

From the History of the Work of the Soviet Government in Uzbekistan in the 20s and 30s of the 20th Century to End Illiteracy

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Abstract: This article analyzes a number of works carried out by the authoritarian Soviet regime in the territory of Uzbekistan in the 20s and 30s of the 20th century to end illiteracy. Also, this article highlights the fact that the Bolsheviks portrayed the local population as completely illiterate, their policy of disregarding their great achievements in science, and the fact that the local women were active in this regard, but in the end they were also repressed.

Keywords: literacy, education, religion, enlightenment, knowledge, culture, demography, preliterate school, nationalism, revolution, feudalism, socialism, capitalism.

Introduction

Since the middle of the 20s of the 20th century, the government of the Soviets in Uzbekistan has paid great attention to the literacy of women and has organized schools, special courses, and technical schools for this purpose. For example, in the Samarkand region, work on ending illiteracy among women was started on a large scale from the mid-20s. The regional department of public education plans to open a 2-year school for training Muslim female teachers in the winter of 1925 in the old part of the city of Samarkand. These women's schools and schools for the elimination of illiteracy required female teachers. Therefore, short-term teacher training and retraining courses were opened in the region, and in 1926, 60 people attended this course [1].

Discussion

By the summer of 1925, it is planned to open 35 schools for the elimination of illiteracy for women in the Samarkand region [2]. In the 1924-1925 academic year, 5,000 people graduated from illiteracy schools across the region. By this time, more than 7,000 people were involved in schools to end illiteracy. In the 1925-1926 academic year, the Department of Public Education of the old city plans to open 5 first-level schools. Two of them were intended for boys, one for local Jews, and two for girls [3].

In the academic year of 1926-1927, 10 new schools for the completion of illiteracy for Uzbek women were opened in the region, and 189 people were trained in them. Also, 100 people studied in general education schools and 5 higher courses, 120 people in 3 courses of 1-year courses, 45 people studied in the medical technical school. In the academic year 1927-1928, 12 schools for the completion of illiteracy were opened for freed women.

As can be seen from the above examples, the government of the Soviets has approached the issue of women's literacy a little. The above results were achieved by the hard work of local intellectuals who effectively used this opportunity, as well as those who serve in the educational system.

Extracurricular education is a component of general public education and is an educational system intended for people who are not involved in school education due to objective and subjective factors. Its difference in school education is that all educational work is based on the student's free time and interests, as well as the student's socio-demographic characteristics.

Out-of-school education is mainly aimed at ending illiteracy and illiteracy among people who have passed school age. Such people were either workers and servants who had passed the school age, or those who had studied in old schools and were strongly opposed to the new education and did not want to accept its rules. The government of the Soviets forcibly involved them in new education.

An important direction of raising the level of general education of the population of the republic was the elimination of illiteracy and illiteracy among the older population. This event was intense, because the political leadership of the center was extremely interested in ending illiteracy as soon as possible in order to make full use of human resources in the acceleration of Soviet economic construction. The Bolshevik Party believed that only by increasing the general literacy of the population and gaining it politically, it would be possible to solve the tasks of transitioning to a "resolute attack along the front" of socialism [4].

We can see the increase in the number of students of schools for the elimination of illiteracy and those who have learned literacy in the republic as a whole, as well as in the number of students in urban and rural districts [5] from the table below:

Academic year	The number of students in schools for the elimination of illiteracy	Including		Those who are literate	Including	
		in the city	in the village		in the city	in the village
1929	300,4	115,3	214,4	241,3	80,4	150,3
1930	353,9	113,5	246,4	257,7	81,3	176,4
1931	590,3	81,9	508,4	234,5	81,1	153,4
1932	682,2	70,9	611,3	265,0	37,3	227,7
1933	610,8	67,4	543,4	336,1	41,9	294,2
1940	670,9	60,5	411,3	457,7	50,8	356,8
Total	3208,3	509,5	2535,2	1792,3	372,8	1358,8

As can be seen from this table, the enrollment of the illiterate was almost twice as high as that of the literate. Most of the schools for the elimination of illiteracy corresponded to the rural districts of the republic. The number of those who dropped out of school is also quite high - 1143.9 thousand people.

The mastery of those who attend schools for the elimination of illiteracy is around 40-50%, and in schools of illiteracy it is 70% [6]. Preliterate schools were distinguished by their strictness and precision in terms of their organizational structure. This had a certain positive effect on learning and attendance.

Preliterate schools, like schools for the elimination of illiteracy, have increased mainly at the expense of rural schools. But also in this area, as in schools for the elimination of illiteracy, the number of commuters leaving school was 148,500. At the same time, almost four fifths of them corresponded to rural schools.

The mastery of students in schools for the elimination of illiteracy is around 40-50%, and in schools of illiteracy it is 70% [7]. Preliterate schools were distinguished by strictness and precision in terms of organizational structure. This had a certain positive effect on the self-organization and attendance of students attending the school of illiterate students.

It is known from the above that as a result of our people's desire for enlightenment and knowledge, a national march for literacy began in our republic in the early 1930s. In 1925, 160 Soviet-type schools were established in Uzbekistan. By 1941, their number reached 5504 [8].

Unfortunately, these indicators were full of hypocrisy typical of the Soviet authoritarian regime. In particular, the majority of school-aged children were not attracted to education, the number of dropouts among local ethnic groups due to dissatisfaction with school education increased, the level of teachers and the financial condition of schools were low. Therefore, the reforms in the general education system “went both positively and negatively” [9]. In addition, the general education of the Soviet authoritarian system was based on the rejection of the national educational traditions of the local people formed over the centuries, which had an impact on the further historical and cultural development of the Uzbek people.

In 1929-1940, the comparative picture of the number of those who went to schools for the elimination of illiteracy and those who graduated was as follows [10]:

Academic year	Attendees of schools for the elimination of illiteracy (thousands of people)	Including		Those who are literate	Including	
		in the city	in the village		in the city	in the village
1929	398,5	55,8	345,7	158,4	30,4	164,1
1934	453,9	59,1	394,3	237,8	33,8	204,0
1935	400,8	42,6	358,2	198,7	22,0	176,7
1936*	764,8	96,5	668,3	381,2	31,0	350,2
1937	1104,7	140,6	964,1	445,6	65,3	380,3
Total	2723,2	338,8	2384,9	1263,3	152,1	1111,2

*Explanation. Since 1936, the report has also included data from the Karakalpakstan ASSR.

At the end of 1929, a “cultural march for literacy” was announced in the republic, a week and a month to end illiteracy, mass rallies and meetings of urban and rural workers, lectures and discussions, cinema screenings, performances, concerts were held. Proceeds from various performances were transferred to the illiteracy fund.

Mass media actively participated in the campaign. On the pages of republican and local newspapers, regular materials were published about the progress of the fight against illiteracy, the achievements and shortcomings of this movement. “Qizil O‘zbekiston”, “Парвда Востока”, “Yosh leninchi”, “Kambag‘al dehqon” and other newspapers were often published under the slogan “To the front of all cultures”, “Educate the literate, the illiterate”.

The party, authorities, and the entire public intensified the work to end illiteracy in the country. This movement was led by the central staff of the Republic of Cultural Movement, which was formed in 1930 to replace the emergency commission for the elimination of illiteracy under the People’s Commissars of Education. Under the Executive Committee, its offices were formed and called “Cultural Walk Headquarters”.

It is also worth noting that the role of educated and knowledgeable nationals in the work of ending illiteracy among the local population, especially among women and girls, was of particular importance.

From old cities such as Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Shahrizabz, Kokan, Namangan, Margilan to large villages, there were educators in almost every neighborhood. They opened a school in their house and taught literacy to girls. The names of Mubarakkhan, Bashoratkhan, Khanposhsha, Inayatkhan and their daughters Kholposhsha, Sharofat, Sadiqa from Tashkent are especially famous, they were progressive people of their time. The services of Sadiqa Atin in “Okhchi” neighborhood of Tashkent are especially praiseworthy, her school was founded in 1925. The famous poetess Zulfia also received her first education in this school, which she was the only teacher of. There was a school of Mehri atin in Arpapoya neighborhood of “Beshyogoch” district of Tashkent. He was assisted by his daughter Taji. 30-40 girls studied at the school, and 3 hours of lessons were held every day in writing, reading and arithmetic [11].

But it is also worth noting that many Othinois were subjected to political repression in the 1930s. Over time, in the second half of the 1930s, such schools disappeared under “Nationalism” and “religious” reasons.

In the schools for the elimination of illiteracy, teachers of the general education school conducted training. They formed the core of illiteracy abolitionists. At the same time, urban and rural intellectuals, engineers, technicians, agronomists and medical workers, literate workers and collective farmers were involved in this event, Komsomol and non-party youth were called “cultural armymen” and active public groups were formed. They were mobilized to organize schools to end illiteracy, educate the illiterate, and raise their political consciousness. In two years, in particular, during 1930-1931, the number of such armymen increased from 12 thousand to 16 thousand [12].

The political authorities found it necessary to expand the network of schools for ending illiteracy in order to achieve general literacy. Such schools were established in industrial enterprises, villages and craft cooperative artels, village councils and red tea houses. As a result, the number of literate people increased sharply, in 1928 they were 41 thousand, in 1932 they were 707 thousand, including 615 thousand in rural areas [13].

It is known from the above that as a result of our people’s desire for enlightenment and knowledge, a nationwide march for literacy began in our republic in the early 1930s. In 1925, 160 Soviet-type schools were established in Uzbekistan, and by 1941, their number had reached 5,504 [14].

The organizational system of schools for adults is a logical continuation of the school for ending illiteracy, and the initial knowledge gained is consolidated here. In 1930, 8,000, 39,100 in 1931, 90,900 in 1932, 90,900 people were involved in schools opened for the poor.

Networks of evening schools for the elimination of illiteracy have been expanded in enterprises, craft artels, villages and village councils. In the academic year 1928-1929, 55,420 people were enrolled in the schools for the elimination of illiteracy, and in the academic year 1931-1932, 682,200 people or 68.1% of the plan, the number of students in the schools for the elimination of illiteracy increased from 3,214 people to 90,400 people during this period [15]. In total, 2.3 million adolescents and adults graduated from schools to eliminate illiteracy during the first five years [16].

In January 1934, the government of the Republic of Uzbekistan, based on the demands of the central leadership, set itself the task of completely eliminating illiteracy of the adult population within two years [17]. In September 1934, the decision “On ending illiteracy among workers” was adopted. It was noted that the responsibility of fully fulfilling the task of ending illiteracy is assigned to public education departments and other state and public organizations. Also, with the help of trade unions, Komsomol, and the Soviet public, it was recommended to identify and register all illiterate people, collect them, and “organize a socialist competition to end illiteracy”. Special attention was paid to the mass movement “For Literacy” in the rural areas where the majority of the native population of the republic lives. At the same time, in order to control the implementation of the decisions of the party and the government on the elimination of illiteracy, the Komsomol, the press, state control bodies regularly conducted regional and republican raids.

Results

According to official statistics, more than 2 million people completed illiteracy courses in the republic in 1934-1937 due to the large-scale implementation of administrative and command measures, and the total literacy rate of the population reached 67.8% [18]. However, the plan to eliminate 100 percent illiteracy has not been implemented. In Soviet historiography, this situation was explained by the fact that the “cultural revolution” in Uzbekistan took place in the conditions of “a sharp struggle with feudalism”, and “reactionary religious people, bourgeois nationalists, and the rich” opposed the new socialist culture and mass literacy. In fact, this was not true. After all, in the mid-1930s, the Soviet state launched a powerful apparatus of

repression, and the Stalinist leadership succeeded in “mixing the exploitative social groups and strata” into the soil of the camp and sentencing the dissidents to prison.

The higher bodies did not take into account the wishes and needs of the people and did not stop at anything in the way of their goals. In order to build socialism faster, command methods were used. Quantitative indicators of “fast growth” are given great political importance. They are aimed at proving the unquestionable superiority of socialism over capitalism, and the primacy of the country in the competition between the two social systems. In this regard, according to the official circles, it is necessary to show the advantage of the Soviet system that the colonial peoples of Tsarist Russia, who until recently were in the “swamp of ignorance”, achieved general literacy in a short period of time. That is why the eradication of illiteracy was carried out with extreme determination in the late 1930s.

In addition to intellectuals, students of higher educational institutions, high school students, literate workers, collective farmers and others were also involved in the work of ending illiteracy. In the presence of city and village councils, support groups to end illiteracy have been established [19].

Conclusion

The political power structures put the “cultural march” machine into full operation and launched the “socialist competition to end illiteracy” method. At the same time, the “light cavalry” brigades organized by the Komsomol, together with the press and state control bodies, regularly organized marches throughout the region and the republic, checking how the decisions of the party and the government in the field of ending illiteracy are being implemented. Although some progress has been made in the field of eradicating illiteracy among the elderly population of the republic, the two-year plans of the political leadership in the field of eradicating illiteracy mostly remained on paper. In Soviet historiography, this process was explained as “a serious struggle against the remnants of feudalism”, “it took place in the conditions of resistance of reactionary priests who were class enemies”. In fact, the plan to end illiteracy could be fully implemented only when a system of improving adult literacy was created that was in line with the requirements of the time.

In short, in the 20s and 30s of the 20th century, the Soviet government carried out a number of works related to the elimination of illiteracy among the local population in the territory of Uzbekistan. And in this way, he tried to use all kinds of tricks, lies, and tricks.

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