



HISTORY OF MASS MEDIA IN THE JIZZAKH REGION DURING THE SOVIET PERIOD (1973–1991)

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ABSTRACT

This article is dedicated to the study of the evolution of mass media in the Jizzakh region of Uzbekistan from 1973 to 1991, covering key aspects of organizational structure, content, and the role of regional media under the total control of Soviet authorities. It examines the activities of local newspapers, radio, and television, highlighting their significance as ideological tools of socialist propaganda. Special attention is given to the impact of censorship on editorial policies and the role that regional media played in shaping Soviet identity and maintaining public order through the promotion of socialist ideals.

KEYWORDS

Mass media, Jizzakh region, Uzbekistan, Soviet period, ideology, propaganda, censorship, state control, regional journalism.

INTRODUCTION

The Soviet Union was a highly controlled state where mass media played a pivotal role in disseminating state ideology and maintaining political stability. In Uzbekistan, particularly in the Jizzakh region, the media acted as a crucial tool for the Communist Party to promote socialist values and the successes of the Soviet system. Despite the significant role of media in

shaping public opinion and influencing social and political life, there has been little research focused specifically on the Jizzakh region during the Soviet period. This article aims to analyze the development, functions, and impact of mass media in Jizzakh from 1973 to 1991, exploring its role under strict censorship and political control.



METHODS

This research examines primary and secondary sources to understand the development and role of mass media in the Jizzakh region during the Soviet period. Primary sources include archival materials, newspapers such as Jizzakh Truth, radio broadcasts, and interviews with journalists who worked in the region. Secondary sources consist of scholarly works on Soviet mass media, particularly those focusing on Uzbekistan and Central Asia, such as History of the Press in Uzbekistan during the Soviet Period by Sh.Abdullaev and Media and Censorship in Soviet Central Asia by M. Karabaev. The study uses both qualitative and historical methods, analyzing media content and examining the political and ideological roles that media played within the context of Soviet governance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Soviet system was a tightly regulated political structure where mass media (MM) served not only as a communication tool but also as a vital element of state ideology. During this period, the media in Uzbekistan, particularly in the Djizak region, played a crucial role in maintaining the party line, highlighting the achievements of the socialist system, and disseminating communist ideology among the local population. The specifics of this process in the region remain under-researched, despite the important role of the media landscape in shaping public opinion and political stability. The aim of this work is to analyze the development and functions of the media in the Jizzakh region during the Soviet period from 1973 to 1991, to identify their roles in the social and political life of the region, and to explore their influence on society under conditions of strict censorship and party control.

The Soviet Union was a state where information flows were strictly subordinated to centralization and party ideology. All media outlets, including regional ones,

were under the control of the Press Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, which regulated the operations of newspapers, magazines, radio, and television. The primary task of the media in the Soviet system was not to inform the population in the traditional sense but to create an ideologically correct worldview, support communist values, and showcase the achievements of the socialist system.

In Uzbekistan, both republican and regional media existed under the strict oversight of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan (CPU). In the Jizzakh region, local newspapers such as "Jizzakh Truth" (Джизакская правда) performed tasks related to the dissemination of official information and socialist propaganda. These newspapers covered events in the region, reported on the labor successes of local residents, and highlighted achievements in agriculture, industry, and other sectors. A key theme was the portrayal of the "new person" — a citizen living according to Soviet moral norms and actively working for the benefit of the socialist Motherland.

All published information underwent strict control by party organs and censorship, making the media in the Jizzakh region an essential element of state propaganda. Newspapers, radio, and television served as channels through which the party line was broadcast, and they were expected to contribute to the maintenance of political stability and social norms. Issues related to the difficulties and shortcomings of the existing regime were rarely discussed in the media, as any criticism of the authorities could be perceived as a threat to the existence of the socialist system.

During the Soviet period, several publications in the Jizzakh region played key roles in serving the informational and propaganda interests of local authorities and the party. One of the leading sources of information for the local population remained the



newspaper "Jizzakh Truth" which circulated in the districts of the region and served as the main organ of party propaganda. It published reports on life in the region, as well as materials reflecting achievements in agriculture and industry.

The newspapers of that time had a distinctly propagandistic character. Their articles often featured stories about progress in the agricultural sector, the achievements of workers and collective farmers, and successes in education and healthcare. Important coverage was given to events of state significance, such as party congresses, anniversaries, and celebrations. Articles were published about achievements in industry, showcasing the successes of the socialist system in attaining high economic indicators.

One significant focus was the coverage of local workers' victories in competitions and contests, as well as the construction of new factories, plants, and cultural facilities.

All these successes were intended to convince the population of the correctness of the chosen political course and that the socialist economy and governance system ensured stability and prosperity.

In addition to print media, radio and television also played important roles in providing informational propaganda in the Jizzakh region. In the 1970s, regional radio stations began to develop, broadcasting local news while also being required to disseminate the party line and social advertising. Regional television channels, which appeared later, also served as channels for disseminating information about events, focusing on the successful implementation of plans and tasks set by the party.

In Uzbekistan, the first radio broadcasts were conducted on February 11, 1927. Thus, radio became the foundation of the mass media system and secured a

firm place in the press and the cultural and spiritual life of the population. As a convenient, prompt, and unique medium for disseminating social information, radio had a significant influence on society.

The press has always evolved alongside society, improving over time. By the mid-20th century, significant innovations and qualitative changes occurred in the press with the invention of television. Many scientists and specialists from various countries contributed to this great discovery, including researchers from Tashkent, B. Grabovsky and V. Belyansky.

A favorite radio station among the residents of the Jizzakh region, broadcasting on FM 105.5 and FM 106.2, airs 16 hours daily and has its unique history. Today, it features various entertaining live broadcasts, engaging discussions, programs on different topics, and intellectual radio games; however, its foundation was laid more than 25 years ago. This year, Jizzakh Radio is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

The history of radio is inextricably linked to the history of the region. After the establishment of the Jizzakh region, the regional newspaper began operations, and it became clear that to disseminate information about ongoing changes and reforms, new mass media needed to be created.

On January 1, 1974, Jizzakh Radio was established, and part of the building of School No. 1 in the city of Djizak (formerly named after M. Gorky) was allocated for the work of radio journalists. The leaders appointed were journalist Nasim Noriyev and chief editor Sherlon Aliyev. They were tasked with forming a creative team, developing programming, and organizing quality broadcasts. During a time of shortage of experienced journalism specialists, graduates from philology departments of universities, along with young, creatively gifted individuals, were recruited. Under the



guidance of experienced mentors like Nasim Noriyev and Sherlon Aliyev, they mastered the intricacies of journalistic skills: fact-gathering, analysis, working with people, and editing radio recordings. Working with reporters who carried heavy 6-kilogram equipment in the field—such as in villages, enterprises, and organizations—was not easy, but despite the challenges, they were full of enthusiasm.

Among the first announcers and correspondents who made history were: announcer Salomat Koraeva, correspondents Albina Amangeldieva, Sergey Kumanikin, Oleg Smuglov, Bakhtier Rizaev, Salohuddin Safarov, Hasan Botirov, Pardoboy Tojiboev, and Abdugani Botirov. The radio correspondents strived to meet the tasks assigned to them. All ongoing events were reflected in essays, reports, sketches, correspondences, and information broadcast on air. To help the correspondents refine their skills, special training was organized under the guidance of the chairman and chief editor, and freelance authors were engaged.

Hungarian specialists installed the necessary equipment for radio broadcasting. Finally, the long-awaited day arrived. On August 9, 1974, the words "This is Jizzakh! We are starting the broadcasts of the regional radio!" were heard for the first time—spoken in Uzbek by Sherlon Aliyev and in Russian by Lenura Adilshaeva. From that day onward, the residents of Jizzakh became regular listeners of local radio. Initially, the radio broadcast consisted of one hour of programming in the morning and evening. Later, other editions emerged, and radio programs began to be broadcast in Kazakh, Crimean Tatar, and Tajik languages.

In the 1980s, construction began on a new standard building for the radio committee in a vacant lot in the center of Jizzakh. The first priority was to build and

equip it with necessary studio technologies. Since the new building was located in the city center, the quality of broadcasts improved. Materials were printed in the old building, while broadcasts aired from the new one.

Television, like radio, transmitted narratives oriented towards national unity and the supremacy of the socialist system. It is important to note that during these years, the first mobile television unit appeared in the Jizzakh region, enabling local residents to receive information about major events in the republic and beyond.

Overall, this new form of mass media—radio—began its activities by fulfilling political and ideological tasks. It is also worth noting that in the early years, radio was used exclusively as a medium for reading press materials (newspapers), and only gradually did it develop its unique characteristics and become a full-fledged type of mass media.

To ensure that mass media, radio, and television in the Republic of Uzbekistan were staffed with professional journalists, a journalism department was established in 1949 at the philological faculty of Tashkent State University named after Mirzo Ulughbek. Since 1967, it has functioned as a faculty (including scholars and educators such as doctors and candidates of historical and philological sciences, professors, and associate professors: T.Ernazaro, O.Togaev, O.Saidov, A.Akbarov, P.Khamdamov, V.Abdullaev, R.Mukhamadiev, A.Karimov, T.Pidaev, S.Umirov, G.Gofurov, F.Nesterenko, F.Muminov, F.Muminova, M.Khudoykulov, B.Dustkoraev, A.Abdurakhmonov, K.Ernazarov, Y.Mamatova, M.Alimova, and others).

In 1999, the Faculty of International Journalism was established at the Uzbek State University of World Languages. Specialized journals such as "Uzbek Press", "Cinema" and others are published in Uzbekistan. Several journalistic organizations are active, including



the International Organization of Journalists (1946), the International Federation of Journalists (1952), and the Union of Journalists of the Commonwealth of Independent States, including the Union of Journalists of Uzbekistan (1957). September 8, 1958, is celebrated as the Day of Unity of International Journalists.

During the Soviet period, the role of local media in the Jizzakh region was limited not only by strict censorship but also by rigid political control. The media became not a tool for open informing, but rather a part of the state apparatus aimed at sustaining the ideology of socialism. Local publications, such as "Jizzakh Truth" and radio broadcasts served not only as informational channels but also as components of the cultural-political apparatus, shaping public consciousness within the framework of communist values.

Limited freedom of speech and censorship were defining characteristics of media operations during the Soviet era. Furthermore, the absence of a plurality of opinions and diverse information sources led local residents to perceive only the information presented by official propaganda, which in turn hindered an objective understanding of the surrounding world and reality.

CONCLUSION

Mass media in the Jizzakh region from 1973 to 1991 played an essential role in supporting the Soviet regime's ideological and political goals. Through newspapers, radio, and television, the media disseminated propaganda that reinforced the

achievements of socialism and the superiority of the Soviet system. While the media acted as a tool for state control, it also contributed to shaping the cultural and political identity of the region's population, presenting an image of prosperity and unity that aligned with Soviet ideals. Despite its ideological nature, the media in Jizzakh, like in other Soviet regions, was a key element in sustaining the political status quo and shaping the collective consciousness of the people.

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