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Quebec French – the Struggle for National Identity

Abstrakt (Język quebecki – walka o tożsamość narodową). Autorka prezentuje dążenie mieszkańców Quebecu do niepodległości, któremu towarzyszy walka o tożsamość narodową i prawo do własnego języka. Na wstępie skupia się na procesie kształtowania się niepodległości Quebecczyków na płaszczyźnie historycznej i społecznej. Następnie rozpatruje zagadnienie bilingwizmu w Kanadzie i zajmuje się językiem quebeckim, podając konkretne przykłady językowe poświadczające istnienie oryginalnej odmiany języka francuskiego, którą posługują się Quebecczycy, oraz ilustrujące stosunek mieszkańców Quebecu do języka angielskiego. Autorka podkreśla również rolę literatury w procesie kształtowania się tożsamości narodowej Quebecczyków.

Abstract. This paper addresses an issue of “linguistic human rights”. The author discusses the endeavours of the inhabitants of Quebec to gain independence as well as their struggle for their language and identity. First, the paper focuses on the process of gaining independence for the Quebecois on the historical and social planes. Then, the author introduces the notion of bilingualism in Canada and goes on to examine the Quebecois language. Specific linguistic examples are presented providing convincing evidence that the language used by the Quebecois constitutes an original variety of French. The final part of the paper examines the role of literature in the process of the development of the Quebecois national identity.

1. Introduction

Under article 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which was also signed by Canada,

All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Article 27 of the same International Covenant further stipulates:

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such

minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language.

The first subparagraph of article 2 of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities reads as follows:

Persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities have the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, and to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination.

There is no doubt that language plays a significant role in the process of shaping any national identity. Speaking the same language gives people the feeling of national community, of belonging to a certain culture formed by history and politics. In this paper I will try to present the struggle of the residents of Quebec for their national identity. First and foremost, I will try to emphasize the importance of their own language, a variety of French known as Quebec French, which is a means of expressing the national motto of the Belle Province, “je me souviens” (“I remember”, which may be construed as remembering everything that happened throughout the history of Quebec). Furthermore, I will briefly set out the events in the history of Canada which shaped the sense of national identity for the inhabitants of Quebec and which stimulated the need for creating an independent Quebec state. In the next part of the text I will concentrate on the sphere of language. I will discuss the phenomenon of bilingualism in Canada, which reflects the relations of English and French, the two official languages. I will also explain the ambiguities of the two levels of Quebec French defence, namely the defence of French against English and the defence of Quebec French against the French language spoken in France. I will also show how the aversion to using anglicisms in Quebec is manifested in the dictionaries of the Quebec language and additionally will cite some examples of Quebec forms that are not used or are unknown in the “European” French. Finally, I will illustrate the struggle of the Quebecois for their national identity on the literary example of *Les Têtes à Papineau* by Jacques Godbout.

2. The struggle of the Quebecois for national identity in the historical perspective

I will start with a brief review of some historical events that are momentous both for Quebec and for Canada. The contemporary identity of Canadians has to a considerable extent been influenced by the cultures of the immigrants arriving in Canada. The immigrants include, among others, people from Asia, a great number of Europeans, and also people from Latin America. They all contribute to the image of the Canadian identity. The first peoples to settle in Canada were Amerindians and Inuits. The Amerindians most probably reached Canada some 35 thousand years ago through what is now the Bering Strait, whereas the Inuits started to populate the territory 1–3 thou-

sand years ago. Then, around the year 1000 Vikings tried to settle across the northern shores of Newfoundland. Before the European colonization started, the civilization of the indigenous Canadians had been flourishing. In 1497 Jean Cabot, a sailor from Genoa in the service of the British Navy, discovered the western coast. Afterwards, in 1534 a French sailor named Jacques Cartier reached Canada itself (Grabowski 2001: 35). He conquered and explored the region around the Saint Lawrence River and named it New France. In 1605 the French established Port Royal and then in 1608 Quebec (Grabowski 2001: 36). In 1633 Canada officially became a French province. The territory to the north and west of New France (Nouvelle France) was under the British rule of the Hudson Bay Company, which was established in 1670 with a view to engaging in trade in hides and furs. At this point it should be stressed that at first the representatives of the European cultures in question lived peacefully alongside each other.

However, when in 1745 British troops took the French fort of Louisbourg in Nova Scotia, fierce fighting broke out between the English and the French for supremacy (Grabowski 2001: 96). In 1759 the British army captured the Quebec stronghold and in the following year the city of Montreal. In accordance with the agreement reached in the Treaty of Paris in 1763, France had to relinquish her dominions in Canada, which became a British colony. In 1774 Great Britain issued the so-called Quebec Act which guaranteed the French population, among other things, the right to speak French (Grabowski 2001: 117). The Quebec Act is a very important document which has found its reflection in the contemporary cultural and linguistic distinctness of Quebec. Moreover, it enabled the French Canadians to keep their Catholic religion and a separate culture (Lacoursière 1995: 386).

As a result of the massive influx of British colonists from Europe at the end of the American War of Independence (1755–1783), the French minority was afraid of losing their national identity. The situation became even more dramatic when the loyalists escaping from the American Revolution arrived. A large number of new English-speaking inhabitants caused tensions in relations with the local Francophones. Subsequently, the Constitution Act of 1791 divided the province of Quebec into Upper Canada and Lower Canada. In Upper Canada the British colonists constituted the majority, whereas in Lower Canada the French colonists prevailed. In 1837 an uprising against the English broke out in Quebec but was quickly suppressed. In 1840 both these parts were again joined into the Province of Canada (Lacoursière 1996: 433). In 1867 England proclaimed the so-called British North America Act under which the state of Canada was created. Establishing the state of Canada was supposed to prevent an annexation of the province by the United States. In 1885 the east and the west of the country were linked together by the Canadian Pacific Railway, the construction of which was one of the most significant events in the history of the country. In 1931 Canada and other British dominions gained independence and membership of the British Commonwealth of Nations. In 1969, in an attempt to alleviate the tension between people of French and British origin, French was accepted as the second official language of Canada, after English (Grabowski 2001: 250). In 1977 the National

Assembly of Quebec adopted the so-called Bill 101 (Charter of the French Language) under which French became the only official language in Quebec (Grabowski 2001: 258). The British North America Act expired only as recently as in 1981. In its place the British Parliament enacted the Canada Act, which gave all legislative power to the Canadian parliament. This was disadvantageous to Quebec and its independence aspirations (Abramowicz 1999: 55).

Subsequently, the call for “La Belle Province” to be separated from the Anglophone Canada intensified. The demand of the Quebec separatists from the 70s more or less reads as follows:

We are the descendants of several thousands of French settlers. We have a separate culture, language, and sense of national identity. As a matter of fact we are a separate nation and as such we have the right to self-determination. If the peoples of Africa or Asia have the right to their own states, we are all the more entitled to that right (Kumor 2006).

Undoubtedly, the political issues centred around the claim of an ethnically homogeneous state. The boundary was clearly defined: “British” Canada on the one side, and “French” Quebec on the other. In 1956 the report of the Royal Commission for Constitutional Affairs explicitly stated that the descendants of the 10 thousand French colonists who settled in Quebec in the 17th and 18th centuries constituted “a nation – a socially homogeneous whole defined by its culture” (Kumor 2006). It was the desire to defend their culture against the overwhelming deluge from England and the United States that was behind the separatist movement. The separatists claimed that if they did not have their own state, which would protect their language and customs, not only would their language become extinct but also the traditions and customs cultivated by whole generations. The basis for the defence of all these social goods was supposed to be the ethnically homogeneous state of Quebec with its own Quebec language laden with cultural connotations. The concept of the state’s homogeneity meant that it would expect immigrants to assimilate and adjust to the French-speaking core. The reason for this was the fact that immigration had always been perceived in Quebec as a kind of threat. Subsequently, as a part of the Canadian confederation, Quebec was granted the right to establish an immigration policy that would be independent of the federal authorities. However, at the time of the government of Prime Minister Trudeau in the early 70s, the idea of Canadian statehood changed. The principle of equality for all immigrant cultures – the officially promoted “multiculturalism” – was adopted, in which a mosaic of national societies has one common denominator, namely respect for liberal values such as freedom, tolerance, and security. This notion of statehood was embodied in the constitutional reform whose final stage was the enactment of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (*Charte canadienne des droits et libertés*) in 1982. The constitution undermined the former role of Francophones within the Canadian state and as a matter of fact lined them up with other ethnic/linguistic groups. The ensuing attempts to amend the fundamental statute at the conference in Meech Lake and then again in Charlottetown were unsuccessful. In the opinion of numerous separatists the multicultural state is a state in which the French culture of Quebec is not adequately exposed, the bilingualism and other protective measures notwithstanding. The radical

separatists therefore constantly see their final resort in an ethnically homogeneous state, an idea which is losing popularity in the contemporary world of globalization, federalist initiatives, and mass migration.

3. The phenomenon of bilingualism and diglossia in the case of Canada

Although French is a minority language in Canada and the English language is spoken in most of its parts, Canada is undoubtedly a bilingual country. This finds confirmation in the 2001 Census. About 5,231,500 people reported at that time that they were bilingual, compared with 4,841,300 five years earlier, which is an 8.1% increase. In 2001, these individuals represented 17.7% of the population, up from 17.0% in 1996. Nationally, 43.4% of Francophones reported that they were bilingual, compared with 9.0% of Anglophones. Within Quebec, the growth in the bilingualism rate from 1996 to 2001 was even greater than in the previous five-year period. In 2001, two out of every five individuals (40.8%) reported that they were bilingual, compared with 37.8% in 1996 and 35.4% in 1991. Outside Quebec, however, the rate remained almost unchanged at 10.3% in 2001 compared with 10.2% in 1996 (Census of Canada 2001).

In this context I would like to say a few words about bilingualism in general. As Suzanne Romaine says, bilingualism rests not on linguistic or other evidence but rather on political and cultural ideology. According to her, it is no accident that this linguistic theory originated in the cultural climate of western Europe and the major Anglophone countries approaching monolingualism and the ethos of “one state-one language” with special significance. A minority from a global perspective, monolinguals are very powerful and often impose their languages on others, who, as a result, have no choice but to be bilingual (Romaine 1995: 6). Romaine follows the opinion expressed by Skutnabb-Kangas (1988: 13) saying that monolingualism is an illness which should be eradicated and believes that bilingualism must be cultivated rather than overcome.

Although Jakobson claims that for him bilingualism is the fundamental problem of linguistics (Jakobson 1953: 19), it is an interdisciplinary phenomenon which should be studied by sociolinguists, psycholinguists and teachers. While popular opinion has it that a bilingual is someone who knows two languages fluently, the concept of bilingualism is a more complex notion. According to Mackey (1967: 555) there are four questions to be addressed in a description of bilingualism: degree, function, alternation and interference. The issue of degree of bilingualism concerns proficiency. Joseph Conrad, a novelist, is a good example here. He had an excellent command of written English, but apparently always spoke with a strong Polish accent. Function focuses on the uses a bilingual speaker has for the languages. Alternation treats the extent to which the individual alternates between the languages. Interference has to do with the extent to which he manages to keep the languages separate (Romaine 1995: 12). Furthermore, Mackey (1968: 565) also lists a number of factors such as age, sex,

intelligence, memory, language attitude and motivation which are likely to influence the bilingual's aptitude.

Another issue is that it is very often so that knowledge and use of a language is an economic necessity. Such is the case with English for many speakers of French in provinces of Canada where Francophones are a minority (Romaine 1995: 31).

Bilingualism is also connected with some types of linguistic change induced by contact, namely convergence and simplification. Romaine refers to the case described by Beniak, Mougeon and Valois (1984/5) for Ontarian French/English bilinguals. In French it is possible to express the idea of location or direction to a person's home by using a prepositional phrase headed by "chez" followed by a personal pronoun, or one headed by "à", e.g. "Je reste chez moi"/"Je reste à la maison" – "I stay (at) home". The English translations of these examples show the strong similarity between the French pattern "à la maison" and English "at home". Romaine sees the possibility that the increasing choice of the French alternative with "à" is indicative of an influence from English (Romaine 1995: 73). The more French is in intense contact with English at the local level and the more bilingual speakers there are, the more likely it is that "à la maison" will be used in the local variety of French. The speakers who use French less frequently are more susceptible to English influence. Consequently, the French of some speakers is converging towards English.

Another linguistic phenomena which also applies to Canada, in particular to Quebec and Quebec French, is the phenomenon of diglossia. The term was originally used by Ferguson (1972: 232) to refer to a specific relationship between two or more varieties of the same language in use in the speech of a community in different functions. For Fishman (1980: 7) the difference between diglossia and bilingualism is that diglossia represents an enduring societal arrangement. He came up with (1967) a schematization of the relationship between bilingualism and diglossia and suggested four possibilities: both diglossia and bilingualism, diglossia without bilingualism, bilingualism without diglossia and neither diglossia nor bilingualism. The second case, diglossia without bilingualism, is of interest to us. It was characterized by Fishman (1980: 7) as an instance of political or governmental diglossia in which two or more differently monolingual entities are brought together under one political roof. Canada is a case in point with the institutional protection for more than one language at the federal level, although in individual territories monolingualism is widespread (Romaine 1995: 36).

4. The conflict of Anglophones and Francophones

As statistics show, Canada is one of the most segregated countries in the world. In 1971, 87.8% of all Canadians who spoke primarily French at home lived in Quebec. 93.9% of all Canadians primarily English lived in the remaining parts of Canada. In 1999, the proportion of Francophones in Quebec rose to 89.9%, and the proportion of Anglophones outside Quebec reached 95.9%. As yet, nothing suggests that segrega-

tion is likely to be reversed in the near future (Cotrau 2003: 40). In the preface to the second edition of the work by Suzanne Romaine we can read that bilinguals rarely make a conscious choice to be bilingual.

Where more than one language exists in a community, they are rarely equal in status. Languages and language varieties are always in competition, and at times in conflict. Choice of the particular language is symbolic of various social and political divisions (Romaine 1995: XIV).

Quebec is an arena of such a conflict. Some time ago an attempt was made by the Quebec government to support the “equal status” of the French language by law. A regulation was introduced which required all signs to be in French only. The law represented the ability of the Quebec government to control and maintain the Frenchness of Quebec in the midst of a predominantly Anglophone Canada. However, Anglophones in Quebec and elsewhere felt that the signs represented an assault on individual rights. Ironically, in 1988 the Canadian Supreme Court ruled against such signs in French only regarding them as a violation of Quebec’s own Charter of Human Rights (Romaine 1995: XIV). Looking at the conflict from a narrower perspective, Montreal, which is a great centre of English-French contact in North America, might be viewed as a battleground between the French language and culture of Quebec and the English-speaking Canadians and Americans who surround the French Canada (Lieberson 1972: 231). Dramatic as the term battleground might sound, this expression clearly emphasizes the harsh French-English relations in the city and the potential danger that one day one language (English) will expand excessively at the cost of the other (French). The metropolitan area facilitates the maintenance of the French tongue and the bicultural society in Canada providing home for some 40% of Quebec’s population. According to the 1961 census, more than 800,000 inhabitants speak only French, nearly 500,000 only English, and more than three-quarters of a million are bilingual. The examination of linguistic trends in Montreal indicates that the place is not a great mixer and melting pot of diverse cultures, quite contrary to most American cities where populations with diverse linguistic origins have eventually become monolingual within a few generations. Montreal has maintained equilibrium. Consequently, Montreal as a French-speaking centre provides Canada with a complete French-language society, which, due to the size of the city, covers rural areas as well as a modern metropolis contacting the outside world (Lieberson 1972: 232).

5. Linguistic features of Quebec French

European French is phonetically, graphically, grammatically, lexically, semantically and stylistically similar to Parisian French. Due to the distance between Quebec and France, the language used by the inhabitants of the Belle Province differs considerably from the French spoken in France. The differences are numerous. The majority of Quebec inhabitants who are of French origin refer to their language as “Québécois”

or “Quebec French”. Subsequently, Quebec manifests a strong need for autonomy in a variety of spheres.

The dictionaries of Quebec French are heavily burdened with ideology and are full of identity-related elements. The dictionary *Dictionnaire de la langue québécoise* is a case in point. Its author, Léandre Bergeron, openly writes in the foreword that he provides words and their definitions for “them”, meaning Quebecois, and not for the French people, who are “their cousins” (Bergeron 1980: 7). He says he has no intention of translating their “speech” (“parlure”), Quebec French, for the French readers. Irrespective of whether he really does so or not (see the criticism of Bergeron’s inconsistency by Danielle Trudeau, 1983), Bergeron’s objective is to define their words using their own phrases and expressions, disregarding the standards of Paris: and he wants to do it “taking primarily and exclusively into account the readers from Quebec” (Bergeron 1980: 7).

The Quebecois want to distinguish themselves from the French through their language. The Quebecois lexis provides numerous examples in support of this claim. There are differences in the French and the Quebecois spelling, for example in the demonstrative pronoun “icitte” (French “ici”, “here”) and the personal pronoun “moé” (French “moi”, “me”). There are visible differences in the syntax and the word order in the Quebecois French sentences such as in “Donne-moé-lé!” (in French “Donne-le-moi!”, “give it to me!”) (Bergeron 1980: 323). Among the specific forms that can be encountered in Quebec French are the following: regionalisms and archaisms, “amerindianisms” (features from indigenous languages), canadianisms, and anglicisms. The regionalisms and archaisms include words and phrases which are used on an everyday basis in Quebec French, but which are no longer commonly used in France or occur only in certain regions. Such words include, among others, *adonner* – ‘convenir’ (Picardie, Normandie) – ‘suit, fit’; *il mouille* – ‘il pleut’ (Bretagne) – ‘it is raining’; *berceuse* – ‘un fauteil à bascules’ – ‘a rocking chair’; *dépense* – ‘garde-manger’ – ‘larder, pantry’; *se gréer* – ‘s’habiller’ – ‘get dressed’ (Abramowicz 1999: 85). Among the lexical items from indigenous languages we can also name a few examples such as *wapiti* or *caribou* – ‘rennes d’Amérique’ – ‘American reindeer’; *achigan, maskinongé* – ‘poissons’ – ‘fish’ or *sagamité* – ‘corn soup’. There are also canadianisms, French words and phrases created in Canada for naming some phenomena specific for that country: *amanchure* – ‘machin’ – ‘a thing, something’; *banc de neige* – ‘amas de neige’ – ‘a snowbank’; *piasse* – ‘dollar’ – ‘dollar’; *tuque* – ‘bonnet’ – ‘a bonnet’.

The use of anglicisms and the attitude of Francophones towards them are particularly interesting. The inhabitants of Quebec use such English words as ‘fun’ or ‘joke’ on an everyday basis. However, in the *Dictionnaire des canadianismes* by Gaston Dulong, next to both these words the reader will find the crossed zero symbol [Ø], which means that the form is to be ‘removed’ (à proscrire). This illustrates the predominant tendency in Quebec and the attitude towards all anglicisms. In *Dictionnaire des canadianismes* we can read that even though ‘joke’ is a form to be ‘removed’, at the same time it is commonly used across all of Quebec as indicated by another symbol [+++] (Dulong 1989: 289). In *Dictionnaire des anglicismes* the expression ‘c’est une

joke’ is considered incorrect and several French alternatives are offered: ‘*c’est farce, tour, blague, attrape, canular*’ (‘This is a prank, trick, joke’) (Dulong 1989: 189). In *Dictionnaire historique du français-québécois* on the other hand, we find the form ‘*fanneux, fanneuse*’ (‘funny’), assimilated to French phonology and morphology. In *Dictionnaire des anglicismes* we can learn that the form ‘fun’ is incorrect and that it should be replaced with the French words ‘*plaisir, amusement*’ (‘pleasure, amusement’). The expression ‘*c’est le fun*’ is also incorrect and the appropriate form is ‘*c’est amusant, drôle*’ (‘it is amusing, funny’) (Forest, Boudreau 1998: 162).

6. Quebecois literature

The struggle of the Quebecois for their national identity is also evident in the novels written in Quebec. I will cite just one typical example here: *Têtes à Papineau* by Jacques Godbout. In the opinion of numerous critics, Godbout is a politically involved novelist whose conviction is that every Québécois writer should create “national texts” (Smith 1995). Godbout depicts the life of a two-headed man named Charles-François Papineau who was born in Montreal. While one of his heads leans towards the English side, the other is more French-oriented. Having reached maturity, the heads decide to undergo an operation after which an Anglophone would be created who would not even speak French any more. The novel presents a discussion between the two heads in eight consecutive chapters entitled respectively: ‘Firstly’ (‘Premièrement’), ‘Secondly’ (‘Deuxièmement’), and so on. In the last chapter, entitled ‘Finally’ (‘Enfin’), the reader finds a letter written in English after the surgery in which it is explained that Charles F. Papineau can no longer continue the work started by the two heads, as he no longer speaks French. For the people living in Quebec the story is highly symbolic and meaningful. François is more French, whereas Charles is more English. They both have their own beliefs and opinions. This is a very accurate depiction of the bilingual and bicultural society of Quebec. Additionally, there are some historical allusions in the text such as the name of the protagonist. Papineau refers to the figure of Louis-Joseph Papineau, the leader of the Patriots, who at some point started to cooperate with the English colonial government. Then there is the struggle between the two heads, which may symbolise the battle of the Plains of Abraham (*bataille des Plaines d’Abraham*) which took place in 1759, or the ‘Lower Canada Rebellion’ in 1837 in the region of Montreal (‘*Rébellion des Patriotes*’). Godbout’s two heads were defeated, just like the Patriots. Apart from that, the heads are to a considerable extent subordinated to the pressure of the Church, which in the 1950s actually played an important role in Quebec. Moreover, there are also obvious traces of the “*Révolution tranquille*”, during which, as Abramowicz (1999: 53) says, the national consciousness and modernization of Quebec was enhanced and after which a new nationalism came into existence which no longer focused on ethno-cultural identity, but was rather centred round the idea of establishing a Quebec national state, which has since then been the main objective of Quebecois politics. Furthermore, in the book there

are also some hints about the visit to Montreal in 1967 of General de Gaulle, who made a very symbolic gesture towards the French-speaking minority who wanted to separate themselves from the rest of Canada when he shouted from the balcony of the Town Hall "*Vive le Québec libre!*" ("Long live free Quebec!") (Abramowicz 1999: 54). After this gesture the Parti Québécois declared that its main objective was the independence of Quebec. Fittingly, in Godbout's novel the two heads are invited to join a conference whose main subject is autonomy, a word that is very meaningful for every Quebecois.

7. Conclusions

In many countries the sense of national identity is strongly connected with the language used by a given community. As a result, numerous actions are undertaken, often in an institutional form, which are aimed at the protection of the national language against excessive foreign influence, in particular against the influence of the omnipresent English language (Bobrownicka 2000: 7). The rapid changes taking place within a given national language and resulting from the influence of another language are perceived as the expansion of another national culture, which potentially deforms or destroys the indigenous national culture and subsequently changes it. Quebec and Quebec French provide a good illustration of this phenomenon. Even though the Francophones of Quebec see the need to defend their national identity through defending their language and creating an independent state, history nevertheless shows that their desires find no confirmation in referenda. In 1980 and 1995 referenda were held which were supposed to give Quebec autonomy and some degree of independence. However, both of them were unsuccessful. The present government is unable to fix a date for another referendum and the whole idea of Quebec nationalism is becoming more and more difficult to popularise in the increasingly globalised world. We could even assume that an opportunity for independence will never come and that all the consolation to be found is in the John Trent words, that in Canada

the English-speaking majority must not only come to accept the special role of Quebec in protecting the French culture but also agree to special rights for the French culture across Canada (Trent et al 1996: 17).

In subparagraph 3 and 4 of article 4 of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities we read:

3. States should take appropriate measures so that, wherever possible, persons belonging to minorities may have adequate opportunities to learn their mother tongue or to have instruction in their mother tongue. 4. States should, where appropriate, take measures in the field of education, in order to encourage knowledge of the history, traditions, language and culture of the minorities existing within their territory. Persons belonging to minorities should have adequate opportunities to gain knowledge of the society as a whole.

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