

Cultural Policy in the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic (1920-1924)

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A political party “Young Khiva people”, whose goal was the political, economic and cultural rise of the country through democratic reforms in the territory of the Khanate, relied on the alliance of the Red Army troops and the Communists of Turkestan to overthrow the Khanate of Khiva. But they made a big mistake, thinking that the leaders of the Red Army would help “the young Khiva people” to gain power and then let them rule their country. The government consisting of “young Khiva people” was terminated on March, 1921¹. Instead, pro-Bolshevik people began to occupy the seats of power one after another. In order to strengthen the Soviet power in the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic, a policy infused with communist ideology began to be carried out in the field of culture as well as in all spheres.

The Inspectorate of Culture and Education in the USSR started its activities on April 3, 1920². Jumaniyaz Sultanmuradov, a young native of Khiva, became its temporary leader. However, the extraordinary representative of the RSFSR in Khiva G.I. Broido, Izmailov, the representative of the military revolutionary committee of the Turkestan Front, Shokirov, the representative of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and Kariev, the representative of Tashkent, were also included in the council.

On September 13, 1920, the RSFSR managed to sign the "Union Treaty between the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the Soviet of the Khorezm People's Republic". According to Article 18 of the agreement, the RSFSR undertook to help the RSFSR with instructors, teachers, training manuals, literature, organization of printing works in order to improve the illiteracy and culture of the people. In this way, the Bolsheviks placed the employees that would be their support in the newly formed republic³. For this, Khorezm even expressed his financial support (in Article 19 of the agreement, for the same reasons, the RSFSR will provide a one-time subsidy of 500,000,000 rubles to the RSFSR). As a result, the number of Russian personnel from Moscow increased in almost all fields.

The new government started the work in the field of culture with a strong emphasis on the fight against illiteracy. According to them, the lack of knowledge about various diseases among the population due to backwardness and illiteracy has led to their wide spread and now requires extensive educational activities to take measures to combat it. For this, it is necessary to increase the literacy of the population⁴. Courses to end illiteracy were opened in several cities of the republic. They were taught by Komsomol (an organization of communist youngsters' union) and party workers, education teachers and cultural units of the Red Army. The great support of the party in the fight against illiteracy was the Red Army. In 1920, 100 soldiers from Khorezm were

¹ Полвонов Н. Хоразмдаги ижтимоий ҳаракатлар ва сиёсий партиялар тарихи (1900-1924). Тошкент. 2011. “Академнашр”. 105-бет.

² O‘zbekiston Milliy arxivi (O‘zbekiston MA). R-71-fond, 1-opis, 1-delo, 4.

³ O‘zbekiston MA. R-72-fond, 1-opis, 5-delo, 3.

⁴ O‘zbekiston MA. R-34-fond, 1-opis, 2734-delo, 69.

trained in military schools of Tashkent for the above-mentioned purposes, and before they were ready, 20 literacy instructors were sent from Tashkent itself⁵.

The number of literacy schools were increased. In 1921, 11 schools for the elimination of illiteracy of red soldiers were opened. In 1922, in the cities of Khiva and New Urganch, “Doloy negramotnost”(“Go away illetracy”)societies began their activities with the support of the RSFSR. Also, based on the Union Treaty of September 13, 1920, teachers who know the Uzbek language were sent from TASSR and RSFSR every year. Only in 1923, the Commissariat of Education of the RSFSR sent 23 teachers who had completed 3-year training courses in Orengburg on a trip and 16 more teachers with employment contracts were sent to Khorezm as well⁶. Another source reports that only in the fall of 1923, 25 teachers, 7 doctors and dozens of other specialists were sent from Moscow to Khorezm⁷. By 1924, the number of literacy schools was 19 (Khiva – 10, Urganch – 7, and Gurlan – 2)⁸.

Gradually, cultural and educational institutions began to be established in the territory of the Khorazm People’s Soviet Republic. The establishment of clubs, study halls, "red teahouses", "red boats", "red carts", "red caravans" showed the goals of the Soviet government. All this was to spread the communist ideology and achieve popular support for the Soviet government. Great political and educational work was done here by the Red Army. As soon as the revolution ended, red soldiers marched along Amudarya with newspapers and posters, films and books. They conducted interviews, presentations, films, lectures and other promotional activities with residents along the coast. In addition to the military, the communists also looked for convenient and acceptable forms of propaganda in Khorezm, since the majority of the population was illiterate. For this purpose, 11 equipped clubs, a cultural-educational propaganda train, and propaganda machines were used. Communists marched and gave lectures on various topics.

The first club in Khorezm was unofficially established in 1920 in the former khan's palace (Nurillaboy). This club was named "People's Club". Later, 2 clubs for women and children were also established in the khan's harem⁹. a study hall and a library will be established. It was officially opened on July 10, 1921. The authorized representative of the RSFSR in the USSR, the military commander also took part in its opening ceremony. After the rally, a concert organized by the Red Army was held¹⁰. Rallies, meetings, conferences and lectures are held in the club and, of course, they are accompanied by theater troupes and film screenings. Almost every club is structured like this. For example, the Urganch club also has a study hall, which will later be turned into the Central Library. There are 3272 books in the library, of which about 2034 books are in the Russian language, and 1228 books are in the Uzbek language. In addition, there were more than 600 ancient and valuable books in the museum room of the library. A large part of this library served particularly for party members, trade unionists and the Red Army. Since most of the books were in Russian and the level of illiteracy was high, it was impossible to meet workers and peasants in the library.

On July 18-20, 1923, the Second Congress of the Communist Party of Khorezm was held, and a resolution was passed to purge the party from “harmfull members”. Almost half of the party members were dismissed from the party work on the grounds that they were merchants and religious representatives¹¹. This event made it possible to fundamentally change the social composition of the party. Now the Communists were in full power, and the policy of "cultural

⁵ Билялов Г.М. Из истории культурки просвеёния в Хорезмской Народной Советской Республике (1920-1924). “Фан”. Ташкент. 1966. -С.89.

⁶ Погорельский И.В. История хивинской революции и Хорезмской Народной Советской Республики(1917-1924 г.). Издательство ленинградского университета. Ленинград. 1984. -С.176.

⁷ Рахмонов Қ. Хива – Хоразм халқ революциясининг бешиги. “Фан”. Тошкент. 1970. 26-бет.

⁸ O‘zbekiston MA. R-34-fond, 1-opis, 2734-delo, 69-70.

⁹ O‘zbekiston MA. R-34-fond, 1-opis, 2734-delo, 66.

¹⁰ Билялов Г.М. Из истории культурки просвеёния в Хорезмской Народной Советской Республике (1920-1924). “Фан”. Ташкент. 1966. -С.96.

¹¹ Рахмонов Қ. Хива – Хоразм халқ революциясининг бешиги. “Фан”. Тошкент. 1970. 29-бет. Again: O‘zbekiston MA. 72-fond, 1-opis, 31-delo, 5-14.

revolution" intensified in the cultural sphere. The number of cultural and educational institutions has increased. The buildings of the military garrison club were converted into a public club and public library. By that year, 8 boarding schools, 3 special communes, 1 people's university, 15 schools for ending illiteracy, 3 theaters and 6 clubs and libraries, as well as a people's museum, were operating in the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic¹². There were also amusement park for the people of Khorezm named after V.I. Lenin, and it was built in the territory belonging to the former khan¹³. In October 1923, "Central House of Education" was established in Khiva in order to unite cultural and educational work into one organization. He led clubs, libraries, theater, cinema, museum, peasant houses and became a center for the promotion of knowledge on various topics.

By February 1924, clubs were opened at the Pedagogical College and Art School. In addition to the students, the clubs also served the population. At the III party conference held in the same year and decided to open 8 more clubs, 4 "red teahouses". Khiva, New Urganch, Khojayli clubs were opening with classrooms¹⁴. The Communist Party of Khiva, under the auspices of the Communist Party of Russia, during 1924 expanded cultural and educational work in the regions where the population was Karakalpak, Kazakh and Turkmen.

On April 11, 1920, the Khorezm People's Museum was established in the Old Taskhovli building of Khan Khiva under the leadership of Mulla Bekjon Rahmanov¹⁵. But in the archive documents, it is said that on April 27, 1920, the National Museum of Khorezm was established in the Old Ark (former khan's palace and harem - Tashkhovli) in Khiva based on the idea of showing the tyranny of the khan and other feudal defects and shortcomings¹⁶. At its opening, the extraordinary commissar of the government of the RSFSR and the military commanders of the Red Army led to maintain museum in Khorezm. However, the organization and condition of the museum has been very poor for a long time. Specialists from the RSFSR and TASSR came to further improve the works of the museum. Their goal was to strengthen the Soviet system and to enlighten the people through communist-revolutionary ideas, and for this purpose, in August 1924, 285 exhibits important for Russian history were brought from Moscow to the Khiva Museum¹⁷.

Initially, Russian and Muslim troupes consisting of musicians, dancers and singers appeared in order to serve for the Red Army, congresses, various gatherings and celebrations. Most of the members of the theater troupes (there were also Uzbek members) such as Donsky, Salamatin, Morskoi, Pokrovskoi, Khovoronkov, Churkin, Serdyukov, Kazansky, Timonin, Smelsky, Bakhmetev, Glukhova, Akhitkovskaya came from Russia according to Article 18 of the Union Treaty. During 1921, they had staged 6 times A.N. Ostrovsky's plays ("Innocent guilty", "Don't live the way you want") and gave 3 concerts¹⁸.

Hamza Hakimzade Niyazi, who was sent to Khorezm in April 1921 at the discretion of the Ministry of Education to promote communist ideas, played a major role in the development of theater in Khorezm¹⁹. He immediately began to engage in school, education, performing arts. He gathered around him advanced people and talented artists to spread the ideas of communism

¹² Рахмонов Қ. Хива – Хоразм халқ революциясининг бешиги. "Фан" Тошкент. 1970. 26-бет.

¹³ Редакционная коллегия Волобуев П.В. и др. История Бухарской и Хорезмской Народных Советских Республик. «Наука». Москва. 1971. -С.151.

¹⁴ Бош мухаррир Мўминов И.М. Ўзбекистон ССР тарихи(IV томлик). III том. "Фан". Тошкент. 1971. 313-бет; Билялов Г.М. Из истории культуры просвещения в Хорезмской Народной Советской Республике (1920-1924). "Фан". Ташкент. 1966. -С.97.

¹⁵ Полвонов Н. Ўзбекистонда ижтимоий ҳаракатлар ва сиёсий партиялар тарихи(Хоразм мисолида 1900-1924)."Университет". Тошкент.2007. 57-бет.

¹⁶ O'zbekiston MA. R-34-fond, 1-opis, 2734-delo, 68.

¹⁷ Билялов Г.М. Из истории культуры просвещения в Хорезмской Народной Советской Республике (1920-1924). "Фан". Ташкент. 1966. -С.91.

¹⁸ Билялов Г.М. Из истории культуры просвещения в Хорезмской Народной Советской Республике (1920-1924). "Фан". Ташкент. 1966. -С.92.

¹⁹ Султонов Ю. Ҳамза Ҳақимзода Ниёзий. Ўзбекистон ССР давлат нашриёти. Тошкент. 1965. 33-бет.

among the people, to develop Soviet art and culture. Among them were Madrahim Yaqubov Sherozi, Safo Mughanni, Kurban Sozchi and others²⁰. Later, Shirozi confirmed this information and said: "- I don't know why Hamza went to Khiva, but he was asking the people who was an artist, and Tajizada was also with him... Before Hamza came, there was no theater in Khorezm. At that time, the people did not know what theater was, what stage curtain was. A herald was hired in Khiva to tell the people that Shirozi would sing songs for the people, and after the people had gathered, we staged Hamza's play "Khan's tyranny". People liked it²¹." So, it can be concluded and claimed the aforementioned data about muslim and russian troupes (1921): The first theater troupes served only for the Red soldiers and bolshevik's organisations.

In 1922, Hamza came to Khojeli and fought against illiteracy - he established boarding schools. In order to educate the young generation in the communist spirit, he organized artistic amateur circles of boarding school children. He also founded a theater troupe in Khojeli. His first stage work that he performed here was the play "Boy ila xizmatchi" ("Rich and his servant"). Later, he prepared "Saifulla khur-khur" and "Revisor" pesas²².

A People's theater was opened in the city of Khiva at this time. In September 1922, Nikolai Gogol's comedy "Revisor" was first staged in Russian and Uzbek languages. About 150,000 rubles were collected from the show and collected by the government for the purposes of fighting against the famine of the Bashkir people²³. However, one periodical press of that time says 150 million rubles was gathered at those performances²⁴. Of course, the lack of information and the diversity of such information create many problems in illuminating the history of that period.

Hamza also held holidays named "Sayil" in Khojeli, and it was also called "educational week" (or "support week for theater institutions"). He opened a school with the money from "Sayil". It was after this event that "educational weeks" were held in Khiva, Khanka, and Tashkhovuz during 1923-1924²⁵, except from Khojeli. Perhaps the government's decision to stop funding theaters in 1924 was a major impetus for this.

In 1924, in one of the decisions of the 13th Congress of the Russian Communist Party, a decision was made to strengthen political and educational work in remote villages, and one of the important clauses in it was to focus on the development of the worker-peasant writers and the art of literature among workers, peasants and the Red Army²⁶. In this regard, Khorezm poets were not left out. In 1924, the poet Chokar, the author of revolutionary poems from Khorezm, was awarded the Order of the Red Banner²⁷.

On September 4, 1923, at the meeting of the Ministry of Education, it was decided to open a music school in Khorezm. A commission consisting of 3 people was formed for its establishment and its charter was developed. In the school, it was decided to have sections for guitar, violin, balalaika and mandolin. It seems that at first, this school did not have a department for teaching Uzbek national instruments. The National music department was opened on January 1, 1924. There was only one teacher who taught the students how to play the national musical instrument tanbur. There were also deficiencies in other departments: 2 violins and 3 mandolins were musical instruments, and there were no study rooms and desks and chairs²⁸. The lack of funds to hire a teacher for the national department is cited as a reason, and it is entrusted to the Waqf department to solve it. However, the issue of needing to open another department for learning to

²⁰ Абдуллаев К., Собиров О. Ҳамза Хоразмда// Шарқ юлдузи. 1959 йил, 11 ноябр. 112-бет.

²¹ O'zbekiston MA. R-2454-fond, 1-opis, 199-delo, 89.

²² Абдуллаев К., Собиров О. Ҳамза Хоразмда// Шарқ юлдузи. 1959 йил, 11 ноябр. 114-бет.

²³ Билялов Г.М. Из истории культуры просвещения в Хорезмской Народной Советской Республике (1920-1924). "Фан". Ташкент. 1966. -С.94.

²⁴ Постановка "Ревизор"// Туркестанская правда. 1922 год. 10 сентября.

²⁵ O'zbekiston MA. R-2454-fond, 1-opis, 199-delo, 89.

²⁶ КПСС о культуре, просвещении и науке. "Политиздат." Москва. 1963. -С.30.

²⁷ Юсупов Ю.Ю. Хоразм шоирлари(қисқача адабий биографик очерклар) "Ғафур Ғулом". Тошкент. 1967. 107-бет.

²⁸ O'zbekiston MA. R-34-fond, 1-opis, 2734-delo, 79.

play the piano, and for this the issue of bringing 3 teachers from Moscow, be higher on the agenda than the national department's problem above mentioned.

The school was supported by the Khorezm Communist Party and Komsomol. The music school accepted applicants from 15 to 25 years of age who had musical talent and could read and write. It is difficult to say that the people of Europe, who were unfamiliar with these conditions and musical instruments, were interested in them and were educated in music there. Those accepted would also usually be party and Komsomol recommendations. The school was supported by the Khorezm Communist Party and the Komsomol, and in 1924, 10 men from the 4th regiment of the Red Army in Khiva were drafted as music teachers. The task assigned to them was to teach wind instruments to students²⁹.

The music school, like other works of art, began to serve the interests of the Communist Party. In November 1924, schoolchildren gave a concert to those who came to the All Khorezm Congress. They performed Russian revolutionary, international and military marching songs³⁰. Great attention was paid to ideological and political issues in the music school. Lectures on political topics were held at the school, and they actively participated in theater circles. Once a week there are general meetings of the school staff, where lectures on music are organized. Young people who graduated from school were sent to theaters, clubs and other cultural and educational institutions.

The sovietized government in Khorezm knew very well that the press was a link between the population and the government. That is why newspapers played an important role in social and political propaganda among the population. In this case, the journalistic poems of Khorezm poets Muhammad Yusuf Muhammad Yaqub (Chokar), Safo Mughanni can be good examples here³¹. The first newspapers, magazines and various other brochures in the territory of the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic were published in Uzbek, Turkmen, Tatar and other languages and brought from Turkestan and the RSFSR. Starting from on March 7, 1920, the newspaper Committee "Inkilob kuyoshi" ("Sun of the Revolution") was published as the Central organ of the Communist Party of Khorezm. This newspaper, which was published twice a week, had no more than 500-600 copies. Initially, in terms of ideology and design, the newspaper did not meet the requirements imposed on it. In 1921-1922, then sent a group of experts from the Russian Federation to 2 typographical devices in order to correct the press work in Khorezm itself³². The visiting representatives from other republics helped the development of the newspaper. As a result, from 1921, the newspaper of the political department of the Khorezm Red Army – "Rosta" (Russian telegraph agencies), the socio-political newspaper "Kizil Khorezm" ("Red Khorezm"), and from 1922, the magazine "Maorif" ("Education") began to be published³³. In addition to these, the autonomous representative office of the RSFSR in Khorezm, which began to be published in July 1921, published the newspaper "Izvestia" ("News") in Uzbek, Turkmen and Russian languages. This newspaper was published in the largest volume, printing 800-1300 copies³⁴. The purpose of this was to introduce the life of Soviet Russia to the population and carry out propaganda work.

In conclusion, the Khiva Khanate was abolished and the foundations of a new democratic state were being built in Khorezm People's Soviet Republic, and the Soviet government gained

²⁹ Билялов Г.М. Из истории культуры просвещения в Хорезмской Народной Советской Республике (1920-1924). "Фан". Ташкент. 1966. -С.84.

³¹ Chokar's poems "Hurriyat" (1920), "Uquv" (1921) published in the newspapers "Inkilob kuyoshi" and "Khorazm xabarlari"; Mughanni's "Communists are creators of freedom and sovereignty" (1920), "Who is the guilty" (1922) and several poems addressed to V. I. Lenin; Mahzum Muhammad Latif (Partav) sang about the politics of the communists in his poems "Yughurumiya" and "Ayo dustlar" (1921). Search for Юсупов Ю.Ю. Хоразм шоирлари(қискача адабий биографик очерклар) "Ғафур Ғулом". Тошкент. 1967. 105 – 126-бетлар.

³² Погорельский И.В. История хивинской революции и Хорезмской Народной Советской Республики(1917-1924 г.). Издательство ленинградского университета. Ленинград. 1984. -С.178.

³³ Бош мухаррир Мўминов И.М. Ўзбекистон ССР тарихи(IV томлик). III том. "Фан". Тошкент. 1971. 313-бет.

³⁴ Раҳмонов Қ. Хива – Хоразм халқ революциясининг бешиги. "Фан". Тошкент. 1970. 20-бет.

political power with the help of the Red Soldiers from the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Republic. Then, to strengthen their power here, they slowly followed the path of subordinating culture to state policy. For this, cultural and educational institutions such as clubs, theaters, red teahouses, red boats, and propaganda vehicles were established in the territory of Khorezm. Communist ideas began to be instilled in people's minds. The work of artists, poets and writers was also used for this. Thanks to the cultural policy of the Bolsheviks, a people's museum and a people's library were established in Khorezm.

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14. О ‘zbekiston МА. R-34-fond, 1-opis, 2734-delo, 56-86.
15. О ‘zbekiston МА. R-71-fond, 1-opis, 1-delo, 4.
16. О ‘zbekiston МА. R-72-fond, 1-opis, 5-delo, 3.
17. О ‘zbekiston МА. R-72-fond, 1-opis, 31-delo, 5-14.
18. О ‘zbekiston МА. R-2454-fond, 1-opis, 199-delo, 69-89.