



IDEOLOGICAL ORIENTATION OF HISTORY EDUCATION IN UZBEKISTAN (1930–1950)

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Abstract. *This paper discusses the historical narrative and the ideology of history teaching in Uzbekistan from 1930 to 1950. The research is based on historiographical sources and scholarly literature and reveals the extent to which Soviet ideologies infiltrated the content, structure and goals of history teaching in the schools of the Uzbek SSR. The results show that history education was primarily an ideological tool meant to legitimize Soviet power, to discredit national historical viewpoints and to spread Marxist-Leninist understanding of history. The article helps to analyze, in more depth, the relationship between ideology and education in totalitarian regimes.*

Keywords: *history education, ideology, Soviet period, Uzbekistan SSR, Marxism-Leninism, historiography.*

Аннотация. *В данной статье анализируется идеологическая направленность исторического образования в Узбекистане в период с 1930 по 1950 годы. Опираясь исключительно на историографические источники и научную литературу, исследование рассматривает, как советские идеологические принципы формировали содержание, структуру и цели преподавания истории в школах Узбекской ССР. Результаты показывают, что историческое образование функционировало прежде всего как идеологический инструмент, призванный легитимизировать советскую власть, маргинализировать национальные исторические взгляды и продвигать марксистско-ленинские интерпретации прошлого. Статья способствует более глубокому пониманию взаимосвязи между идеологией и образованием в авторитарных политических системах.*

Ключевые слова: *историческое образование, идеология, советский период, Узбекская ССР, марксизм-ленинизм, историография.*

Annotatsiya. *Ushbu maqolada 1930-1950-yillar oralig'ida O'zbekistonda tarix ta'limining mafkuraviy yo'nalishi tahlil qilinadi. Faqat tarixshunoslik manbalari va ilmiy adabiyotlarga tayanib, tadqiqotda Sovet mafkuraviy tamoyillari O'zbekiston SSR maktablarida tarix o'qitishning mazmuni, tuzilishi va maqsadlarini qanday shakllantirgani o'rganiladi. Tadqiqot natijalari shuni ko'rsatadiki, tarix ta'limi asosan Sovet hokimiyatini qonuniylashtirish, milliy tarixiy qarashlarni chetga surib qo'yish va o'tmishning marksistik-leninistik talqinlarini targ'ib qilish uchun mo'ljallangan mafkuraviy vosita sifatida faoliyat yuritgan. Maqola avtoritar siyosiy tizimlarda mafkura va ta'lim o'rtasidagi munosabatni chuqurroq tushunishga hissa qo'shadi.*

Kalit so'zlar: *tarix ta'limi, mafkura, Sovet davri, O'zbekiston SSR, marksizm-leninizm, tarixshunoslik.*

Introduction. The years between 1930 and 1950 were the main deciding factors in the history education development of Uzbekistan as they were the time when the Soviet regime was increasing its power and the mainstreaming of Marxist-Leninist



philosophy in all aspects of life took place. The teaching of history was regarded by the Soviet authorities as the most important way of spreading the ideology and a means of getting politically useful loyal citizens. History education in the Uzbek SSR was not only an academic subject but also a tactic of the state in promoting the Soviet identity and shutting down any alternative interpretations of the past [5]. The present article has the purpose of explaining the ideological direction of history education in Uzbekistan during this time by looking into the way historical knowledge was selected, organized, and imparted as per the Soviet political aims. The issue's importance is that it helps one see how the educational systems operate in times of ideological pressure and the way power relationships determine the production of historical narratives. The study is restricted to history education at school level, which was the place where the ideological influence was most systematically carried out and monitored by the state apparatus [1].

Methodology and literature review. The methodological framework of the present research is founded upon qualitative literature analysis and critical interpretation of historiographical sources. The analysis is not based on any empirical experiments, interviews, or observation methods. The analysis relies on academic articles, conference papers, and scholarly monographs that study the history of education in the Uzbek SSR from the perspective of the wider Soviet educational system [2]. Besides, attention is particularly focused on the works of Uzbek scholars who have explored curriculum reforms, textbook policies, and the historical context of history teaching in the 1930s and 1940s [1], [3], [4]. These literary works uncover that history education rounded out on considerable restructuring in the mid-1930s when the Soviet leadership left behind the integrated social studies models and opted for history as a separate subject matter closely linked to ideological requirements [2]. On the contrary, the literature also accentuates the growing centralization of the educational content, where Moscow sanctioned textbooks and syllabi took the place of locally prepared materials [6]. The article, through the combination of these sources, reveals the major ideological trends and assesses their influence on the production of historical knowledge in Uzbekistan.

Results and discussion. The literature analysis shows that the historiography of Uzbekistan in education during the 1930–1950 was mainly by ideological control and political misuse. The historical accounts in school programs focused on class conflict, the prominent role of the Communist Party, and the presence of socialism as a historical trend; thus, pre-Soviet history was either pushed aside or presented from a Marxist point of view [3]. Certain national figures and events were often subjected to re-evaluation and in the process, aspects of Uzbek history that were important for the



culture were either distorted or completely left out [4]. The literature goes on to say that teachers were seen as ideological agents who were responsible not only for passing on knowledge but also for influencing the political consciousness of students [7]. Ideologically, the late 1930s and post-war periods were marked by hard-line policies that were particularly strong in the case of perceived threats to the Soviet Union's cohesion [8]. The history education process thus became an avenue for the Soviet state to gain loyalty and to deny and suppress alternative histories. Meanwhile, some historians believe that the recognition of history as a formal discipline led to the professionalization of teaching, albeit within strict ideological parameters [9]. This duality reveals the intricate connection between educational progress and ideological domination in the Soviet regime.

The ideological orientation of history teaching in Uzbekistan during the 1930s to the 1950s also revealed itself in the rigorous standardization of textbooks and teaching aids. The documents show that history books in the Uzbek SSR were made under very strict rules based on the all-Union guidelines, leaving almost no space for the inclusion of local peculiarity or alternative views of historical events. By doing this, the Soviet education system created a situation where all the different ideological beliefs were alike and all the different local historical stories were subjected to one common political narrative [10]. Hence, the historical past of Uzbekistan was often presented in a selective way, highlighting those aspects that were in line with the Soviet ideological goals while downplaying or even omitting those related to the national statehood, religious traditions, and cultural autonomy.

One more important aspect that was pointed out by the researchers is the change in historical chronology and periodization that took place in the school curricula. The traditional historical timelines were rearranged in such a way that revolutionary milestones, the proclamation of Soviet power, and the accomplishments of socialist construction were all included in the first place. The whole era before the revolution was often depicted as one of suffering and stumbling, and thus the comparison with the so-called progress of socialism was made easier. This method of presenting history gave rise to one particular interpretation, which saw the Soviet regime as the "artificial and highest" stage of social development, thus narrowing the learners' access to diverse historical views.

In addition to that, the literature points out that the political campaigns and ideologies changes had a great impact on what was taught in history classes. The so-called ideological control periods of the late 30s and the years just after the war were times when history teaching materials were revised to get rid of "ideologically harmful" interpretations and thus these times saw the coming and going of new

narratives based on what was politically accepted at that moment rather than on what was academically supported. The resulting lack of consensus between politics and scholarship over the interpretation of the past weakened the academic credit of the history teaching and made it basically an instrument of the state's ideology, which was flexible rather than a discipline based on critical inquiry.

The literature has retroactively analyzed to address the long-term implications of this ideologically driven model of history teaching. The persistent marginalization of national historical agency and the dominance of class-based interpretations led to a fragmented historical consciousness in the students. The system succeeded in transmitting a unified ideological narrative but also created historical knowledge gaps that became apparent in the post-Soviet period. This legacy demonstrates the continuous influence of ideological control over history teaching and the need for re-evaluation of Soviet-era pedagogical practices as an integral part of modern educational reforms.

The studies reviewed also indicate the ideological framing of historical actors in school narratives, where individuals were mostly judged by their adherence to Soviet political values. Historical figures linked with national movements, religious leadership, or pre-Soviet statehood were often portrayed negatively or assigned to minor roles, whereas revolutionary leaders and Communist Party representatives were presented as the main agents of historical change. This selective representation gave rise to a moralized interpretation of history, where political loyalty took the place of scholarly judgment as the main criterion for historical significance.

Table 1. Ideological Features of History Education in Uzbekistan (1930–1950)

Aspect of history education	Ideological characteristics	Educational implications
Curriculum content	Dominance of Marxist-Leninist theory and class struggle narratives	Marginalization of national and pre-Soviet history
Textbooks and materials	Centralized, Moscow-approved publications	Elimination of regional perspectives and plural interpretations
Historical actors	Positive portrayal of Soviet leaders, negative framing of non-Soviet figures	Politicization of historical evaluation
Periodization	Emphasis on revolution and socialist construction	Teleological and predetermined view of historical development
Teaching objectives	Formation of ideological loyalty and political consciousness	Suppression of critical historical thinking

The table presents evidence that the ideological influence was present in all major aspects of history education in the Uzbek SSR during the period 1930-1950, from the very beginning of the process of curriculum development to the establishment of pedagogical goals. The systematic alignment of Soviet ideology with content,



materials, and interpretive frameworks turned history into a normative discipline aimed at political socialization rather than analytical inquiry. This structural coherence of ideological control ensured the stability of the official narrative while at the same time narrowing the intellectual scope of historical learning. The consequence of this was that history education operated as a unified ideological system where the transmission of knowledge and political instruction were inextricably linked, thus reinforcing the long-term predominance of the Soviet discourse on history.

The literature also discusses the issue of the ideological history education being a key factor affecting pedagogical practices. Essentially, teachers were expected to follow sanctioned interpretations meticulously, thereby undergoing an ideological screening by the authorities in the educational field. Punishments for straying from the prescribed narratives could take the form of professional sanctions, which in turn disallowed and discouraged analytical discussion thereby favoring a very orthodox, teacher-centered type of instruction. Thus, in history classes the topographical memory of ideologically sanctioned conclusions was given precedence over critical interaction with historiographic sources, which again solidified the disciplinary role of history that served the educational system.

Finally, the literature suggests that the ideological orientation of history education influenced not only content but also students' cognitive relationship with the past. By presenting history as a closed and predetermined narrative, the educational system limited opportunities for historical questioning and interpretive plurality. This approach fostered passive acceptance of official narratives and weakened the development of independent historical reasoning. The long-term effect of such practices, as noted by scholars, was the persistence of simplified and politicized understandings of history, which continued to shape public historical consciousness beyond the Soviet period.

Conclusion. According to the research, Soviet ideological directives were the main drivers of history teaching in Uzbekistan from 1930 to 1950. Instead of developing critical historical thinking, the system stressed political loyalty and ideological conformity. The widespread use of Marxist-Leninist interpretations, central control of the curriculum, and the establishment of historical narratives for political purposes all curtailed the intellectual freedom of both teachers and students. Nevertheless, the time period did imbue the structural foundations required for the organization of history education which, in turn, paved the way for the post-Soviet reforms. It is of utmost importance to comprehend this historical experience if one wishes to do a critical reassessment of the present-day history education, to confront the long-lasting effects of ideological influence on historical consciousness, and so



forth. The results draw attention to the need for the existence of academic freedom and methodological pluralism in the practice of history teaching.

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