

Marrist Stricture into Marxist Structure

— An Inquiry into the Soviet Linguistic Controversy in 1950's—

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1. A problem in context

A reviewer of the *Recent Trends in Linguistics* (Language, vol. 41. 1, p. 125) has it that ... 'Although the reader will find many brief references to the Marrist controversy of 1950, the book contains no clear treatment of this important event of Soviet linguistic development.

The nature of Marr's theory is not discussed, nor are the circumstances examined which led to the overthrow of the school. ... the impact of Stalin's intervention in the linguistic controversy and the gradual freeing of Soviet and Eastern European linguistics from some of cruder form of political interference got only sporadic attention'.¹

This paper is an attempt at inquiring into the Marrist controversy of 1950's 'the important event of Soviet linguistic development', into the nature of Marr's theory in terms of criticisms levelled against it by Tschikobawa and others on 'Prawda', the organ daily of the Soviet Communist Party.

2. Marr — the man and scholar—

Nikolai Jakovlevitch Marr was born in 1861 and died in 1934. From 1900 on he was Professor at Petersburg (Later Leningrad) University and was elected member of the Science Academy in 1906. He specialised in Caucasian linguistics, and his main publication includes:²

1. Grammar of Tschanic language with specimens and glossaries (1910)
2. Grammar of old literary work of the Georgian language (1925)

Beginning with the study of geneological relationship of the Georgian language, Marr proposed 'Japhetic theory' which in its embryo was only an attempt at attesting relationship of the Caucasian family of languages with that of the Semitic languages. However Marr gradually gave the theory a character of general theory of linguistic relevance, and called it 'new studies in language'.

Before the publication of the Japhetic theory, which in time resulted in the linguistic controversy in 50's with consequent participation of Stalin in the debate, Marr was known as a first-rate scholar and specialist of Caucasian paleontology and philology. He was versed in the whole range of language, literature, ethnology and archeology of Armenia and Georgia. In his later years Marr emerged as the famous and fervent research-

cher of theory and practice of the Japhetic language, but at the same time he was known as a scholar of world fame in his studies not only in Caucasian languages but in Basque and other related languages.

Thus quite a number of Marr's scholarly works go a long way to working young Soviet linguistics into mature full-fledged linguistic science which stands the test of the Western linguistic scholarship.

Detracting Marr, however, Tschikobawa maintains that 'in spite of his efforts Marr could not make out the essentials of Marx-leninism along with the method of dialectical materialism and failed in applying the latter to linguistics studies.'³

Putting aside for the present this sweeping generalization of Tschikobawa against Marr's stance toward linguistics and Marxist-leninism in the Soviet Union, we will go over the theory and practice of the Japhetic language of Marr's conception.

3. The theory and practice of the Japhetic language

Marr's theory of the Japhetic language is subdivided into two different but related theories.

- a. the theory of the Japhetic language with its nature and origin.
- b. a general linguistic theory of the Japhetic language as a theory of language.

The Japhetic theory took its source from a theory for relationship of the Georgian language with the Semitic language.

The Georgian language goes through a series of developmental stage, and the defining criteria for each stage is the concept of the Japhetic language. In 1908 Marr found out that Khartwelic family of language (the Georgian group of language plus a couple of dead languages of the Near East) belonged to the Japhetic language. And in the same year Marr claimed that the Japhetic language was one of the branches which is most closely related to the Semitic language. But in 1916 the Khartwelic language, language of Caucasian mountain folks, was found to be the Japhetic language, and thus the Japhetic language was made a self-contained language family, which is related to the Semitic family of languages.

Toward 1920 the extent of the Japhetic family of languages was greatly expanded: the Basque language which makes itself 'an island of language' on the Pyrenean peninsula, the Etruscan language, which has been dead a long time but flourished in Italy peninsula before Roman period, and the dead Pelasgic language, (language of the prehistoric people on the Balkan peninsula), and the dead language of the makers of the older civilization in the Near East (the Hittite, the Uraric, the Elamaic). These are all claimed as the Japhetic family of languages.

Thus the theory of the Japhetic language, which originated as a discovery of a branch language closely related to the Semitic one, now looms large as a full-fledged theory for geneological relationship of almost all the languages in the prehistoric era of the Mediterranean civilization.

4. The Japhetic language and the people who spoke it

Marr maintains that the Japhetic speaker took part in the making of the Mediterranean culture because this speaker came in third in Marr's framework of linguistic chronology. The first came the pre-Indo-European and the second is the pre-Semitic languages respectively in his chronological scale. Of course it is expected that taking a bird's eye view the Indo-European and the Semitic language in their primitive stage were not in succession but partly overlapped in some areas.

To the above-mentioned comprehensive status of the Japhetic language as well as to its status as a third element in the making of Mediterranean culture, Marr arrives in his famous monograph.⁴

In this monograph entitled 'the Japhetic Caucasus and the third ethnic element in the making of Mediterranean area' (1920) he delineates vividly a fascinating picture of culture making role of the Japhetic language and its people.

Tschikobawa took issue with the chronological order of the Japhetic language, which comes in third in Marr's testimony. He contends that if the Japhetic language comes later than the Semitic language, then it is inappropriate to speak of relationship between these two languages.

Nevertheless it is said that Marr has made a great contribution as founder of the Japhetic theory of language because he has made it clear that the Japhetic family of language is originally related one another and that the Japhetic people is a maker of one of the oldest civilization in the Near East.

But Tschikobawa was of opinion that the theory of the Japhetic language was doomed when similar phonetic elements were found in diverse languages with the result that the Japhetic language came to be related with almost all the languages of the world.

5. The Japhetic language as a general theory of language

Marr maintains that language is a category of over-structure, and that all that in language as a over-structure of society is colored and conditioned by the class. It is this view of language that Marr conceived language as class language.

The origin of language, said Marr, is uniform in form and function. This is because of homogeneity of processes of formation as well as of initial building block for later development. All the language took its origin in the four elements (SAL, BER, JON, ROSCH)

Marr has it that the analysis of words must begin with discovery of one or the other of these four elements and that in this four element analysis of words one is faced with the most fundamental problem of linguistics, that is, with the problem of the origin of language.

As mentioned earlier, Marr considered that all the languages have the same origin and that the difference between languages are derivable from the difference in their

developmental stages.

As his criticism against what Marr said on the origin of language and on the difference in languages, Tschikobawa holds that Marr was right in regarding language as a over-structure in society as well as in his attempt at characterizing languages as the oldest evidence of history.

Marr made his studies in the evolution of language in close connection with that of thought, technique and production. Marr maintains that a spoken language as well as a gesture language is a category of over-structure on the basis of production and of production relationship.⁵ He said that language was one of over-structures in society and that in fact as the whole development of human society was defined by the development of production relationship, so language, most important means of communication, must be defined in its development by the same criteria, that is, by the development of production relationship. All histories of language points to this undeniable fact.

Dependence of language on production relationship is especially clear in the domain of vocabulary, more exactly in the changes of the form and meaning of words. It goes without saying that new objects or phenomena in our social life inevitably call forth words expressing them. On closer scrutiny it was found that new words are coined or existing words are used in new signification.

But the phenomena equivalent to formation of new words or to changes in word meaning are not as a rule observed in the forms of words, of sounds, and in sentence structure.

Therefore no specialists of language have succeeded in revealing significant relation or meaningful correlation between history of noun declension, verb conjugation or sentence structure and that of socio-economical structure. Concluding his criticism against Marr's theory of language as over-structure in society Tschikobawa contends⁶ that art and speech are not equal as items on the over-structure in society and that the details of the over-structure theory of Marr's is not made clear. Various facts of language, he continues, are not appropriately differentiated.

It often so happens that Marr did not validate his contention by details of linguistic facts.

6. Marr's theory of class characteristics in language.

Marr's Japhetic theory has it that everything in language is interlocked with class. Therefore, he goes on, a language is always a class language. He puts it: 'I am fully aware how much I have to hold myself responsible when I say that I am of a different opinion from my colleagues in that there is no languages that are not class bound and that there is no thought that is not class bound.'⁷

In another paper Marr reiterates: 'Japhetology does not deny the existence of class bound language. All the languages including the national languages of Europe and Caucasus are first and foremost class-bound languages. For instance, in Armenia and Georgia

one finds two national languages both of which are class bound. One is old feudal literary language, and the other is the so-called vernacular. And What is remarkable here is that the Georgian feudal language is nearer in its system to the Armenian feudal language than it itself is nearer to any of the vernaculars of Georgia.

As the Armenian vernacular and the Georgian vernacular have naturally the same relation to their feudal speech they are typologically the same languages of one system. The point is that Japhetology states explicitly that any other approach to the study of language than that of Japhetology is simply untenable.⁸

Tschikobawa butts in: 'according to Marr's theory it is out of question to speak about languages which are not class bound even in the first stage of their origin. Marr claims that to speak about a classless language is to go back to the primitive stage of speculative linguistics, that is, to the cult of Indo-European with its parent language and its formalized discipline.'⁹

Marr is very definitive in his statement that only his idea of language is scientific and marxistic. He claims that to talk about languages which are not class bound even in its initial stage of development is to doom scientific and logical essence of Marxism. Setting himself against Marr, Tschikobawa maintains that there is no shadow of Marxist-leninist concept of class in Marr's theory. Tschikobawa speculates that in the very beginning of the pre-historic human society there was no class and means of production was a property of a whole members of that society. And in the class society, Tschikobawa goes on, contrary to Marr's insistence there did exist a language that is not class bound, and here he quotes Stalin against Marr: 'the nation is not a historically developed and stable society of people, language, territory, social life and culture. A society of common language does not speak for a nation.'¹⁰

Marr goes on further: 'there is no national language; no language of a whole nation but a class language. And the language of the same class of different nations, if equal in social structure, shows more of a typological relationship each other than the language of various classes of the same country.'¹¹

Tschikobawa levels his criticism against Marr and declares that nothing is so far from the facts of linguistics as Marr's unsupported thesis that the Georgian feudal language stands nearer to the Armenian feudal one than each is near to the vernacular of its own country. In a class society, Tschikobawa goes on, class character of a speaker expresses itself only in some aspects of his language, that is, usually in his vocabulary and style; but this does not in the least mean that language in question is bound with class, since the concept of class character of language is full of contradiction when one takes consideration one of the important function of language, that is, communication.

A class language, if there is any, must be one in which the people of the same class can communicate but is not usable for the purpose of communicating between the peoples of different classes of the same nation. It is evident that history of society does not provide us with any of such a reciprocally isolated society. Therefore the problem

of a class language in Marr's version is not posed in a viable form. It is a commonplace to assert that a nation has only its national language which is common to all the classes of that nation, although it may occur to us that there are nations in the present-day world where bilingualism is a fact of its people. A general thesis excludes exceptional minorities.

However Marr was very persistent in this point and said that Japhetology makes it necessary to clarify most unambiguously Engels' hypothesis of the origin of a nation as a collapse of races, which needs serious reconsideration.¹²

7. Marr's theory of the origin of language

According to Marr, first came a gesture language, for that matter, a hand language. And a sound language which is called variously as speech or as oral language, came later and a period of a sound language approximately lasts from about 50 000 to 50 0000.¹²

Marr's version of a sound language did not arise from the need for communication but from magic activities for labor. One hears Marr speak about four original linguistic elements which primitive magicians made use of, but the magicians it seems, did not use these four elements as means of communication with his people, not even with other magicians, but as a means of communication with the totems.

The original words, according to Marr, were magical in nature as well as in use. Thus the sound language, which the magicians have at their disposal, originated in a class differentiated environment. Consequently the sound language served as a tool for class struggle as later did the written language. Marr is speaking about the struggle in the days of the origin of language between the people who possessed the sound language and the people who possessed the gesture language until the mightier mass commanding the sound language won over the deaf and dumb.¹³

Tschikobawa brought out his point against Marr and puts it as follows. It is clear that when one speaks of the origin of language the sound language comes to our mind as a means of communication. In this connection it never occurs to us the existence of a silent language. The silent language, and for that matter, a gesture language possesses no words in their proper sense and silent into the bargain. Therefore the silent language can by no means be called language. Further, said Tschikobawa, when one asks the origin of language, one is supposed not to confuse the origin of language with that of a particular language. Thus one is never expected to ask; how many words were there? what words were there? much less who used them and what struggle was conducted between them?

The fundamental problem of the origin of language, said Tschikobawa, is to ask: in what condition was language supposed to originate?

The classical Marxist theory has it that language arose in cooperative work and out of the need for understanding, that is, for communication, and that the original language was a spoken, that is, a sound language. The language, wrote Marx and Engels, 'arose

out of the need and drive for communicating with other people.¹⁴

Engels said in his article, 'an ever growing man reaches the stage where he has something to say one another, and this need shaped his organ of speech; the undeveloped larynx of the ape slowly matured and the organ of speech gradually learned to pronounce one articulated sound after another.'¹⁵

Communication is the fundamental function of language and this function exists from the very beginning of the growth of language. The language which is shy of this function is not a language in any sense of the word. This is one of indubitable theses of linguistics.

Marr, in direct contrast to this first principle of linguistics, declares that 'it is a great misunderstanding to think of the origin of language in terms of a means of communication, and 'it is no little mistake to assign one of the important functions of a present day language to the primitive language. The language was a magical tool, a means of prediction in the first stage of man's collective production. The need and possibility of using a language as a means of communication is a later phenomenon and this applies to a gesture language as well as to a spoken language.,¹⁶

Consequently Marr maintains that the need for understanding could never lead to the birth of language. In the beginning language, according to Marr, was not used as a means of communication but as a means of magic.

8. The Unity of a future language

Marr speaks of the unity of the future common language of mankind. This is one of the principal problems in which Marr's view seems to be in accord with Marxist-leninism thesis on this subject.

With this reservation Tschikobawa hastens to add that Marr's conception of this problem is false. The working life, Marr maintains, generally leads to the birth of a common language, and in this way the unity of trade and industry with social order were first realized, and by means of this unity the obstacles against a common language are eliminated in the fullness of time.¹⁷ And mankind enters a classless society and one can not help taking measures to hasten this world-wide process.¹⁸

Marxists are of a different opinion on this theme. They assert that the process of the decline of a national language and the making of a common world language are gradually achieved not through any artificial measures to hasten the process. Use of such measures means use of force against nations, which marxism is not likely to allow in any circumstances.

Stalin has it that Lenin has transferred the period of the collapse of national boundaries and the levelling of national identity not to the period of the victory of socialism in one country, but to the period when dictatorship of proletariats is realised in all countries of the world. By that time the foundation of socialistic world economy shall have already been laid down.¹⁹

Hence Lenin holds that the first phase of dictatorship of proletariats does not mark the beginning of the collapse of nations, and of national languages. The beginning of a single common language only comes in the second phase of proletarian dictatorship in accordance with the making of a single world economy. With this world economy achieved does the nations of the world feel the need for an international language along with its own national language in order to achieve a smooth communication as well as a friendly economic, social, cultural and political cooperation. Thus in the second phase of proletarian dictatorship an international language will flourish in complete harmony with national languages.²⁰

9. The paleontology of language and element analysis

The paleontology of language with its peculiar method of element analysis takes a pivotal place in the Japhetic theory of Marr's. Two vital theoretical theses are inextricably connected with this paleontology of language.

1. the thesis for the unity of glottogenic (that is, language originating) process
2. the thesis for the stadial development of language (the stadial classification of language).

The paleontology of language makes a study of the oldest state of language, and in the Japhetic theory the so-called element analysis serves as a method for the paleontology.

The formulation of this element analysis follows.

All the words of all the language, which are products of the single originating process, consist of four elements. Every word consists of one or two, and very rarely of three elements. And in the vocabulary of no language can one find any other elements than these ever recurrent four elements. Marr has reached these four elements and named them as Sal, Ber, Jon, Rosh. These four elements constitute the basis for the formal paleontological analysis of any word. Without this preliminary analysis, that is, without the division of any words into one, two, or three members of such elements, can one never compare. Without this analysis comparative method will not work.²¹

Marr's paleontology is usually regarded as a major achievement of his theory, which is progressive as well as revolutionary and gets rid of a racially segregating principle of a bourgeois linguistics.

However Tschikobawa is a doubting Thomas. According to Marr, he contends, the four element analysis is a necessity for the comparative method.

The four element analysis is a 'new linguistics' on Marr's ordination and he emphasizes that this new linguistics does not exclude comparison. On the contrary, the element analysis, he continues, is a new technique of comparison, comparison in terms of four elements.

Then, Tschikobawa butts in, 'Any words of any languages can be compared by this new comparative method. A Georgian word can be compared with a Chinese word as

well as with a Latin or an Arabic word, or further with a Turkish, and a Basque word. One has only to determine to what element or a group of elements a given word is decomposed'.

And Tschikobawa asks: 'Then can all the words of the world be traced back and decomposed into these four elements?' and 'Is it possible today for those four elements to be found in the words of a language?' 'When all the languages of the world can be derived from the same four elements in respect with vocabulary, then all the languages of the world are said to have a common origin, and then there can be no languages which are different in their original building materials.

Through these building material common to all the language of the world, as well as through the unity of processes for linguistic change, the unity of the origin of language is established.

In spite of Marr's persuasion it is a commonplace that there exist languages which are widely divergent in word, word composition, in structure of sentence and in phonetic assets and arrangement.

Marr's rebuff is: 'Various languages embody various stages of a single development. Difference in languages are determined according to the place which is taken by a given language (language family and language system) in the single process of linguistic change.' Marr describes the single process of linguistic change as the developmental stages. These various stages show a formation of language and thought in terms of a means of production.

It is natural to ask with Tschikobawa, 'what is this 'formation of language and thought, which allows us to speak of a new stage? In another word, by what characteristics can we recognize a stage in language development? Here again Marr did not give any definite and concrete characteristics for transition in stage.

In this connection Meschtchaninov, the pupil of Marr writes: 'The problem of stages and systems are posed in the framework of a universal theory with no concrete division of language development on a proposed scale of transition. The number of the stages is not specified, nor the characteristics for the stages investigated.,²²

In his later work Marr did research into characteristics for stages in the Japhetic language in terms of syntactic peculiarities. He has shown that in a number of points the old Georgian language does not coincide with the new Georgian language, and he concludes that the Japhetic language is a polystage language.²³

However we are not informed for certain how many stages are found in the existing languages or, for that matter, for the extant languages of the world.

Marr provisionally divides languages according to their chronological period of origin.

1. the languages in the first period
 - a. Chinese
 - b. the present day languages of the middle and deep Africa
2. the languages in the second period

- a. Finno-Ugrian
- b. Turkish
- c. Mongolian
3. the languages in the third period
 - a. the present day Japhetic language
 - b. the Hamitic language (of the near and deep Africa)
4. the languages in the fourth period
 - a. the Semitic language
 - b. the Indo-European language²⁴

The Japhetic language was listed as a language in the third period and it precedes the Indo-European language. Marr claims that the Indo-European shows a new formation out of this Japhetic language.²⁵

Then it is in the nature of order to ask how this new formation is made. Marr answers: 'the Indo-European is a result of a especial and complex phase of a cross fertilization which is called forth by a revolution in social order. And this revolution depends on the invention of new means of production to which the discovery of metal and its wider use gave rise.'²⁶

A criticism against Marr in this connection follows:

According to Marr the discovery of metals and its wider use in a society called forth a new stage of the language which was spoken by the people in society. But as early as two thousand years ago when there was no trace of the Indo-European language in the Mediterranean area, that the maker of metallurgy was the Japhetic people was shown by Marr and is known to all. This admitting, then, on a new fourth developmental stage we just expect the Japhetic language to appear, but we don't find it in Marr's framework of the above stated stages.

Another criticism is the following: Marr asserts that the Japhetic language has evolved itself into the Indo-European, but according to the table above cited, the Japhetic language still exists. The Japhetic language can never be expected to stay in the developmental stage in which it had been in after its evolution into the Indo-European language. In short only one of two cases is tenable; when the Japhetic language has evolved itself into the Indo-European, it is no longer in its earlier stage of development, or if it stays in its earlier stage, then there would have occurred no evolution of it.

A creator and a creation can exist side by side in this animate world. Parents do not perish with a birth of their sons and daughters. In language, however, the newly developed language and the language whose change has given birth to this new language can not stand in a parallel chronological period. It is easy to see that for instance, vulgar latin can not exist side by side with Italian, which is one of its descendant.

10. Marr's theory and practice of 'element analysis'

In Marr's theories emphasis is laid on his theory of element analysis. As mentioned earlier the common building materials determine his point for uniformity of processes of language development. Marr has it that all the words of any language in the world come out of the four elements (Sal, Ber, Jon, Rosch). Thus in any word of any language one can find these elements or a combination of these.

Hence one can detect these elements, and then comparison is in order.

Tschikobawa throws in his criticism to this apparently harmless fantasy of Marr's and said, 'the fact that first there were four elements in words is not a harmless hypothesis. On the contrary this fact is a means for analysis whose use can vouch for comparison and, without which the study of language both in general and in particular is impossible.'

Marr repeatedly emphasises importance of paleontological element analysis: 'The Japhetic theory, new linguistics, makes a free use of the two means which are not securely attested. One is an analytical alphabet, and the other is analysis in terms of four linguistic elements.'²⁷

In another occasion Marr drove home more precisely meaning of the element analysis. 'The way to history of thought has been paved by the paleontology of language which is founded on the four linguistic elements, and with these new means of research relationship between particular languages all over the vast expanse of Africa, European Asia has been revealed.'²⁸

The four element analysis is based on the table of law-abiding varieties of four elements.²⁹ And according to this table one can ascribe Sal (with voiced s), Zal, Tal, Dal, Gal, Tkal, Dgal, Zkal, Dsgal and others to the element Sal. In like manners a number of varieties can be traced back to the remaining three elements.

Naturally there occurs a question: In what language and when the change of the sound 'S to that of Z, T, D. G. Tk, Dk, is observed? Neither the language nor the period is not given. The change is free of time and common to all the language, that is, the element analysis is not confined neither by time nor by language.

One could compare Russian words with Arabic words, Hittite words with Turkish words, Latin words with Finnish words. With the use of four element analysis can one arbitrarily divide any words and its components of any existing or extant languages of the world. Hence Marr's element analysis is a panacea in linguistic science.

Marrs compares Russian word *izrekat'* (pronounce) with Armenian *Dsain* (sound,) with Georgian *ena* (language, tongue,) with English *tongue*. With the element analysis Marr demonstrates linguistic commonness of the words *Japhet*, *Prometheus*, and *Karapet*.³⁰

The Megrelic word *dicha* (the earth), the Georgian word *dug-s* (cooks) and the Russian word *dux* (Geist) was compared one another by means of the element analysis. But

where and how can one find relationship in meaning through all these words? The Megrelic word *dicha*, it is said, designates not only the solid earth but also the solid sky and along with the sky, then the sun, the fire, and further the sky totem came to mean the spirit. All this series of transformation and relationship in meaning takes place according to norms of the pre-logical thought. Therefore the element paleontology of language and the paleontology of thought, where logical norm has no meaning at all, helps one another.

Now we have to go into a combination of element in Marr's element analysis.

The Georgian word *mucha* (oak) is composed of two elements *mu* (an element of Ber) and *cha* (an element of Sal). The first element *mu* is closely connected with the Chinese *mu* (tree), Mordavian *pu*, (tree), Georgian *puri* (bread, cereal), Greek *balanos* (acorn), Megrelic *kobali* (bread, cereal). The second element *cha* is also closely connected with Georgian words *che* (tree), *tké* (wood). Thus one and the same element *mu* and its variants *pu*, *pur*, *bal* designates tree, acorn and bread because according to Marr, mankind in its infancy lived on acorn.

This very important conclusion for history of culture is derived from a seemingly harmless comparison of a Georgian language with a Chinese, Greek and other languages. And all this was built upon the element analysis of the words *mucha*, *puri*, *balanos*, *kobali* and others. The semantic grouping of oak, acorn, bread with all its implication for history of culture was made with the help of the element analysis, although a historical fact of a Georgian word is against this thesis of Marr's.

Mucha does not lend itself to the arbitrary analysis, *mu* and *cha*; neither *mu* nor *cha* can in all likelihood be correlated with the roots which mean bread or tree.

Tschikobawa maintains that in any framework of Georgian philology it is not within our scope of task to ask whether we can live on acorn. Probably one species of oak may bear edible acorn.

For the present we have only to state that no evidence has so far been produced in favor of the element analysis of Marr's. To the repeated criticisms against him in the form of what are four elements the latest version of Marr's answer is: 'one does not need to clarify things, sometimes it is that one can only show them. One can observe that on last analysis there exists four elements. Why? I don't know.'³¹ This shows that a hypothesis which had not been proved was raised to the altar of an axiom.

11. Concluding

— The circumstances for Marr's overthrow —

Little is known about the rise and decline of Marr's linguistic theory both as a general theory of origin and development of language and as a particular theory of the Japhetic language. This is partly because of the political situation involved, and partly because the interests and concerns of Soviet linguistic scholars as well as those of the western linguistic scholars have tended to focus on the recent achievements of Soviet ling-

uistics, but as Mr. Sledd has it in a different context: 'we have to keep with the past without denying the present' and with Hungerford, 'we should be on our guard not to join the ignorant progressive who rejects tradition without studying it and reads nothing earlier than last year.'³²

The critical impulse was given and interest aroused when the editorial staff of the *Prawda* announced. 'In view of an unsatisfactory state of the present day Soviet linguistic science, we think it necessary to organize free discussion so that through criticisms against each other and even against himself stagnation in the development of the Soviet linguistic science may be dispelled, and the further development of the discipline be put onto a right path.'

The cult of Marr—Marrism—had been firmly established since 1925 keeping close parallel with that of Stalin. This is not surprising when we know that his Japhetic theory of language was made public as early as 1908.

The first attempt at the thawing of Marrism was openly made by A. S. Tschikobawa in the pages of *Prawda* for May 9 th, 1950.

In this paper entitled 'Some problems of the Soviet linguistics' Tschikobawa has extended an excellent and elaborate analysis of the nature of Marr's theory and practice of Japhetology and its concomitant element analysis. In passing mention must be made that this paper had detonated a series of linguistic discussion in *Prawda* and elsewhere which resulted in the overthrow of Marrism, with the intervention of Stalin in the last stage.

As mentioned above with the rise and stabilization of Stalin's regime Marr's Japhetic theory was securely established at around 1925. Marr called his theory as 'a new discipline', and this linguistics of Marr's considers language in terms of its social context, that, is, in terms of class and society, and defines language as an over-structure of society according to what seemed to him Marxist conception of social structure. This is well illustrated by his own words when he levelled criticism against Indo-European philology of long standing.

'Indo-European society after Industrial Revolution with its romantic atmosphere and Resoration aftermath did not provide a favorable milieu for making a deep and enlarged use of a new linguistics viable. This new method, however, was not organically developed by linguistic science, but was taken from natural science. In this milieu Indo-European linguistics with its comparative method has arisen and developed. ... This IE linguistics has acquired a world view of the society which had been built on a religious conception of a universal cultural process. Indo-European linguistics replaced the division of mankind by that of religion and this IE linguistics took only the IE family of language in its scope out of the body cooperate of all the languages of the world.'³³

Against this supposed supremacy of the IE linguistics Marr pitched himself and argues that in the areas where IE race had roamed were found monuments whose makers seemed neither the Semitic nor the IE race. Marr named this single race a third ethnic element.

And this third ethnic element began to emerge in a historical time as a founder of Mediterranean culture. The IE linguistics however, only clouded the origin of this race, so Marr contends, and showed the IE race as the only creator of Mediterranean culture. In this way the IE linguistics failed to explain the origin of the Etruscans as well as that of the Greek type of the Indo-Europeans, the Minoans and its script. The language of this maker and founder of Mediterranean culture who have migrated and been found 'not only on the islands but also on the peninsulas of the Mediterranean Sea and the southern area of Russia was called by Marr the Japhetic family of language.

Marr maintains that the Japhetic language is related to three branches of languages; the Semitic, the Indo-European, and the Turkish not only genetically but in terms of culture, history and ethos.

The Japhetic language shows a fundamental relationship with the Semitic language, and a genetical relationship with one type of the Turkish family of language. And a genetical relationship of the Japhetic language with the IE was occasioned by their crossing which resulted in two languages of the Armenian family; one is the Armenian written language and the other is the dead language of the Armenian stock.

Thus Japhetic philology stems from two sources; one is from the study of living languages, taking into consideration what is inherited from their developments. Another is from the study of confluence of languages.

In Marr's theory, as described in the body of this paper, a central place was taken by the problem of the origin of language. what is called modern languages, Marr remarks, is the product of the already existing fully developed languages of a definite social period.

Illustrative of his stage theory of language is his observation that the essential moment for the development of language is the social and economical structure of that period.

Marr regards IE as a transformation of the Japhetic language, and the IE language, he remarks, is not a language of a particular race. It was spoken by a member of a certain race.³³ Hence IE proto-glossa was dismissed by Marr as an incidence of a discovery of a language, and comparative study of the so-called IE language as meaningless.

Marr puts his theory of the Japhetic language diametrically against a theory of the IE philology. He states that in the primordial past highly multiple meanings were materialized in a single word,³⁴ and that this makes it possible for us to reduce the number of the words of the real parent language to quite a few number of word elements. This finding led Marr to establish his famous theory of element analysis. As detailed earlier he tried to reduce and decompose the words in any language to the four basic elements and a combination of them.

As early as 1940 there is an indication that the Institute of Language and Thought at the Science Academy denied Marr's four element analysis, and in 1944 Serdjutschenko, as a summary of a thoroughgoing discussion of the problems remarked that the element

analysis can never be applicable and useful.³⁴

Although in 1946 Mestschaninow challenged against Marr's four element analysis and called it as a misrepresentation of Marxist-leninite linguistics, in 1949 he had still no audacity to declare that with the help of the notorious four element analysis no Marxist-leninite linguistics can be produced. On the contrary he made a casual and obsequious mention on the matter saying that the analysis of words of the present-day language according to four element would lead nowhere.³⁵

In the same year the journal, '*Russian Language in School*' was published with a view to popularizing materialistic linguistics in the Soviet Union to thousands of Russian teachers in and out of the country. In this journal the word *ruka* (hand) was divided into two elements *ru* and *ka*, both of which are shown to mean 'hand'. And a Russian word *topor* (hatchet) and a French word *porter* were said to be consisted of the elements *por* and *tor* or *ter*. This was explained by the fact that a hatchet is as much of a working tool as hands.

In 1950 the Ministry of Education of Soviet Federation Socialist Republic published as one of a series of 'The Problems of Linguistics for Teachers', a brochure by Professor Seedjutschenko entitled 'Academician N. J. Marr—the founder of the Soviet materialistic linguistic'.³⁶ Serdjutshcenko wrote: 'the problem of the element analysis must be taken in earnest, and the paleontological analysis according to the four element can be completely applicable and profitable.' (p. 60)

And in the same year The Ministry for Higher Education worked out a program for 'Introduction to Linguistics': (author: Tschemodanov, editor: Serdjutschenko), which was exclusively based on the false thesis of Marr's linguistic theory.

In this program not only the four element analysis but also the the thesis which had been acquired through this analysis was stated as achievement of the Soviet materialist linguistics. The result is that the four element analysis, stock example of which are *ruka* and *topor* cited above, was introduced to the universities, and teachers' colleges as an obligatory course of study.

The Presidium of the Soviet Science Academy declared on July 21st in 1941 that Marr's theory built on the foundation of dialectical and historical materialism and his thesis of common language developing processes are progressive and revolutionary disciplines.

Marr's theory of the four element analysis and its practice with his earlier Japhetic theory of language has so securely been established in the Soviet linguistic scene that no linguists can dare to oppose it without the fear of losing his position or prestige, although there are some scholars in the country who manage to detract Marrism to some extent.³⁷

Thus there is no lack of criticisms. Early in 1942 a tendency toward Marr's liquidation came from a political circle when a historical common fate of the Slavic peoples was emphasized. On the strength of this circumstance the so-called IE comparative philology gained ground to some extent. But this lapse did not last long, and after the Second

World War, again Marr's theory became the officially recognized linguistic theory.

Incidentally before Stalin's participation or intervention in a series of linguistic discussions the Soviet linguists had been asked to take care of keeping fast Marr's discipline.³⁸ Consequently Marr's dogma presided over the Soviet linguistics for some fifty years, and it is no wonder that during this long passage of time there appeared some linguistic works which outlived Marrism and has had some relevance to the present-day Soviet linguistics.³⁹

But all in all Marr's linguistic theory of language had done real harm to Soviet linguistic science and its otherwise faster development. After a long spell of Marrism, which had long been supported by the administrative side, and on the spur of Tschikobawa's anti-Marrism discussion Stalin put an end to Marrism when he ordained Marr's theses of class and over-structure character of language completely erroneous, and the interpretation of language as socially neutral means of communication now replaced Marr's theory of language, especially of its origin as a means of magic and rituals. There followed shuffle and change in personnels and organizations in various institutions for linguistic science in the Soviet Union, and in due course isolation of Soviet linguistics was broken through translations and assimilation of the works of Western scholars.

Notes

1. Thanks to the extraordinary improvement in the Soviet linguistics since the latter was freed from the Xenophobic strictures of Marr and Stalin Western structuralists can no longer afford to ignore the studies appearing in such centers as the Moscow Institute of Russian languages, of Slavic studies, and of Linguistics.
2. Грамматика чанского языка с хрестоматиями и словврем 1910.
Грамматика древнелитературного грузинского языка.
3. 'Über einige Fragen der Sowjetischen Sprachwissenschaft' Quoted in *Beiträge aus der Sowjetischen Sprachwissenschaft*, 1952, s. 10.
4. Яфетический кавказ и третий этнический элемент 1920.
5. Н. Я. Мавр, К бакинской дискуссии о яфетидорогии и марксизме. 1932, с. 25.
6. Н. Я. мавр, Яфетическая теория, 1928, с. 130.
7. Н. Я. Мавр, Язык и мышление, 1931, с. 4.
8. Н. Я. Мавр, К бакинской дискуссии о яфетидорогии и марксизме, 1932, с. 19.
9. То же, с. 10
10. Н. Я. Мавр, Почему так трудно стать лингвистом теоретиком, Избранные работы, т. 2, с. 415.
11. Н. Я. Мавр, Актуальные проблемы очередные задачи яфетической теории, Избран. работы, 1928, с. 75.
12. Н. Я. Мавр, Язык и мышление, 1931, с. 58.
13. То же., с. 116.
14. К. Маркс и ф. Энгельс, Немецкая идеология, с. 20.
15. Ф. Энгельс, 'Роль труда в процессе очеловечения обезьяны', Диалектика природы,

- 1932, с. 52.
16. Н. Я. Марр, К бакинской дискуссии о яфетидологии и марксизме, 1932, с. 7.
 17. Н. Я. Марр, К вопросу о едином языке, Избранные работы, т. 2, с. 397.
 18. То же, с. 398.
 19. И. В. Сталин, Соч. т. 2, с. 346.
 20. То же, с. 348-349.
 21. Н. Я. Марр, Общий курс учения о языке, Избранные работы, т. 2 с. 16.
 22. Н. Я. Марр, Яфетические языки. ВСЭ, т. 65.
 23. Н. Я. Марр, Почему так трудно стать лингвистом теоретиком, Избранные работы, т. 2, с. 405.
 24. Н. Я. Марр, Иберо-этрusco-итальянская скрещенная среда образования индоевропейских языков, Избранные работы, т. 1, с. 187.
 25. Н. Я. Марр, Индоевропейские языки средиземноморья, Избранные работы, т. 1, с. 185.
 26. Н. Я. Марр, К семантической палеонтологии в языках неяфетических систем, Избранные работы, 1931, т. 2, с. 256.
 27. Н. Я. Марр, Языковая политика яфетической теории и удмуртский язык, Избранные работы, 1931, т. 1, с. 288.
 28. Н. Я. Марр, Общий курс учения о языке, Избранные работы, т. 2, с. 256.
 29. Н. Я. Марр, К семантической палеонтологии в языках неяфетических систем, Избранные работы, 1931, т. 2, с. 256.
 30. Н. Я. Марр, К бакинской дискуссии, 1932, с. 44.
 31. Н. Я. Марр, Яфетический кавказ и третий этнический элемент в созидании средиземноморской культуры, 1920, с.
 32. Hungerford H., Robinson J. & Sledd, J. (eds.), *English Linguistics: An Introductory*, 1970, p. 3.
 33. S. Schaumjan, *Strukturelle Linguistik*, Trans. by W. Girke and Helmut Jachnow, 1971, p. 10.
 34. H. Arens, *Sprachwissenschaft*, 1955, p. 419.
 35. В. Малаховский, Русские этимологии в исследованиях академика Н. Я. Марра 1947, с. 4.
 36. И. И. Мещанинов, 'Марр — основатель советского языкознания. Изд. АН СССР. Отд. лит. и яз., т. 8, 1949, с. 295.
 37. V. Kiparsky, 'Comparative and Historical Slavistics' in *Current Trends in Linguistics I*. (ed. T. A. Sebeok), 1963, p. 97.
 38. Виноградов, В. В., 'О преодолении последствий культа личности в советском языкознании,' Теоретические проблемы современного советского языкознания. М. 1964, с. 10.