

The History of The Press and Printing in Navoi Region

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Abstract

This article provides a scholarly analysis of the formation, developmental stages, and current state of the press in Navoi Region. It examines the establishment of the region in 1982 and the subsequent publication of newspapers such as “Do‘stlik bayrog‘i” and “Знамя дружбы”, highlighting their role in socio-political life and their contribution to the creation of a local school of journalism. Additionally, the study examines the operations of additional periodicals, such as “Karmana ovozi”, “Konchilar hayoti”, “Oltin vodiyl”, and “Qonun kuchi”, highlighting their influence on regional information policy. In order to scientifically outline the developmental directions of regional journalism, the article also examines the technological modernisation of the printing infrastructure in the Navoi Region, the multilingual nature of periodical publications, and their significance in the community’s cultural and spiritual development.

Keywords: journalism, spirituality, society, democracy, transparency, freedom of expression, development, newspaper.

1. Introduction

The Navoiy Region was established by Decree No. 2247 of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Uzbek SSR on April 20, 1982. Pursuant to this decree, the Council of Ministers of the Uzbek SSR issued Resolution No. 3304 on April 30, 1982, entitled “On the Organization of Soviet Authorities, Economic, and Public Institutions in the Navoiy Region of the Uzbek SSR” [1]. On the occasion of the formation of Navoiy Region, its administrative composition incorporated Navoiy, Konimex, Qiziltepa, and Tomdi districts from Bukhara Region, alongside Nurota and Khatirchi districts from Samarkand Region. At present, Navoiy Region is recognized as an industrially advanced territory within the framework of the Republic of independent Uzbekistan.

The press, throughout all historical periods, has functioned as a powerful instrument influencing the public, consolidating society around specific ideas, and illuminating socio-political realities. Newspapers and other periodicals have become the main source of important information for the general people. At the start of the 16th century, the world’s first newspaper was published in Venice. In Venice, news was beautifully embellished and printed using stone printing on white paper before being sold. At first, each of these sheets was worth

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one Venetian coin and made up a single newspaper. The phrase became widely used and eventually came to refer to the journal itself. “La Gazette” was founded in France in 1631 by T. Renado. Every developed state had two or three of these periodicals by the end of the 16th century. “Вестовне письма или Куранти” was the first newspaper published in Russia in 1621. Nevertheless, this publication fell short of the public’s expectations. Eventually, in 1702, Peter I created the official newspaper, “Ведомости”. In the latter part of the 1800s, the press began to appear in Turkestan. The area had organised book and newspaper publishing by 1870. Initially, “Туркистанские ведомости” and “Turkiston viloyatining gazetasi” were spread throughout Tashkent [2].

2. Research Method

This study was conducted using historical-analytical, comparative, and systematic approaches. The article critically analyzed archival documents, government decrees, historical sources, and periodicals as primary materials related to the formation and development of the press in Navoiy region. The research examined, on a scholarly basis, the emergence of regional newspapers, their role in the socio-political life, the activities of journalists, and the broader significance of the press in society.

3. Result

A review of the history of the Uzbek press reveals that it is closely linked to the intellectual and educational revival known as the Jadid movement in the early twentieth century. At that time, Turkestan was under colonial subjugation. The Jadids, who were national intellectuals, sought to lead the people toward enlightenment and to liberate them from oppression and ignorance. In pursuit of this goal, they established new-model schools and laid the foundations of a national press. Indeed, the press became a direct response to the political and social demands of the time. On June 27, 1906, the newspaper “Taraqqiy” began publication in Tashkent, addressing this very need. However, it was forcibly stopped from being circulated by the General-Governorate of Turkestan after the publication of its twentieth issue. National intellectuals started the newspaper “Xurshid” the same year, but it was also quickly outlawed. Afterwards, further newspapers including “Najot”, “Kengash”, and “Osiyo” were released. Nevertheless, these periodicals faced systematic persecution, just like “Taraqqiy” and “Xurshid”. The enlightened thinker Munavvar Qori played a crucial part in their publishing and editing endeavours. These periodicals consistently disseminated articles advocating for civic liberties, national autonomy, and the sovereignty of the homeland, which, in turn, provoked the ruling authorities to implement coercive measures against them [3].

The press serves as a chronicle encapsulating the past, present, and future of the nation and its people. Consequently, significant attention is devoted to the activities of print media and mass communication outlets at both the republican and regional levels. In the early years after the Navoiy Region was created, the region’s developing media infrastructure was reflected in the publication of three oblasts, nine cities and districts, and five multi-edition newspapers [4].

A major turning point in the sociopolitical life of the Navoiy Region was reached on January 1, 1983, when the first editions of the newspapers “Do’stlik bayrog’i” and “Знамя дружб” were published. This event also had a major impact on how journalism would evolve in the region going forward [5]. Experienced journalists who had previously worked in the newspapers of Samarkand and Bukhara regions came to Navoiy and rapidly transformed the new regional newspaper into one of the most exemplary print media publications in the country. Over the years, the editorial office was led by seasoned professionals such as Hamid

Mo'minov, Umid Sattorov, Rahim Ro'ziyev, Hamdam Eshonqulov, G'affor Hotamov, and Mahmud Mardiyev, who devoted considerable attention to the establishment of the Navoiy School of Journalism. The fact that several representatives of this school are currently successfully active in the central media outlets of the republic attests to its enduring influence and significance [6].

Unfortunately, the policies of the era and the “Red Empire” approach to administrative territorial reductions left a profound and painful impact on the local populace and deeply affected the trajectory of “Do'stlik Bayrog'i”, which had been closely aligned with the community. From the second half of 1988, “Do'stlik Bayrog'i” was published as a newspaper of the Samarkand region. On December 31, 1988, the publication of “Do'stlik Bayrog'i” was discontinued. From 1989, the newspaper “Знамя дружбы” began to be published at the city level. Shortly thereafter, a two-page version of “Do'stlik Bayrog'i”, serving as a translation of “Знамя дружбы”, reached its readership. From 1990 onward, its volume was expanded by an additional two pages [7].

Prior to independence, primarily two regional newspapers, along with newspapers in the districts and Zarafshan city, were in operation; currently, their number has exceeded thirty. These publications serve as a platform for local young journalists to demonstrably showcase their skills and advance toward professional journalism.

The newspapers “Do'stlik bayrog'i” and “Знамя дружбы” continue to operate today as steadfast custodians of journalistic tradition, serving as a true standard-bearer for the development of journalism in the region. Notably, the alignment of the aspirations and creative endeavors of the younger generation with the experience of seasoned professionals plays a significant role in this process. The appointment of Boboqand Umarov and Otabek Aslonov, despite their relatively young age, to lead the editorial offices of the Navbahor and Karmana district newspapers further attests to the enduring influence and educational legacy of the regional press.

Among the Navoiy region's mass media outlets, the newspaper “Karmana ovozi” is well-known and esteemed. The publication has done excellent work, reflecting the social and cultural life of the neighbourhood. Records pertaining to “Karmana ovozi” can be found in the Karmana district archives. These records include details regarding the personnel units, salary paid to employees, printing press operations, and the employees who worked for the newspaper [8]. During the years of independence, the editorial office of the newspaper expanded its capacity to fulfill its responsibilities and honorable duties. Journalists from Karmana have been diligently working to disseminate the ideas of national independence to the wider public, to acquaint readers closely with the substantive achievements resulting from the extensive reforms implemented in the region and district, and to encourage conscientious labor in the interests of national development and the welfare of the people [9].

The newspaper “Navaiy Chemist” (“Навайский химик”), established under the initiative of the open joint-stock company “Navoiyazot”, the largest enterprise in Navoiy region, has become a favored publication among all the company's employees. Launched on March 4, 1967, “Navaiy Chemist” is, in fact, the first newspaper established in the city of Navoiy. The establishment of a printing press in the same year to facilitate its publication proved to be of critical importance for the newspaper's future operations. In addition to publishing the “Navaiy Chemist” newspaper, the enterprise's printing press also provides services to clients, including the production of forms, labels, and other printing-related tasks. The newspaper devotes substantial coverage to the dedicated workers and experienced staff of the enterprise. Sections such as “Figures on the Honor Board”, “People Among Us” and “They Stand Beside Us” present engaging and significant information about the exemplary careers and achievements of these distinguished employees. Under the motto “Great and Sacred,

Independent Homeland”, numerous articles on moral, educational, and cultural themes are regularly published. Materials covering topics such as “You Asked”, “In the Garden and on the Field” and “Be Well” resonate strongly with readers. Among the newspaper’s correspondents, Feruza Sharipova and Komiljon To’raboyev, as well as layout designer and typesetter Sabina Ro’ziyeva, are recognized as dedicated and proactive young professionals committed to their craft [10].

At the moment, the Navoi Mining and Metallurgical Combinat is publishing the journal “Konchilar Hayoti”. This publication started out as “Gornyak” in May 1991. Russian and Uzbek versions of the newspaper have been published since 2011. The publication offers thorough and unbiased coverage of the combinat’s diverse operations under the motto “NMMC – a guarantee of high quality, efficiency, and social protection”. The content published in “Konchilar Hayoti” encompasses a diverse range of topics, including essays, articles, and reports on production processes, industry pioneers and devoted employees, moral and cultural values, as well as historical events [11].

The newspaper “Xatirchi Hayoti” was initially published in October 1932 under the title “Paxtakor” as an organ of the Khorezm Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, the district executive committee, and the trade unions’ council. It was printed at the Qizil Narpay printing house in what is now the city of Oqtosh, with a circulation of 1,500 copies. In 1934, a printing press was established in the Xatirchi district. At that time, all printing operations, including typesetting and printin, were performed manually. Thus, the newspaper, which had been published for 30 years, was renamed “Paxtakor Ovozi” following the merger of Xatirchi and Narpay districts, and later published under the name “Zarafshon” after the district was merged with Kattaqo’rg’on. In 1965, with the re-establishment of the district, the newspaper adopted the title “Yangi Hayot”. In 1998, it was renamed once again as “Xatirchi Hayoti” [12].

In 1980, this newspaper was ranked second among district newspapers in the republic in terms of typographic design. Since its establishment, it has held significant influence in the social life of the district, reflecting nearly 90 years of the region’s history within its pages. Over the years, all notable changes and developments in Xatirchi district have been thoroughly documented in the newspaper. The newspaper’s achievements to this level are largely attributable to the contributions of its former editors, O’rin Kamolov, Adolat Sanoqulova, Shonazar Ochilov, Jaloliddin Rajabov, Karim Rahimov, and Jo’raqul Yormatov[13].

Following the attainment of independence, increased attention was directed toward mass media. Principles of democracy, transparency, freedom of expression, and diversity found reflection in the pages of “Xatirchi Hayoti” newspaper. In its early years, however, the newspaper faced significant challenges: its material and technical resources, editorial office facilities, and overall publication quality were below the required standards. Consequently, the annual circulation of the newspaper had declined to approximately 400 copies. Since 2011, the newspaper has been published with a circulation of 4,000 copies. The publication was equipped with modern computers, printers, photocopying devices, and digital cameras, which significantly enhanced the quality of the newspaper. Based on its internal resources, the editorial office constructed a new building, relocated, and acquired its own service vehicle. Additionally, a “Writers’ Garden” was established on a 2.5-hectare area [14].

Times are changing, and the demand for timely information is increasing. Delivering news about events occurring in the country and the region to readers promptly, rather than with a delayed “recently” preface, has become a pressing requirement of the present day. The growing prevalence of articles copied from other sources, what the authors of “report” materials refer to as “raising the newspaper’s level”, also poses challenges and pressures for the newspaper.

The newspaper of Nurota district, “Nurnoma”, was founded in 1935. Initially published under the names “Stalinchi”, “Nurota haqiqati” and “Ilg’or chorvador”, and later as “Nurnoma”, the newspaper has actively addressed the socio-economic issues of the district. In the early years of independence, the publication appeared under the title “Ilg’or chorvador”. The bound volumes kept at the regional archive contain important documents pertaining to the newspaper’s operations. Previously created using conventional means, the newspaper is now prepared on the computer at the editorial office and printed using the offset technology.

Beginning on April 1, 1982, the newspaper “Navbahor Tongi” was published three times a week. Its initial editor was Rahim Ro’ziyev. The newspaper’s enormous circulation and popularity in the years after independence were mostly attributable to the invaluable work of committed journalists such as Shamsiddin Kalonov, Muhayyo Nazarova, Umrzoq Mustafoyev, Nuriya Po’latova, and Narzulla Tilavov.

By 1997, the Navoi Region Press Department was in charge of publishing 19 newspapers, including the regional “Do’stlik Bayrog’i” and “Знамя дружб”, in addition to one city and eight district newspapers. Aside from the district newspapers, publications from specialised and community organisations were actively published, including “Qizilqum”, “Qonun Kuch”, “Oltin Diyor”, “Soliqchi”, “Solomatlik”, “Navoiydan Gapiramiz va Ko’rsatamiz”, “Ziyokor”, and “Чудо-дерево” (for children). Press publications in Navoi Region were issued in three languages: Uzbek, Russian, and Kazakh. The Uchquduq city-district newspaper “Достық – Дружба” was published bilingually in Kazakh and Russian.

In the northern districts of Navoi Region, populations of Kazakh ethnicity have traditionally resided. In a number of Uzbek SSR regions with sizable Kazakh populations, newspapers in the Kazakh language started to appear during the 1930s and 1960s. Notable examples include “Kommunizm uchun” in the Tashkent Region’s Bo’stonliq district (now “Бостандық дауысы”), “Sur’at-Qarqin” in the Tashkent Region’s Yuqori Chirchiq district, “Do’stlik” in the Jizzakh Region’s Mirzacho’l district, and in the Konimex district of Bukhara (now Navoi) Region, “Enbek”, “Sosialistik Enbek”, “Shopan Uni” (now “Кенимех таны”), and “Социалистик шаруашылық” in the Tomdi district (now “Тамды шаруагери”). These publications served as important vehicles for information and cultural communication among the Kazakh-speaking population[15].

In 1991 and 1994, within the framework of the “Кенимех таны” newspaper, two supplemental bulletins titled “Talimger” and “Aq jo’l” were published for remote and nearby Kazakh-populated district schools, kindergartens, and trade unions. These bulletins covered spiritual and educational activities embodying the centuries-old values of the Kazakh people, literary evenings reflecting the national ethos, and long-standing pressing issues in the field of education that had awaited resolution for many years.

The “Зарафшанский рабочий” newspaper has been published under the title “Золотая долина” since 2003 and, from 2012 onwards, under the name “Oltin vodiy”. Over the years, not only the title of the newspaper but also its content and thematic focus have undergone significant renewal. The Zarafshan State Printing House was established in December 1991.

At present, the “Oltin vodiy” newspaper has become not only one of the leading local publications in Navoiy Region but also in Uzbekistan as a whole. Its editorial team has notably remained faithful to the traditions and principles of national journalism established in its early days, consistently developing them over time. Moreover, the analytical, critical, and topical content published in the newspaper’s pages not only enhances the publication’s impact and quality but also contributes to the expansion of its regular readership.

In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Mass Media” and Certificate No. 30 issued by the State Committee for Press of the Republic of Uzbekistan on October 10, 1996, the “Qonun kuchi” newspaper was established to cover legislative and law enforcement matters in Navoiy Region. The establishment of “Qonun kuchi” involved the active efforts of the Navoiy Regional Prosecutor B.X. Kalonov, Head of the Regional Justice Department I.I. Berdiqulov, Regional Court official B.U. Jamolov, and Head of the Regional Internal Affairs Department D.S. Oqmirzayev. T. Fayzullayev was appointed as the editor of the “Qonun kuchi” newspaper.

In Navoiy Region, 70 printing departments, the Alisher Navoi Publishing House, and a number of information services under the jurisdiction of state and economic management bodies are actively operating. The editorial offices of the “Do‘stlik bayrog‘i” and “Знамя дружбы” newspapers, the private enterprise “Qiziltepa-ADAST” in Qiziltepa District, “Kompter Mo‘jizasi” LLC, and the printing enterprise “Mehr Zar” LLC in Zarafshan city have installed and are operating the most modern printing lines produced in India, Germany, and China.

Economic organisations involved in printing operations in the Navoiy Region have recently implemented cutting-edge printing machinery and auxiliary devices in an effort to improve the marketability of their goods, guarantee adherence to global standards, and get rid of technical flaws. In particular, the printing house of the Navoiy Mining and Metallurgical Combine received €215,000 worth of state-of-the-art equipment made in Germany. Additionally, “Navoiy Kolor Print” LLC received printing equipment worth 66 million soms, and “Mehr-Zar” LLC in Zarafshan city was provided with an offset printing line valued at USD 18,000. Furthermore, printing departments such as “O‘zbek-Kino” LLC and “Ada Servis Navoiy” LLC in Navoiy city were also equipped with the latest machinery capable of producing large-format advertising products.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

In summary, periodical print publications issued in Uzbek, Russian, Kazakh, and Karakalpak serve to acquaint the population of the region, where representatives of various ethnic groups live together in harmony under the banner of unity, with news, socially significant information, and constructive initiatives. As social institutions, these print periodicals maintain close cooperation with state and economic management bodies, organizations, enterprises, central offices, and associations, demonstrating dedication in conveying the essence of ongoing societal processes to readers comprehensively and in a timely manner.

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