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THE POLICY OF REPRESSION AND ITS SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONSEQUENCES

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Abstract

This article analyzes the socio-historical roots and dire consequences of the policy of repression carried out in Turkistan during the Soviet totalitarian regime. Based on archival data and statistical indicators, the author highlights the mechanisms of spiritual and physical elimination of the national intelligentsia, particularly the Jadids, during the years of the "Great Terror." The article also reveals the attempts of the oppressive regime to create an atmosphere of fear and distrust in society through the principle of "collective responsibility," its efforts to erase national identity, and the significance of the state policy in modern New Uzbekistan regarding the rehabilitation of repression victims and the study of their legacy.

Keywords

Policy of repression, Jadidism, totalitarian regime, Great Terror, national intelligentsia, socio-historical consequences, political rehabilitation, spiritual repression, historical memory, human rights.

The discrediting of the national intelligentsia, the heaping of reproach and slander upon them, and the wholesale destruction of the sources of authentic national identity have been the principal aim of every colonial policy. Under the guise of slogans such as "creating a unified nation," "forming a national elite stratum," "eliminating the vestiges of the old order," "spreading knowledge and enlightenment," "rooting out and crushing the nationalists," "granting Turkistan democratic freedoms," "elections and free thought," and the "basmachi movement," the Soviet regime set in motion an apparatus of mass destruction against the luminaries of the nation. This policy, which began with the "cleansing of society" of the propertied classes, subsequently took on the character of mass slaughter. Repression encompasses the concepts of punishment, mass execution, decimation of the population, and the mass exercise of oppression applied against a people by a despotic, totalitarian, colonial state. Measures of mass punishment and torture served despotic states not merely as an instrument for keeping a people in bondage and subjugation, for intimidation, pressure and coercion, but as a mechanism for their spiritual

and political annihilation. During the years of the Great Terror (Repression) of 1934–1938 [1;552], Stalin expelled thousands of local cadres who had joined the Communist Party from its ranks for various reasons, branding them as Jadid nationalists and accusing them of deviating from the party line. Although some of the Jadid intellectuals killed under Stalin were later rehabilitated during the Khrushchev era, the stratum of intellectuals who had led the intellectual life of society had already been destroyed. Likewise, during the Soviet period, efforts were made to portray the Jadid movement in Turkistan as a local bourgeois movement, detached from the people and driven by the ideologies of Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism. Harsh measures were applied against the family members of repressed statesmen, scholars, and cultural figures. Such gross violations of human rights continued consistently thereafter. The principle of collective responsibility became the guiding principle of the "criminal law" of the totalitarian-terrorist regime. This principle led to:

a) the unjust punishment, together with the actual offender, of other persons who had no knowledge of the crime;

b) an upsurge of suspicion and informing in social life;

c) the ceaseless expansion of the circle of repressed persons and the continual growth of a labor force that served the totalitarian regime without pay.

On the basis of the principles set out above, an apparatus of deception, fraud, false imprisonment, violation of the presumption of innocence, and informing — rather than public oversight — began to operate in society. According to the calculations of the British historian Robert Conquest, one of the researchers of the history of Stalinism, owing to the article on "collective responsibility" in the Criminal Code, by the beginning of 1938 more than 5 percent of the country's population had been imprisoned, and had the repression continued at the same pace, this figure would have risen to 45 percent [2;552]. As a result of the policy of repression, in 1937–1938 alone more than 43,000 people were arrested in Uzbekistan in total. Of these, 6,920 were shot, and 37,000 were sent to prison or exile for various terms. The years of the cult of personality of Stalin brought grave calamities upon the people of Uzbekistan. In 1937–1939 alone, more than 41,000 people were arrested by the "troikas" of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the Uzbek SSR. Of these, more than 37,000 were tried, and 6,920 were shot. Among those groundlessly arrested and brought to criminal account were a great many party, Soviet and economic officials, military personnel, members of the intelligentsia, and kolkhoz workers" [3]. The Jadids devoted themselves selflessly to enlightenment, patriotism, and the progress of the nation. Yet the content and essence of their movement, and its goals and tasks, were interpreted with malicious intent both in their own time and during the Soviet period. It became customary to speak of the activity of the Turkistan Jadids only while attaching negative labels to it. Their activity was never allowed to be studied deeply and impartially from a scientific and theoretical standpoint; no positive word could be said about it, and anyone who dared to do so was punished. Not content with physically destroying the Jadids, the Soviet government also sought to erase their names from history (a form of spiritual repression) and strove to implant in the consciousness of the Soviet citizen it was raising the image of the Jadids solely as "enemies of the people," "traitors to the homeland," and "counter-revolutionaries." At the beginning of the last century, in complete defiance of the will and wishes of the state, the reforms begun by the most

progressive segment of the nation — the Jadids — and the reformers themselves were erased from the pages of history under a regime dominated by communist ideology. Yet the nation did not forget its true sons and daughters, and preserved its respect and recognition of them in its heart and its pure conscience. Following the decision of the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956, the names of a number of Jadid intellectuals were rehabilitated. Scientific conferences and events devoted to Jadids such as Abdulla Qodiriy, So‘fizoda, Siddiqiy-Ajziy, Ibrat, and Avloniy began to be held. Likewise, during the years of independence, the two-volume works of Fitrat, Cho‘lpon, and Abdulla Avloniy, and the single-volume works of Behbudiy, Abdulla Qodiriy, Sidqiy, Xondayliqiy, Ibrat, Ajziy, and So‘fizoda, as well as the works of Fayzulla Khodjayev, Munavvarqori, and Polvonniyoz hoji Yusupov, were published. The album-book “Unutilmas siymolar” (“Unforgettable Figures”), bringing together 20 representatives of the Jadid movement, was published. The activity of the Jadids was incorporated into textbooks and manuals. Monographic studies and books were produced [4], the “Meros” (“Heritage”) International Foundation carried out substantial work in this regard [5], candidate's and doctoral dissertations were defended, and numerous booklets and scholarly articles were published. In New Uzbekistan, the Jadid movement and the work of its participants continue to be studied systematically. The names of free-thinking intellectuals of the nation, who for many years lived under the labels of “enemy of the people,” “religious fanatic,” “counter-revolutionary,” “speculator,” and “nationalist,” are now being fully rehabilitated. Research continues today into the lives and achievements of our Jadid forebears — the founders of national liberation — who staked their lives on the nation's future, who lived under the persecution and pressure of the regime, and for whom seeing the Homeland free and prosperous became a lifelong aspiration. Linguists, historians, literary scholars, philosophers, jurists, art historians and pedagogical scholars have begun to make public the initial results of their study of the scholarly and literary legacy of the Jadids. Certain work is being carried out toward the truthful study of our national history on the basis of primary sources, the objective assessment of past historical events, the clearing away of the “dark stains” of our recent history, and their analysis from a historical-philosophical point of view. In particular, a number of pressing questions related to the policy of repression carried out in Uzbekistan by the ruling regime during the years of Soviet power, and to its social and spiritual consequences, are now finding their scholarly resolution.

Decree No. PF-5598 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, dated 8 October 2020, “On Additional Measures for the Further Deepening of the Study of the Legacy of the Victims of Repression and the Perpetuation of Their Memory”; Resolution No. 936 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, dated 22 November 2017, “On Measures for Organizing Museums of the Memory of Victims of Repression within the Structure of the State Museum of the Memory of Victims of Repression under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan and of Higher Education Institutions in the Regions”; and the tasks set out in other regulatory-legal documents on this subject all attest to the relevance of analyzing the repression policy of the former Union period from a scientific-philosophical point of view. The policy of repression carried out in the Uzbek SSR had a profound effect on the social, political and cultural-spiritual structure of society. Political purges, mass arrests and mechanisms of repression directed against the

intelligentsia created an atmosphere of fear in society and had a negative impact on the development of national culture and scholarship. The study demonstrates that the policy of repression served not only to strengthen the government's totalitarian control, but also fundamentally transformed the social and cultural system. Archival documents, official materials and personal testimonies illuminate the broad and systematic character of the repression and clearly reveal its consequences. At the same time, a scholarly analysis of the years of repression and an understanding of these historical events lay a solid foundation for further research. The conclusions reached provide readers and researchers with the means to comprehensively assess the social, political and cultural consequences of the policy of repression.

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