



THE ROLE OF WALL NEWSPAPERS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIALISM IN TURKESTAN

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Abstract

When the Bolsheviks came to power in Turkestan at the end of 1917, a decree was issued to close all bourgeois newspapers. The issue of organizing a Soviet press with new content and essence was put on the agenda. In Turkestan, the press was also supposed to become the most important tool for building socialism. However, there were a number of obstacles to using the press as a means of propaganda to mobilize the people in support of the new "populist" government. Firstly, when the Bolsheviks came to power, there were no other "forces" working in the newspapers in Turkestan, so it was necessary to attract modern journalists to work in the press. They had previous experience, but until then they had not supported the ideas of the Bolsheviks. Secondly, the part of the population reading newspapers was a minority. On Lenin's instructions, the issue of increasing the number of print workers at the expense of the worker-peasant masses was put on the agenda, "by completely removing the rotten intelligentsia... harmful" [1], which required the training of new personnel. In this case, the first to be involved in newspaper work were employees of sects and state institutions. In 1920, at the first meeting of press workers, an order was given to create literary colleges at parties, trade unions and other organizations, and to oblige workers of councils and sects to work regularly as newspaper correspondents.

The press was to be published for the broad masses of the people, not only to express the thoughts, aspirations and hopes of the public, but also to be noticeable due to the active participation of these broad masses of the people in the press, and the main authors of the press were to be workers and peasants. Based on Lenin's instructions, it was necessary to develop the voluntary movement of



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worker-peasant correspondents and make it an important factor in socialist construction. This work was glorified in Soviet times as the Leninist principle of the mass media.

The First Congress of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan (Bolsheviks) in March 1925, in its resolution entitled "On the Press", stated: "The branches of worker correspondents, peasant correspondents, and youth correspondents, which are the means of communication of our press organs with the broad masses of the rural and urban population, should be consistently organized. The cultural and political level and prestige of the army of correspondents should be raised."

The Soviet government effectively used wall newspapers to train press workers, attract people to newspapers, and "bring the people closer to the government." Wall newspapers were the most important means of propaganda in the construction of socialism. They served as a primary school in the formation of an army of reporters armed with a new ideology. "On the one hand, wall newspapers educate students for the press, and on the other hand, they educate writers, that is, reporters from the best strata of the masses," [11] said an article published in the press.

Ziya Said said, "The wall newspaper is the sweetest fruit that the Great October Revolution has given us" [6]. The author of another article praised the wall newspapers, saying, "Before the revolution, they played a major role in organizing workers, raising their class and political consciousness, and preparing them for the revolution. After the revolution, their importance increased even more" [11].

According to Ziya Said, by 1923-1925, attention to wall newspapers was also increasing in Turkestan. Instructions were given in the press on the organization and management of wall newspapers. In an article published in 1925, the tasks of the wall newspaper were: "to establish the correct relations between workers and departments in factories, mines, and government institutions, and between farmers and the government in the villages", "to fight against the remnants of the old way of life, illiteracy, and religious superstitions", "to promote the ways of the new way of life", "to help implement all decrees, orders, laws, and measures of the party and the government, especially in various companies to explain to the people the goals, tasks, and significance of the company", "to conduct



propaganda among the masses and organize them around the party and the government” [11]. The "development" of wall newspapers is proposed to be carried out by holding exhibitions ("exhibitions") in the city or district, discussing the collected newspapers, explaining what a wall newspaper is among the general public, and spreading ideas by holding meetings, evenings, and competitions on May 5 - Press Day, "on the 2-3rd anniversary of the wall newspaper," or when the 50th or 100th issue is published.

The implementation of this proposal can be seen in an article published in the press in 1926. On February 9 of this year, the closing ceremony of the exhibition of wall newspapers published in old Tashkent took place in the central workers' club. The exhibition opened on January 5 and lasted until January 20. On January 20, it was moved to Samarkand in connection with the congress of educational workers held in Samarkand. Over ten days, more than a thousand people read the newspapers. The winning newspapers were awarded at the exhibition: "The newspaper "Yosh Ishchilar" (Young workers), which came out of the construction workers' cell, received 1 year of "Kizil O‘zbekiston" and "Kommunist" magazines, 48 sheets of large paper, a bottle of ink, 2 boxes of paint, a brush and a pen; the newspaper "Xotin Qizlar Ovozi" (Voice of Women) received 4 months of "Kizil O‘zbekiston" and "Kommunist" magazines, 12 sheets of paper, a bottle of ink, a brush and a pen; the pioneer newspaper "Kizil Alanga" (Flame) received 8 sheets of large paper, a bottle of ink and a pen..." [12] Then a bureau was elected to manage the newspapers published in the old city. Komiljon Alimov was appointed its honorary member and head of the bureau.

After the congress of correspondents held in 1926, major changes took place in the press. The number of correspondents increased, and wall newspapers began to appear everywhere at an unexpected rate. The movement of the masses to publish wall newspapers and to report on them in organizations and large neighborhoods intensified. A circle of correspondents was organized next to the wall newspaper [3].

In an article published in 1927, it was stated that "There is a strong effort to establish a reporter's circle under the wall newspapers. We can cite the movement in Tashkent as an example of this. In Tashkent alone, in recent months, 20 reporter's circles have been established under the wall newspapers" [13]. Ziya



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Said wrote that the wall newspapers were led by factions and large newspapers at that time.

He emphasized that after the Communist Party's directive: "One of the most important tasks of the Party and Komsomol cell in the city and village should be to organize the work of the wall newspaper," "the work of publishing the wall newspaper has taken on such an important place that if any organization does not have a wall newspaper, the work of that organization seems to be sluggish... This work has especially intensified after the first congress of Uzbek correspondents... Not only those who can write, but even those who cannot write, have others write and send their wishes to the newspapers. In this way, the village began to hear its shortcomings from its inanimate wall, and to correct its shortcomings by looking at it. Not only that, but the chairman of the executive committee, while pushing the demands of the village to one side, began to run around, talk, and play at weddings and plays, and became afraid of the "inanimate wall." Thus, in our country, since October "The 2,000 silent walls of the past have now become spoken... 2,000 wall newspapers have come out with new wishes."

The requirements for a wall newspaper were: it should be "dedicated to the lowest strata of the masses"; the articles should be relevant to the time of publication; it should be "written in short sentences, each sentence should have multiple meanings"; it should be "politically close to the masses on every issue"; it should "not be too large technically (although it should be long from left to right, it is better if it is one and a half gas from bottom to top); it should "contain slogans that will attract everyone's attention"; it should "be placed on walls on roads where people walk the most"; "wherever it appears, all the people in that place should participate"[11].

Wall newspapers, which play an important role in providing correspondents to regional and central newspapers, are currently taking root well. However, this growth is not satisfactory in terms of the quantity of wall newspapers, but in terms of their quality. The main task of local wall newspapers is to gather the lower working peasant masses around the wall newspaper, teach them to write for the newspaper, educate them, and hold frequent meetings in this direction [4].

If they do not have circles to pay attention to wall newspapers, they were given the task of organizing them, increasing the number of reporters who write for wall



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newspapers, organizing exhibitions of wall newspapers in clubs, reading rooms, Lenin's corner, red teahouses, and other whitewashing houses [10].

In a report made at the plenum of the Central Asian Bureau of the V.K.F.(b) in 1927, it was reported that “the movement of worker-peasant correspondents and the extremely rapid growth of wall newspapers (there are about a hundred wall newspapers in old Tashkent alone) have brought before us a number of issues that have not yet been completely resolved” [8].

In the press, wall newspapers were criticized for neglecting their management work. “Sectarian cells, local committees have forgotten to lead” [5].

At the second congress of Uzbek intellectuals, Nabi Qodirov, head of the press department of the Central Committee, criticized: “Although our wall newspapers have made progress in terms of quantity, they have many shortcomings in terms of content” [7].

There were also critical articles about those who used the wall newspaper for their own benefit and scammed people by scaring them into writing for the newspaper. The article titled “A scammer hiding under the veil of journalism” criticizes a scammer who swindled people's money by pretending to be a reporter [9].

As the press noted, “reporters perform a great task in the fight against corruption, crimes, betrayals and similar vices” [2]. As the press implemented the Leninist principle of “disclosure without prejudice,” threats to reporters increased. In 1927-1929, the press published many articles and court essays about attacks on reporters. Persecutions such as the death of reporters, dismissal of reporters for writing critical articles, demotion, expulsion from the party, Komsomol, and trade union, unjust prosecution, and deprivation of the right to vote increased.

Strict measures were taken by the government against this, and the reputation and influence of the press and reporters was increased by protecting journalists. Wall newspapers were hung in every organization, teahouse, and public meeting place. They were regularly issued and read to the people. Their release was made mandatory. Dozens of reporters appeared in these wall newspapers. They played an important role in training the personnel of the Soviet press and in explaining and propagandizing the Bolshevik policy to the people. This experience of the Soviet government was later widely used in socialist China.



In this way, the Soviet government effectively used wall newspapers as one of the methods of propaganda.

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