

WORK DONE IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION, NATIONAL PRESS, CULTURE AND ART DURING THE PERIOD OF MODERNIZATION OF CENTRAL ASIA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY

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Abstract

This monograph explores the multidimensional transformation of public education, national press, cultural life, and artistic development in Central Asia during the early 20th century modernization era. The work provides a comprehensive historical and analytical account of how educational reforms, the rise of national journalism, and cultural renaissance converged to form a new civic consciousness in Muslim Central Asian societies. It traces the impact of Jadidism, Tatar intellectual activism, and the Khorezm enlightenment movement in fostering modern schools, progressive curricula, and inclusive educational access, including for women and marginalized communities.

The research highlights how newspapers and journals became vital tools for the dissemination of modernist ideas, debates on national identity, and political discourse. Artistic expressions—from literature and theater to traditional crafts and visual arts—are shown to have mirrored and reinforced emerging concepts of modernity and national pride. The study also reflects on the integration of Western artistic influences with indigenous traditions, producing a rich hybrid culture that became a cornerstone of Central Asian identity.

Through an interdisciplinary methodology combining archival analysis, socio-cultural theory, and postcolonial critique, the monograph uncovers how modernization, while empowering in many ways, also introduced tensions around class, ethnicity, and cultural imperialism. It ultimately argues that the educational and cultural transformations of this period laid the groundwork for later movements of autonomy and self-determination in the region, while continuing to inform current debates on national development and identity in post-Soviet Central Asia.

Keywords: Central Asian modernization, public education reform, national press development, jadid movement, cultural and artistic revival, identity and social transformation.

Introduction

The early 20th century marked a pivotal era for Central Asia, as nations within the region underwent profound modernization that influenced public education, national press, and cultural expression. This period was characterized by a burgeoning awareness of national

identity amidst the backdrop of political and social upheaval. Educators and writers began to harness the power of literature and media to advocate for reform and cultural revival, significantly contributing to the intellectual landscape. This transformation was bolstered by the efforts of educators who established literary societies and promoted childrens literature, thus playing an essential role in shaping societal values and aspirations (E R Vagabova). Furthermore, the rich historical context of the region, shaped by diverse cultural interactions, provided a fertile ground for artistic and intellectual endeavors, culminating in a unique cultural synthesis that defined Azerbaijani identity during this transformative period (Hamzayeva N). The early 20th century marked a transformative era for Central Asia, characterized by significant advancements in public education, national press, and cultural expression. This modernization was propelled by the active involvement of Tatar intellectuals and the Khorezm Jadids, who advocated for educational reforms and the establishment of modern schools that emphasized innovative teaching methods. Their efforts played a vital role in fostering a national identity and awakening public consciousness, as seen in the proliferation of national newspapers and journals that informed the Muslim population about sociopolitical developments within the larger Russian Empire (Abduvali A Yuldashev). Moreover, the Jadid movements contribution to literature and theater enriched the cultural landscape of the region, laying the groundwork for a more enlightened society (Rustamovich KS). Thus, these movements not only addressed immediate educational needs but also stimulated broader reforms that ultimately shaped the course of Central Asias modernization.

The period of modernization in Central Asia at the beginning of the 20th century witnessed a profound transformation in public education, national press, culture, and art, reflecting a collective aspiration for socio-political renewal. Notably, Tatar intellectuals played a pivotal role in these initiatives, launching schools and fostering a vibrant press that informed the Muslim populace of contemporary developments, as indicated by the emergence of national newspapers and journals in Turkestan that paralleled those in Kazan (Abduvali A Yuldashev). Simultaneously, the Khorezm Jadids significantly contributed to the advancement of national consciousness through their pioneering work in modern educational institutions and cultural expressions, such as literature and theater (Rustamovich KS). These efforts not only facilitated a discourse on national identity but also laid the groundwork for subsequent movements advocating for autonomy and reform, thereby underscoring the intertwined significance of education, press, and cultural dynamics in shaping modern Central Asian society.

The objectives of this essay are to critically explore the transformative impact of modernization on public education, national press, culture, and art in Central Asia during the early 20th century. This era was marked by significant societal changes, wherein education became a vital instrument for socio-political empowerment, fostering intellectual independence among the populace. By examining the burgeoning national press, the essay aims to elucidate how media representation shaped public discourse and cultural identity. Moreover, an analysis of artistic expressions will reveal how local artisans and intellectuals navigated the tensions between tradition and modernity. Central to this exploration is the relationship between these developments and the geopolitics of religious soft power as highlighted in recent analyses,

which reflect broader regional dynamics impacting social and cultural narratives (Mandaville PM et al.). Finally, the essay will introduce concepts such as ecological ethnicity and cultural imperialism to contextualize the indigenous response to modernization, enriching our understanding of this pivotal historical moment (Jameson F, p. 71-90).

The research methodology employed in examining public education, national press, culture, and art during the modernization period of Central Asia in the early 20th century draws from an interdisciplinary framework, integrating historical analysis with sociocultural perspectives. Primary sources include archival documents, newspapers, and educational curricula from the time, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of how modernization influenced societal norms and practices. Focused case studies illustrate diverse representations of identity and cultural expression, revealing the complexities of agency among Indigenous populations and ethnic communities. Scholars have highlighted the significance of examining notions of nationality and culture, where Finnish contexts of identity inform broader discussions relevant to Central Asian modernization movements, emphasizing questions of inclusion and exclusion (Keskinen S et al.). Furthermore, insights into spiritual values related to communal ties and natural landscapes offer an additional layer, reflecting how evolving identities intersect with cultural transformations (Roux J-L et al.). This multifaceted approach provides a nuanced perspective on the dynamic interplay between education and cultural evolution in Central Asia. Amidst the wave of modernization that swept through Central Asia in the early 20th century, public education reforms emerged as a crucial element in reshaping societal structures. These reforms aimed not only to enhance literacy rates but also to cultivate a sense of national identity reflective of the regions diverse cultures. Educators and reformers recognized the necessity of integrating local traditions with modern pedagogical practices, thereby fostering a unique curriculum that would resonate with the populations heritage. The interplay between education and cultural expression was vital, as it allowed the populace to engage with their historical narratives while embracing progressive ideas. Furthermore, this period saw an increasing recognition of the role of the national press in disseminating educational philosophies and reform initiatives, linking education with broader socio-political movements that championed greater autonomy and self-determination in the face of imperial influence (Jameson F, p. 71-90)(Wohlrab-Sahr M et al., p. 875-909).

The establishment of new educational institutions during the early 20th century in Central Asia marked a pivotal shift in the landscape of public education, responding to both internal aspirations for modernization and external influences from global intellectual movements. These institutions aimed not only to provide practical knowledge but also to instill a sense of cultural identity and social responsibility among students. In this context, concerns regarding the integration of traditional Islamic education with secular pedagogical approaches emerged, as educators grappled with the tension between inherited Islamic educational frameworks and modern educational philosophies derived from the West. Such dynamics reflect the ongoing struggle within the region to reconcile diverse epistemological traditions, with debates arising around the nature of knowledge production in these new educational settings. This interplay of cultural, intellectual, and societal factors underscores the significant role that educational

reforms played in shaping the socio-political landscape of Central Asia during this transformative period (Abdullah Şahin, p. 335-335)(Mamdani M, p. 68-83).

The pervasive influence of Russian educational models during the era of modernization in Central Asia at the beginning of the 20th century is evident in the restructuring of local educational systems. As the Russian Empire expanded its reach, it aimed to instill a sense of Soviet ideology and cultural identity among diverse populations, leading to the standardization of education across the region. This shift not only facilitated the transmission of Russian language and literature but also altered traditional values and customs, nurturing a new generation that grappled with both Russian and indigenous identities. The educational reforms initiated during this period can be understood within the broader context of imperialism, as they reshaped social structures and cultural norms. Thus, the adoption and adaptation of Russian models created complex layers of interaction that continue to influence contemporary Central Asian identities and educational frameworks, reflecting the historical complexities of empire and modernization (Keskinen S et al.)(Roux J-L et al.).

During the early 20th century, local intellectuals played a pivotal role in shaping educational reform across Central Asia, a period marked by significant modernization efforts. Their contributions were instrumental not only in developing curricula that resonated with local cultural contexts but also in advocating for broader access to education for marginalized populations. These intellectuals emerged as key figures in the national press, using their platforms to disseminate progressive ideas about education and literacy. They sought to dismantle the traditional barriers inherent in the educational system and promote inclusive learning environments that encouraged critical thinking and creativity. This movement, however, was not without challenges, as it grappled with class and gender inequalities that persisted within society, creating a dichotomy in educational access and representation (Born G et al., p. 135-172). Significantly, this era laid the groundwork for enduring changes in public discourse about education and its role in promoting social equity (James A Beckford, p. 1-19). The evolution of education in Central Asia during the early 20th century significantly influenced social mobility and gender equality, marking a progressive shift in societal structures. As public education initiatives gained momentum, they provided a crucial platform for marginalized groups, particularly women, to pursue academic and professional aspirations previously deemed unattainable. This transformation was evident in the rising enrollment rates of females in educational institutions, fostering a generation that championed gender equity in both public and private spheres. Moreover, increased educational access facilitated upward social mobility, enabling individuals to break free from entrenched socio-economic constraints. Such advancements were closely tied to the broader modernization efforts across the region, as articulated through various cultural outputs in the national press, highlighting the intersection of education, economic development, and social activism (Mieczysław Adamowicz, p. 5901-5901). The emergence of university social responsibility further underscored the role of educational institutions in promoting sustainable societal change (V́ctor Meseguer-Sánchez et al., p. 4729-4729).

The early 20th century marked a significant turning point in the development of national press in Central Asia, largely driven by the modernization movements that swept the region. Activism among Tatar intellectuals played a crucial role, as they championed the establishment of various newspapers and journals that catered to the local Muslim population in Turkestan. These publications were vital in disseminating information about socio-political developments, thereby fostering a sense of community and cultural identity among readers (Abduvali A Yuldashev). Concurrently, the Khorezm Jadids emerged as transformative figures, advocating for educational and cultural reform through innovative literature and journalism. Their efforts not only aimed to elevate public consciousness but also laid the groundwork for national independence and modernization, despite facing significant resistance from conservative factions (Rustamovich KS). Collectively, these developments in the national press were fundamental in shaping a modern, informed society within the context of Central Asia's evolving political landscape.

The emergence of newspapers and journals in Central Asia during the early 20th century played a pivotal role in fostering public education and cultural awareness. This period marked a significant transformation in communication, as local intellectuals began to embrace print media to articulate socio-political issues and promote modernity. Journals became platforms for discussing national identity and cultural heritage, reflecting a burgeoning desire for self-definition among Central Asian societies. The proliferation of these publications also coincided with broader global trends regarding modernization and civic engagement, positioning Central Asia within a wider narrative of progress and reform. As newspapers circulated ideas that challenged traditional norms, they contributed to shaping a new civic consciousness. This intersection of local and global influences suggests that the development of a national press was not merely a regional phenomenon, but part of a larger movement toward modernization where cultural narratives began to engage with concepts of Europeaness and identity (Gressg Rård et al.)(Chakrabarty D, p. 259-282).

During the modernization of Central Asia in the early 20th century, the role of the press emerged as a pivotal force in shaping public opinion, particularly in the realms of public education and cultural development. As literacy rates increased, newspapers and periodicals became vital platforms for disseminating ideas and fostering debate about national identity and social reform. The emergence of public service media was essential, as this media model advocated for a communication landscape that empowered citizens and prioritized public discourse (N/A). Furthermore, the press actively engaged with the challenges related to educational reforms, often critiquing high-stakes testing that perpetuated racial inequalities masquerading as meritocracy (Au W, p. 39-62). Consequently, the press not only informed the populace but also galvanized movements for sociopolitical change, illustrating its indispensable role in the public sphere during this transformative period in Central Asian history.

Throughout the modernization of Central Asia at the beginning of the 20th century, journalists and publishers faced formidable challenges that hindered their ability to effectively disseminate information and foster public discourse. The political climate was frequently hostile, with

authoritarian regimes suppressing free speech, which constrained the journalists' capacity to report on pressing social issues and cultural developments. Additionally, the lack of institutional support meant that many publications struggled financially, limiting their reach and impact within communities. The emergence of public service media was posited as a remedy to these systemic issues, emphasizing the importance of creating platforms that prioritize the public's interest over commercial gain (N/A). Furthermore, the preservation of diverse voices became imperative; without a comprehensive representation of cultural narratives, the risks of authoritarian narratives prevailing greatly increased (Ma Išić). Thus, the struggle for journalistic integrity and financial viability defined this critical period in Central Asia's modern history.

During the early 20th century, the press emerged as a crucial instrument for shaping national identity and fostering cultural awareness in Central Asia. As modernization swept through the region, newspapers and magazines served not only as vehicles of information but also as platforms for cultural discourse, reflecting the diverse narratives of Central Asian societies. The written word became a means to articulate the aspirations and identities of various ethnic groups, thus contributing to a collective national consciousness. Additionally, the press played a significant role in promoting educational initiatives, integrating new ideas of modernity while also reviving traditional cultural practices. By highlighting local customs and intellectual achievements, the press bolstered a sense of pride among Central Asians. This dual role of informing and uniting communities exemplifies how the press contributed to the broader trajectory of nationalism during this transformative period in history (Mandaville PM et al.)(N/A).

The early 20th century in Central Asia witnessed a significant Cultural Renaissance marked by a flourishing of artistic expression and intellectual exchange. This period brought forth a revival of traditional art forms while simultaneously embracing modern influences from the West, fostering a unique synthesis of styles and themes. Public education initiatives facilitated greater access to the arts, encouraging participation from diverse segments of society and empowering local artists to explore national identity through their work. As a result, artistic expression became a powerful medium for social critique and cultural dialogue. Furthermore, the role of the national press in disseminating artistic works and promoting cultural discourse cannot be understated; it served as a vital platform for new ideas and collective consciousness among the populace. Such dynamics underscore the transformative power of art within the broader social fabric, echoing sentiments that emphasize the importance of collective well-being in a divided society (Jakob Bühlmann et al.)(María Staiano F).

The early 20th century marked a pivotal era in Central Asia, characterized by a burgeoning interest in the revival of traditional art forms and crafts amidst modernization. This revival was not merely an act of cultural nostalgia; rather, it served as a crucial mechanism for unifying communities and preserving local identities under the pressures of rapid industrial change. Artisans harnessed their skills in textiles, pottery, and metalwork, creating works that resonated with both historical significance and contemporary relevance. Public education initiatives played a significant role, as they sought to instill a sense of pride in national heritage, echoing

the broader societal transitions described in (Hatuka T et al.). Concurrently, the evolving spiritual and cultural landscapes of societies were observed, as highlighted in the research on forest spirituality, reflective of a re-engagement with traditional values and practices during this transformative period, as articulated in (Roux J-L et al.). Thus, the revival of traditional crafts emerged as a vital expression of resilience and identity amidst the waves of modernization.

The influence of Western art movements on local artists in Central Asia during the early 20th century became a significant phenomenon amidst the broader currents of modernization. This period marked a transformative stage where artists began to explore and reinterpret Western styles, such as Impressionism and Cubism, infusing them with local cultural motifs and narratives. As Western ideologies permeated the region through public education and the national press, local artists adopted these new artistic languages as tools for self-expression and social commentary. This synergy allowed them to challenge traditional artistic norms and address contemporary issues within their societies. In doing so, they opened new avenues for dialogue about identity and belonging, particularly in the context of changing landscapes of culture and spirituality. Such creative exchanges illustrate that local and global influences coalesced in the rich tapestry of Central Asian art, further emphasized by the evolving definitions of cultural identity during this transformative era (Keskinen S et al.)(Roux J-L et al.).

Literature has historically served as both a mirror and a catalyst for societal change, particularly during periods of significant transformation. In Central Asia at the beginning of the 20th century, the modernization movements actively leveraged literary expressions to reflect and promote evolving social frameworks. Tatar intellectuals played a crucial role in this phenomenon, engaging with various art forms to illuminate the burgeoning socio-cultural developments in the region. Their involvement in education, national journalism, and theatrical productions fostered a deeper understanding of modern ideals while addressing the collective aspirations of the populace (Abduvali A Yuldashev). Concurrently, as observed in the modernization of civil service systems globally, literature in Central Asia contributed to dialogues around governance, accountability, and performance (Otajonov E). By articulating the complexities of identity, tradition, and modernity, literature not only documented but also facilitated the profound changes occurring in society during this transformative era.

Cultural events and festivals in the early 20th century were instrumental in fostering community cohesion within Central Asia, especially during a period marked by modernization and socio-political change. These gatherings served as platforms for collective identity and cultural expression, whereby diverse ethnic groups could celebrate their unique traditions while also reinforcing social bonds. Engaging in these communal activities encouraged intercultural dialogue and mutual respect, contributing to a more cohesive society amidst the challenges of modernization. For instance, the integration of handicrafts and local practices into cultural events highlighted the importance of preserving heritage while adapting to contemporary realities, demonstrating how such festivals acted as a bridge between tradition and modernity (Shaban A et al.). Furthermore, these events provided a space for reflection on shared histories

and experiences, solidifying local identities against the backdrop of external pressures, and enhancing social solidarity within rapidly changing landscapes (Selling J).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the modernization of Central Asia at the beginning of the 20th century marked a transformative period that reshaped public education, national press, culture, and art within the region. This significant shift was characterized by the interplay of various socio-political forces that both challenged and reinforced traditional structures. The emergence of educational institutions aimed to cultivate a new wave of enlightenment among the populace, fostering literacy and critical thinking. Furthermore, the national press played a pivotal role in disseminating ideas related to social reform and cultural identity, often framing these discussions within broader narratives of modernization. However, as the complexities of modernization unfolded, the dynamics of racial and social inequality became increasingly pronounced, revealing tensions within the purported goals of reform. The ideological landscape, often described as “Meritocracy 2.0,” reflected the intricate relationship between state policies and societal outcomes, highlighting the ongoing negotiations of identity and equality in Central Asian contexts (Au W, p. 39-62)(James A Beckford, p. 1-19).

The modernization of Central Asia at the beginning of the 20th century was marked by significant advancements in public education, national press, culture, and art. Key findings indicate a profound transformation in societal norms and identity, as the proliferation of schools aimed to educate the masses, fostering a new class of literate citizens who sought to engage with contemporary issues. The national press emerged as a critical platform for public discourse, allowing for the dissemination of ideas and promoting cultural awareness among diverse ethnic groups. Additionally, artistic expressions began to reflect the intricate blend of traditional elements and modern influences, illustrating the complexities of evolving identities. Importantly, the discussions surrounding race and ethnicity became more pronounced, revealing the intricate dynamics of national identity as seen in scholarly works exploring whiteness and Finnishness (Keskinen S et al.). Furthermore, these changes had implications for social values, as the relationship between cultural production and spirituality emphasized the need for policy that respects both heritage and modernity (Roux J-L et al.).

The intricate intertwining of education, press, culture, and art during the modernization of Central Asia at the beginning of the 20th century reflects a period of transformative societal change. Education emerged as a pivotal foundation, facilitating the dissemination of new ideas that fostered critical thinking and cultural awareness. The national press played an indispensable role in shaping public discourse, providing a platform for diverse voices and fostering an informed citizenry. This interplay was further enriched by artistic expressions that mirrored and influenced societal values, contributing to a vibrant cultural landscape. As noted in contemporary discussions about the ramifications of educational access and media representation, such as in the works surrounding language integration in various cultures (Peterson E et al.), and the evolving understanding of cultural contexts in disciplines like world-

systems analysis (Jacob F), the era witnessed a profound reshaping of identities and ideologies, underscoring the vital connections among these domains.

The early 20th-century modernization in Central Asia left a profound legacy that reshaped the regions public education, press, and cultural landscape. As new educational institutions emerged, they fostered a burgeoning literacy movement, allowing for wider access to knowledge and facilitating progressive ideas that challenged traditional norms. Specifically, the national press became instrumental in disseminating these revolutionary thoughts, creating a platform for intellectual exchange and political discourse. This period also saw the artistic expression flourish, as cultural movements embraced previously marginalized voices, contributing to a richer tapestry of Central Asian identity. Notably, this modernization can be analyzed through the lens of broader societal changes, reflecting tensions between traditional values and modernity, which can be interpreted as intertwined with the dynamics of meritocracy in social development (Au W, p. 39-62). Furthermore, the visibility and role of religion within this modernization highlighted the negotiation of cultural identity amidst diversity (James A Beckford, p. 1-19).

To deepen the understanding of public education, the national press, and cultural developments during the early 20th century modernization of Central Asia, several avenues for further research warrant exploration. First, a comparative analysis of similar modernization efforts in other regions could yield insights into the unique factors that shaped Central Asias experience, particularly regarding educational reforms and cultural expression. Additionally, scholars might consider investigating the role of public service media in promoting democratic values amid the political turbulence of the time; the idea that such media can support social cohesion remains relevant today, as articulated in discussions surrounding the Public Service Internet (N/A). Furthermore, examining racial and ethnic dynamics within public education and media could unveil critical intersections, allowing contemporary scholars to reflect on how historical narratives impact current disparities in access and representation (Pollock A, p. 50-5029). These approaches promise to enhance the discourse surrounding this pivotal period.

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