

## FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR HISTORIANS: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

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Society cannot live without using languages which is the most important aspect of human communication. There is no profession in society where the language is not used to express our thoughts, feelings and desires, to achieve mutual understanding between individuals. Language penetrates into the social experience of the mankind, develops with it and with human society, and is also assimilated by each person only through communication with other people [1].

Nowadays, when contacts with other countries are becoming closer, knowledge of foreign languages plays an important role. Any person should know at least one foreign language for mutual understanding and successful cooperation between people of different nations. Without knowledge of foreign languages this cooperation is almost impossible. By the years, various forms of international communication are developing: international meetings, exhibitions, sports events, joint business, etc. The exchange programs for schoolchildren and students are good prerequisites for learning foreign languages. Knowledge of different languages is very important when we use it in various spheres for professional purposes. It gives us a lot of opportunities to develop our professional skills, broaden outlook, use different sources in our research works and so on.

There are many professions where knowledge of various languages is the main factor for career growth. They are, of course, translators, diplomats, journalists, scientists, guides, and also flight attendants, taxi drivers, etc. For instance, a cutter who knows a foreign language well can use foreign fashion magazines in her/his work to sew good, fashionable clothes. Also, this skill is helpful in big enterprises where foreign equipment is used, it helps to read the operating instructions and maintain the equipment. Businessmen, athletes, and artists who often go on business trips abroad also need to know the languages to communicate successfully with the people.

But what about the historians? Is it so relevant in our country to study history through foreign languages? We know that the knowledge of different languages will expand our horizon, but we can not even imagine at what extent it will enlarge and broaden the knowledge about the world history and the history of our country.

Knowledge of foreign languages is very important for studying historical heritage of different nations. History is a science that covers the entire history of mankind and the ways of its existence. History is the source of everything. After some destroyable bloody wars and political conflicts between countries, people in the 18th centuries began to study deeply the origins and roots of human existence. Despite the fact that history has always been existed, from this period history began to emerge as a subject for study. Humanitarian disciplines such as political science, sociology, culturology, linguistics - they all come from the subject of history, when people began to study history of mankind separately in the terms of its consciousness, culture, and social aspects. At present, thanks to these subjects, we constantly learn something new about the human world and its origin.

Human beings have always been interested in learning about their past. When they first appear, what were their roots, with whom they integrated, the heritage of their ancestors. History

has always played an important role in the life of society and the people as a whole. After all, over the extended period, the knowledge of historical heritage has always been a relevant topic for discussions on a global spectrum. History has a wide range in the field of studying of all aspects of life. It is a science about the culture embracing the cultural values and achievements of not only one nation but also the whole world, studying it in harmony and justifying the world order. Culture and human relations have always been important aspects for studying and investigation. Without the influence of any nation and culture, we would not be able to match all the puzzles of historical objectivity and its connecting ties with the real world. World history is the overall achievement of the whole world, of the whole nation. Without international communication, we would not have created a kind of unique world where everyone exists separately and interacts with each other at the same time. And in this case the need for knowledge of foreign languages in history is obvious .

In the new XXI century proclaimed by UNESCO as the century of polyglots the entire civilized world strives for openness and mutual understanding. In this regard, the role and importance of learning foreign languages increases. It becomes important to educate a person who will be able to participate in cross-cultural communication in various languages. The processes of interaction and internationalization of cultures are expressed in the formation of international culture. A person needs to study foreign languages, culture, and traditions of other nations for spiritual growth, for enriching his/her worldview and outlook. Thus, why it is relevant to study history in different languages?

1. In other languages, namely, English, Russian, Arabic, Greek, Persian, there are more objective information about the history. It is evident from schoolbooks where all data sources referred to the scientific works of foreign scientists. Historical records have been maintained for a variety of reasons, including administrative (such as censuses, tax records, commercial records), political (glorification or criticism of leaders and notable figures), religious, artistic, sporting (notably the Olympics), genealogical, personal (letters), and entertainment. They are all mostly saved and placed in China, Greek, English and Russian museums [2].

2. The more languages you know, the more historical information you will get. Knowledge of languages plays a significant role in self-development. Especially, it is essential for historians - to study history in the context of foreign scientists' works. It is useful to expand horizon, to exchange views on historical events, to expand own diversity.

3. Fewer historical records were found in Kazakh literature, since the historical heritage was mainly transmitted by oral speech, which removes it from historical objectivity. Also, most of the priceless documents were burned in the Otyrar library behind the scenes of the Mongol invasion.

4. It may seem that history cannot be changed in other way and we have no reason for different interpretations. But it turns out, it is not all true. There is some evidence that history is the most inaccurate of the sciences. Hence the historical heritage of each country, their consciousness, perception. Despite all the facts, we must not allow history to be a mixture of lies. Thus, in this case, the ability to study history in different languages and discover one objective history seems necessary for a generation to gain true knowledge about it. There are great examples about historical facts that are presented in different countries in different ways:

**The Hundred Years' War.** One of the major battles of the Hundred Years ' War was the Battle of Agincourt between Britain and France. With a serious numerical advantage, the French were defeated. In France, this event is hardly mentioned in schools. At the same time, in the UK, this battle is presented almost as the only battle of the Middle Ages.

**Waterloo.** In French schools, they teach that the French won the Battle of Waterloo. In British schools, the opposite is true.

**World War II.** In modern Germany, the history of the Second World War in schools is very detailed and it is taught in several subjects at once. Modern Germans want to learn from mistakes, trying not to run away from them. Unlike their parents 'generation: up until the' 60s, the study of World War II history was unofficially taboo. In contrast to Germany, American students pay much less attention to the study of the history of the Second World War. In general, all that US

schoolchildren know about Germany is a brief history of World War II and the destruction of the Berlin Wall. After these events, Germany disappears from the history books.

In the UK, the study of history is conducted in primary school. Students go through the Norman Conquest, the Industrial Revolution, the Tudor period (XVI century) and the Second World War. In high school, they will return to this only if they choose the appropriate specialization. In Russia, the history of the Second World War in schools is reduced to the history of the period in which the USSR directly participated. Many schoolchildren and even adults often consider the end date of the Second World War to be May 9, 1945 (the day of the German surrender), while the war was officially ended on September 2 of the same year with the signing of the Act of Surrender of Japan. The key battle of the war is the Battle of Stalingrad.

**The British Think They Defeated Napoleon; The Russians Beg To Differ.** The official histories of Great Britain and Russia disagree over the story of Napoleon. Depending on what country you were schooled in, Napoleon's defeat was due either to Wellington's genius or the sacrifices of thousands of Russian soldiers. Before Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo in 1815, he had been defeated at Leipzig in 1813. This earlier defeat was entirely due to two reasons: the arrogance of Napoleon and Russia. Just a year earlier, Napoleon was, de facto, the ruler of Europe.

**History in Islamic countries.** In religious Islamic countries, the study of history is not separated from the study of religion, so that historical events are viewed through the prism of the acts of the Prophet. History is not about events in their chronological order, but about the victories of Islam and the war of Muslims for independence. The Middle Ages are presented in textbooks as an area of obscurantism, and in the countries of the East all this is studied in different ways [3].

History is dependent on facts, events and experience. It is not fixed because it is told from different perspectives and at different times using new information: different people and different groups experienced the same events differently. A white conservative Southerner at the time might have had a very different perspective and interpretation of the civil rights movement than a white liberal, or a black American experiencing the same events. New information is constantly being added to the historical record. The passage of time combined with subsequent and related events from different points of view always refines and changes the scope of our understanding, so that the same people might understand the same events from a wider lens fifty, a hundred, or five hundred years later.

If we turn to Black Death: a historian or diarist writing in the fourteenth century understood the events of their time as a visit of the wrath of God for the sins of mankind, that came out of nowhere and died down just as inexplicably. Mortality was so widespread that the people who wrote at the time assumed that humanity would be completely destroyed, that they lived in the End Time. The limitations of technology, information and distance precluded any other narrative. Today we know that plague is caused by *Yersinia pestis*, it came out from central Asia and was spread via trade routes, that it was carried by rats /fleas, that public health measures such as official quarantines were invented in that period, that it mutated into a pneumonic form, that it killed between one-quarter and one-third of the population of Europe. The labor shortage caused the decline of the feudal system and helped to ignite the Renaissance and Reformation, and centuries later, Isaac Newton took it upon himself to break out of school to escape the plague, sat under an apple tree and discovered gravity, which is one of the governing forces of the universe.

As for our own history, new facts emerged, Zhangir, who was the khan of the Kazakhs in the period 1823-1845, is better known as a cruel ruler, a person who did not respect the concept of ordinary residents of our nationality. It was known that he made big mistakes, obeying tsarist Russia. All this information was revealed from the writings of Makhambet akyn, where he said that he was not a khan, but a wolf, obeying the orders of another king. This gave the impression that he was not a noble ruler. 3 years ago we did not know about his achievements in medicine, teaching young students. Yes, he has greatly changed the local life of the people. Zhangir Khan opened the first school for young children, gave Kazakh students an opportunity to study at higher educational institutions in Moscow, and gain a lot of experience. All these records were found in the Russian archive about Zhangir Khan. Our historians, who knew the language and collaborated with Russian

historians, received such invaluable findings. What changes will happen to our history if we expand the source of records by cooperating with other archives?

History has always been and still remains a relevant profession. But I believe that we need to work with the shortcomings and add a new course to its study. Nowadays, the subjects of natural science have begun to be studied in English as a means of development and progress in this sphere. Biology, Physics, Astronomy are more explored in Western countries and we are following their examples ready to transform our books and knowledge about the world.

But what about the History? If students who have chosen history as their future profession are sent to different countries and universities to obtain international experience, it is quite possible that Kazakhstan will become the center of new information in the field of history and culture. Now the steppe civilization is one of the relevant topic for investigation among the scientists of the Western world. They are still interested in findings about the absorption of sources of natural components, sacred lands, and extraordinary history. Also, they are interested in our past, power of the Saks, the Huns. Instead of foreign scholars who will engage with investigation of our lands and our culture, why not to do it ourselves? By gaining experiences with scientific institutions of foreign countries our students will be capable to open new facts and information for the entire world. Recently, we had an online meeting with Bolat Komekov., Doctor of Historical Sciences. He said that in the field of studying historical events, he received great support and invaluable experience from foreign colleagues. He also noted the importance of foreign communication in scientific history.

Now we can see the successful experience of Nazarbayev University where History as a discipline has been teaching in English language by foreign educators for many years already. The History major at Nazarbayev University aims at being a model for rigorous, pluralistic, and research-led institution in History of Kazakhstan. Students who choose the major in History will gain a sound knowledge of regional and global history across a variety of sub-disciplines and the understanding of how the past shapes current phenomena. Furthermore, students are taught to critically evaluate, select, and process information, to communicate fluently and in sophisticated way both orally and in writing, and to work autonomously and responsibly.

The bachelor's degree in history will prepare students to assess evidence, evaluate other people's arguments, form their own opinions, and express their views in a sophisticated and persuasive manner. Students will not be expected to remember a long list of names and dates. Instead, they will learn how to use historical sources to understand how societies function. For example, by looking at how modern industry developed, being able to explore the relationship between economic change, the environment, and public policy. Likewise, by examining interethnic relations in the past, they will be able to analyze how multicultural societies such as Kazakhstan work today.

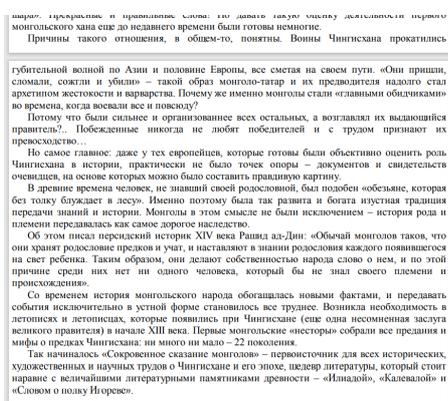


Figure 1. [4]

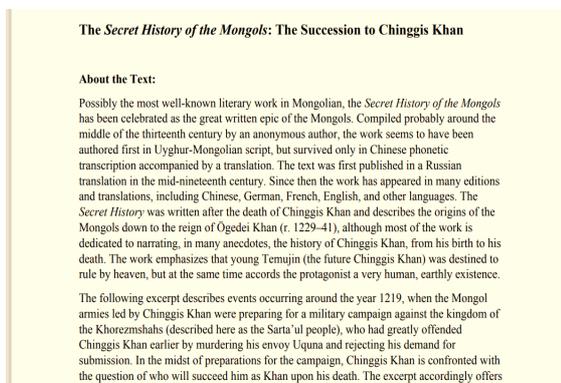


Figure 2. [5].

In these excerpts, we can see completely new facts about history, about the creation of a powerful Mongolian state. As a historian students we have to obtain this information from different sites and books. However, if we had that information in the university program, where it contains

historical books from different languages, we will be able to get more records and possibilities to enrich our knowledge.

To sum up, we may conclude that the role of a foreign language in the study and formulation of historical truth is very important. Since history contains the facts that concern not only one country but the whole world, we need to take into account the cultural experience and the exchange of knowledge. What we expect? Those who enroll in graduate school of history need to be prepared for more than just research work that fosters human knowledge. They begin their training to become historians in the full sense of this word, people whose goal is to reveal the meaning of the past and create the meaning in the present for all who seek to find a source of knowledge and pleasure in history. Such students should strive to acquire not only research skills, but also the ability to transfer historical knowledge to others through any appropriate possibilities to help to understand life by referring to its origins. And without knowledge of different languages, it is impossible to achieve. Now there are many historical findings, records, but not all of them are discovered completely. If we start to take a course to promote history and culture based on international experience, we would achieve a great success in that direction. We firmly believe that this knowledge will help us to bring our nation to the number of culturally developed countries.

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