religions I decree;

1. The Cabinet of Ministers of the republic of Azerbaijan, ministries, organizations and heads of local executive bodies:

Consider thoroughly the tasks connected with national relations arising from the present decree within the frame of activities of ministries and organizations for taking an active part in the defense of political, economic, social, cultural rights and liberties of the representatives of the national minorities, small numbered peoples and ethnic groups living in the territory of the republic of Azerbaijan and their realization defined by the Constitution of the republic of Azerbaijan.

In accordance with the professional training of the representatives of national minorities, small numbered peoples and ethnic groups, having in mind the legal rights that they enjoy without any discrimination create all conditions for the realization of these rights, bar action or inertness aimed at violating these rights, increase attention to the examination of their oral and written applications and complaints connected with these issues.

2. To charge the apparatus of the President of the republic of Azerbaijan, the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the ministries and organizations of the Republic of Azerbaijan, heads of local executive bodies as a task with the mission of the state assistance and government policy in the following directions;

- to safeguard and develop the cultural, linguistic and religious specification of the nations in minority, small numbered peoples and ethnic groups, to perform religious rituals and ceremonies in complete freedom,

- to develop independently national crafts, professional and amateur arts, national trades;

- to protect historical and cultural monuments of all nations;

- to protect and preserve lands, reservations, parks and other objects of nature which are important for the population.

3. To charge the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the ministries of culture, people's education, finance and justice, heads of executive bodies of cities and districts with the errand:

- to organize cultural and religious institutions and societies of all nations and to create conditions for providing their legal functioning and to take all measures for them in accordance with the legislation of the republic of Azerbaijan;

- to render state assistance to these institutions, societies and unions, including the suit ability of providing them with buildings and financial support.

4. To commission the Ministry of Justice of the republic of Azerbaijan to prepare the law draft of the rights of the national minority, small numbered peoples and ethnic groups living in the Republic of Azerbaijan and introduce it to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in a one month.

5. To commission the Ministry of Justice of the republic of Azerbaijan and the State Frontiers Protection Committee to prepare the law draft simplifying passages of frontiers for the representatives of all nations in order to meet their compatriots freely in territories of other states and introduce it to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in a one month.

To commission the Cabinet of Ministers of the republic of Azerbaijan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other corresponding bodies to prepare proposals for concluding bilateral and multilateral treaties with the interested states.

6. To commission the Ministry of People's Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan to implement measures providing the learning of languages and literatures of national minorities on the basis of secondary school curriculum in the areas of their compact residence and in the form of optional lessons in the cities of Baku and Sumgayit.

Taking into account the transformation of the Azerbaijan Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages into the Azerbaijan State Institute of Languages to create there a department of philology of the small numbered peoples and a corresponding chair.

To prepare professional specialists for the Daghestanian Turks, local population and small numbered peoples in Guba branch of the M. A. Aliyev Azerbaijan State Institute of Arts, in Gusar branch of the M. A. Sabir Pedagogical School after.

To prepare and introduce corresponding proposals for concessive admission to higher educational institutions and secondary special schools the youth from the mountainous parts of the republic, small numbered peoples and our compatriots living abroad.

7. To found chairs and departments of Semitology, antique languages, Caucasian studies in the Academy of Sciences of the republic of Azerbaijan, in the M. A. Rasulzade Baku State University providing the learning of the ancient roots of the peoples living in the Azerbaijan (including the South Azerbaijan), their historical evolution, languages and literatures and on the level of requirements of world standards, to prepare skilled specialists able to study and investigate the historical heritage of Shumers, Elam, Manna, Medea, Albania, Sanscrit, Hunns, Khazars and other ancient ethoses. To invite foreign specialists and to send students, post-graduates, scientists to well-known research centers and educational institutions for this purpose at the expense of the state budget.

8. The ministries of people's education and culture of the republic of Azerbaijan render assistance to enliven crafts and arts, amateur arts, ancient trades of the small numbered peoples, to create libraries, shops of craftsmanship studying.

9. To charge the State Committee of Press and Poligraphy of the republic of Azerbaijan pay attention to the publication of educational literature, reference books and fiction in the languages of small numbered peoples.

Taking into account the absence of periodicals on national relations of the republican importance to publish a weekly newspaper by name of "Elin sasi" ("The Voice of People") attached to the counselor's service on the international relations of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in order to enlighten the lives and activities, labour and spiritual world of peoples, to develop their languages and cultures.

10. The State Television and Radio Broadcasting Corporation organize tele-radio programs for enlightening the literatures, folklores, labor and lives of the small numbered peoples and ethnic groups living in Azerbaijan, provide broadcasting of the "Republican News" in the Lezghi, Talish and Kurdish languages, broadcast daily programs through local radios in the languages of less numerous peoples.

11. The Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan provides the financing of measures providing the rendering of state assistance for the development of languages and literatures of peoples under this decree.

12. The heads of executive bodies of Baku, Sumgayit, Lankaran, Zagatala and Gabala shall provide the national cultural centers of the Jewish, Slavic, Lezghi, Talish, Avar, Udin and other small numbered peoples and ethnic groups with buildings or service rooms.

13. To commission the Counseling Board on inter-national relations of the President apparatus of the Republic of Azerbaijan to prepare corresponding measures and proposals for improving inter-national relations, as well as the realization of the authority of president and the solution constructive problems arising from the present decree.

14. To commission the General Prosecutor of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Ministry of National Security of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Ministry of the Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Azerbaijan prevent any action aimed at racial discrimination, national exclusiveness and national priority, at stirring up national hatred enmity and make the culprits answerable for these actions in accordance with the law.

Baku, September 16, 1992

Documents related to the language

June 21, 1918 – An act on the publication of the declaration of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan

June 27, 1918 – An act on the approval of Azerbaijani language as the official language of the Republic of Azerbaijan

August 28, 1918 – An act on conducting of instruction at the secondary schools in Turkish

September 18, 1918 – An act of the parliament on delivery of 1mln. rouble for purchase of books in Turkish for the libraries of public schools

November 13, 1918 – An act on the alteration of resolution on the nationalization of schools

February 11, 1919 – An act on affirmation of cavalry regulations in Turkish language and on the regimentals of Azerbaijani Army

March 21, 1919 – An act on formation of the committee on the reform of Arabic alphabet

September 18, 1920 – A decree of Azerbaijan Revolution Committee on “Teaching the languages at schools of the 1st and the 2nd levels”

February 8, 1921 – A decree of Azerbaijan Revolution Committee on conducting of the office work in the Soviet Institutions in Russian and Azerbaijani languages

March, 1925 – An act of the 4th All-Azerbaijani Congress of Soviets on the new Turkic alphabet

March 6, 1926 – The resolutions of the 1st All-Union Congress on the study of Turkic languages

July 11, 1939 – On alteration of Azerbaijani written language from Latin to Russian alphabet

August 21, 1956 – An Act on addition of the item on the official language of Azerbaijan SSR to the Constitution (Basic Law) of Azerbaijan SSR

An excerpting from the Constitution of Azerbaijan SSR of 1978

December 25, 1991 – A Law of the Azerbaijan Republic on the renewal of the Azerbaijani alphabet with Latin graphic

December 25, 1991 – A Decree of the National Board of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Regarding the regulation of coming into force the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the renewal of the Azerbaijan alphabet with Latin graphic"

An excerpting from the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan of 1995

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You can look through the text of the given documents in Azerbaijani and Russian versions of e-resources.

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