



**THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MEDIA AND INFORMATION IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF TURKESTAN**

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Annotation: The article highlights the role of information media in the process of cultural and political changes in Turkestan. Media played a crucial role in raising self-awareness, promoting enlightenment, and supporting independence movements among the peoples of Turkestan. Through the press, radio, and later television, the spread of science, literature, and political consciousness accelerated. This process clearly demonstrated the power of information during the colonial period and the Jadidist movement. The development of media contributed to the awakening, modernization, and preservation of the national identity of Turkestan society. This article analyzes historical processes in relation to the development of information and media.

Keywords: Printing press, media freedom, information, Turkestan Jadids, national consciousness, democratic reforms, press activities.

INTRODUCTION

In today's era of globalization and the advancement of digital technologies, information and mass communication tools play a crucial role in the social-political life, economic development, and cultural progress of every society. In particular, during the ongoing democratic reforms in the Republic of Uzbekistan, the importance of the media and the information space has increased significantly, becoming a key means of ensuring citizens' political engagement and participation in society.

A number of legal and institutional reforms have been implemented in Uzbekistan to ensure freedom of speech, develop independent mass media, and strengthen the principles of openness and transparency in public administration. Especially, the widespread use of the internet and social networks has enabled citizens to freely express their opinions and actively participate in discussions on pressing social issues.

As the flow of information increases and various communication platforms expand, there has been a noticeable rise in political awareness and civic engagement in society. The historical significance of media and information holds a vital place in human history. Their importance in the education system, in particular, deserves special recognition, as they have played a decisive role in the formation and development of societies. The history of information dates back to ancient times, and in every era, the development of media tools has led to social, political, and cultural transformations.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In ancient times, the main means of transmitting information were oral communication, manuscripts, collections, and other written sources. For example, in the civilizations of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, information inscribed on pyramids, metal plates, or clay vessels held great significance. These sources contained not only political orders but also religious and cultural values.

However, the emergence of media systems, particularly with the invention of the printing press, marked the beginning of a new era. In the 15th century, Johann Gutenberg's development of printing technology enabled the widespread dissemination of information. This innovation opened new horizons in science, literature, and politics for Europeans. The introduction of the printing press, the distribution of early newspapers and publications, in turn, expanded access to

information among people and led to a societal awakening. During this period, the importance of media freedom and information tools significantly increased, as they became a driving force for supporting socio-political reforms.

By the end of the 19th century, with the industrial revolution and the development of new technologies, the emergence of radio and television further expanded the influence of media and information. In the 20th century, the introduction of television and the internet, followed by the widespread use of social networks, enabled information to be disseminated instantly around the world. The development of internet technologies and the growing power of social networks, in particular, brought citizen participation and civic society to a new level in political processes.

Historically, media and information tools have played a critical role, especially during revolutions and political reforms. Events like the French Revolution (1789) and the Russian Revolution (1917) spread widely through the distribution of information to the masses. During this time, newspapers, pamphlets, and posters served as important tools in shaping socio-political consciousness.

Thus, throughout history, media and information have defined the relationships between societies and states, issues of freedom of information, and civil rights. All of this has further strengthened the role of media and information in the political and economic systems of modern society.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, one of the key factors in the rise of socio-political activity in Turkestan—especially among the Uzbek people and other Turkic nations—was the media and press activity of the Turkestan Jadids. The Jadid movement widely used newspapers, journals, and other information tools to promote knowledge, spread cultural innovations, raise national consciousness, and develop society. This profoundly transformed the political, social, and cultural life of Turkestan.

The Jadid movement emerged in a period of socio-political and cultural transformation in Turkestan at the end of the 19th century. Its main aim was to implement reforms in education, science, culture, language, and religion among the Uzbek and other Muslim peoples. The movement used the press, newspapers, and journals as its primary tools, serving as an effective means to communicate new developments in education and public awareness to the masses. The Jadid movement, in turn, supported the ongoing socio-political changes in Turkestan and sought to mobilize the population for reform. The movement's special focus on the press was aimed at awakening the people, increasing political activism, and shaping national consciousness.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The newspapers and journals published by the Jadids of Turkestan were not only aimed at spreading enlightenment but also focused on encouraging political activism among the people, promoting social equality, and ensuring civil rights. In their publications, the Jadids addressed many issues, including religious and social reforms, women's rights, national identity, the development of education, as well as political and economic challenges.

For instance, "*Taraqiy*" (Progress) was a Jadid newspaper published in Tashkent between June 14–27, 1906. This paper served to promote the progressive ideas of the Jadid movement, highlight national awakening, education, upbringing, and social reform issues. *Taraqiy* is regarded as the first true national publication. Its pages featured articles, news, and information boldly exposing the colonial policies of Tsarist Russia in Turkestan. The opening article of *Taraqiy*, titled "*Tashkent, June 14*" by Ismail Obidi, was a direct appeal to the Muslims of Turkestan, urging unity and an end to internal disputes. The newspaper's slogan, aligned with its mission, was "*Salvation lies in perseverance in principle and adherence to righteousness.*" The author emphasized that the survival and progress of the nation depended solely on unity and intellectual enlightenment. He noted that only enlightened nations could benefit from the democratic reforms introduced following the struggles and revolutions in the Russian Empire. This article was enthusiastically received by the reformers of Turkestan.

During the Jadid movement, their own press developed. In Tashkent between 1905–1906, the Jadids published *Taraqiy* (editor – Ismail Obidi), *Khurshid* (editor – Munawwarqori

Abdurashidkhanov), and in 1907–1908, *Shuhrat* (editor – Abdulla Avloni), *Osiyo* (editor – Ahmadjon Bektemirov), *Tujjor* (editor – Saidkarimboy Saidazimboy's son). In 1913, *Sadoyi Turkiston* (editor – Ubaydulla Khojayev) was launched, followed by *Najot* (1917–1918, editor – Munawwarqori Abdurashidkhanov), *Kengash* (editors – Ahmad Zaki Validi and Munawwarqori Abdurashidkhanov), *Turon* (editors – Muhammad Amin Afandizoda and Abdulla Avloni), *Ulug Turkiston* (editor – Kabir Bakirov), *Shu'roi Islam* (editor – Abdulla Battol), and *Turk So'zi* (editor – Temurbek Khudoyorkhonov). In 1915, the journal *Al-Isloh* (editor – Abdurahmon Sodiq's son) was also published.

Oyna was the first journal in the Uzbek language. Its first issue was published on August 20, 1913. The journal's printing house and main office were based in Samarkand. *Oyna* focused primarily on reforming the national education system. Most of its published materials were related to enlightenment. Promoting patriotism, nationalism, and our unique historical and cultural heritage were central to *Oyna*'s mission. These values are clearly expressed in articles by M. Behbudi such as “*Turkestan*”, “*Sherdor Madrasa in Samarkand*”, “*Ulughbe'k's Observatory*”, and “*Travel Memories*”. In articles on national language, *Oyna* called on society to develop and preserve the purity of the national language, emphasizing, “*Every nation takes pride in its own language.*”

These newspapers and journals were crucial in raising national consciousness, awakening society, and preparing for socio-political change. The Jadid movement, through its publications, addressed political, economic, and social issues in Turkestan, calling on people to embrace renewal.

The influence of the Jadid movement on Turkestan society was profound. Through their newspapers and journals, the public was exposed to new ideas, knowledge, and innovations. This, in turn, contributed to increased political activism and the dissemination of cultural and scientific advancements. The Jadid movement especially highlighted the importance of women's education and rights. Many articles in Jadid newspapers called on women to seek education, which contributed to increased social activism in Turkestan.

In addition, the Jadid movement fought for social equality, freedom, and rights, promoting these ideas in their publications. The newspapers and journals issued by the Jadids of Turkestan opposed the prevailing social injustices of their time and called for improved relations between the government and the people.

The newspapers, journals, and other information tools produced by the Jadids of Turkestan were significant not only in their time but continue to be relevant today. They played an active role in disseminating cultural, social, and political updates, awakening the public, and facilitating societal change. Today, the Jadids' press legacy is still considered vital in the context of democratic reform and increasing social activism.

Thus, the newspapers, journals, and other media produced by the Turkestan Jadids called for renewal in society and laid the foundation for social and political transformation. Their media activity played a significant role in raising national consciousness, ensuring rights, and strengthening civic engagement. This, in turn, became an important stage in the development of modern societies in Turkestan and the entire Central Asian region.

Along with Uzbekistan gaining independence, many reforms have been implemented on the path of democratic development. Media and information tools that widely cover socio-political processes have played an invaluable role in the success of these reforms. The development of media and information tools in Uzbekistan is closely linked to historical processes. In the pre-independence period, information and media were heavily restricted. After the establishment of an independent Uzbekistan in 1991, the foundations for freedom of information, freedom of speech, and independent media were laid. During this time, the media gained the opportunity to influence internal and external political, economic, and social reforms. In the early years of independence, the media system in Uzbekistan developed with the establishment of new television channels, radio stations, and print publications. These changes became an important step in building a democratic society, as they enabled citizens to express their opinions freely.

The issue of information freedom and citizen awareness in Uzbekistan underwent significant changes especially after the 2000s. Media outlets in the country started operating independently, and policies were implemented to allow journalists and media organizations to function free from state influence. This enabled citizens to be informed about political, economic, and social processes. Moreover, freedom of information allowed citizens to express their opinions, monitor the government, and publicly discuss important social issues. Civic engagement is crucial for building a democratic state. Media and information tools provide citizens with the opportunity to participate in political processes, take part in elections, and receive information about governance. In recent years, the expansion of media in Uzbekistan has enabled citizens to actively participate in political life. Journalistic activities and analysis through news have helped increase political literacy among the public.

Media and information also play an important role in state development. Since 2016, the government of Uzbekistan has aimed to integrate the country into the global economy and pursue development through democratic reforms. In this regard, media and information tools have become the most important means of communicating state policies to the public, explaining the importance of reforms, and engaging citizens.

At the same time, the development of information technologies and the widespread availability of the internet and digital media tools have helped involve all layers of society in Uzbekistan. Through digital platforms, citizens gained the opportunity to evaluate state policies, express their views on reforms, and propose their suggestions.

In accordance with the Presidential Decree No. PQ-4366 of June 27, 2019, *“On Additional Measures to Ensure the Independence of Mass Media and to Improve the Activities of Press Services of State Bodies and Organizations,”* significant steps have been taken in the country to ensure freedom of speech, reform the management system of mass communications, and increase the role of media in solving socio-political and socio-economic problems.

CONCLUSION

Nowadays, media and information platforms play a significant role not only in covering political processes but also in awakening society, providing citizens with legal knowledge, and addressing social issues. The reforms implemented in Uzbekistan in 2021 in the field of “Media and Information Freedom” were aimed at increasing social awareness, helping citizens to better understand their rights and responsibilities. At the same time, the media has influenced the rise of social activism by exposing issues such as corruption and political and social problems in society.

The role of media and information platforms in Uzbekistan’s democratic development and in increasing civic participation in socio-political life is invaluable. They not only assist in implementing the country's political and economic reforms but also play a crucial role in informing citizens, engaging them in political processes, and highlighting societal issues. The reforms carried out in the field of media and information freedom in Uzbekistan contribute to the social, political, and economic development of the country, enhance civic engagement, and support the strengthening of a democratic society. Therefore, the development and sustainable formation of the media and information space, the implementation of wide-ranging measures in this area, the introduction of advanced practices, and the promotion of information culture are of critical importance.

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