

THE FORMATION OF POETRY IN THE BUKHARA OASIS DURING THE SOVIET ERA

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Abstract. This article presents a historical analysis of the regional poetic milieu that emerged in the Bukhara oasis during the 1950s–1970s, examined in relation to the political and ideological processes of the Soviet era. The study focuses primarily on the interrelationships among Soviet ideology, the social order imposed upon literature, the regional press, literary organizations, and the creative environment. Drawing on the Bukhara oasis as a case study, the article identifies the mechanisms through which centralized cultural policy influenced regional literary processes, the ideological boundaries governing the selection of themes and ideas, the dynamics of literary legitimation, and the adaptive strategies employed by writers under existing conditions. The research demonstrates that, while Soviet ideological control shaped the organizational and thematic orientations of regional poetry, it was unable to fully homogenize the local literary milieu. The poetic process in the Bukhara oasis was shaped through the interaction of official ideological demands, local cultural memory, individual creative needs, and institutional opportunities. The article provides a scholarly grounding for the dual function of the regional press: simultaneously as an instrument of ideological control and as a field of literary legitimation for young writers.

Keywords: *Soviet era, Bukhara oasis, ideological policy, social order, regional poetry, literary milieu, press, socialist realism, cultural policy, literary legitimation.*

Introduction. The second half of the twentieth century in the history of Uzbekistan is characterized by the centralization of political governance, the ideological regulation of social life, and the close alignment of cultural processes with state policy. In these historical circumstances, literature and the arts were regarded not merely as aesthetic phenomena, but as ideological instruments serving the formation of social worldview and behavioral norms. Accordingly, the historical study of the Soviet-era literary process requires analysis at the intersection of political history, cultural history, and literary history.

The study of the developmental characteristics of regional literary milieus is particularly significant for identifying the practical mechanisms of Soviet cultural policy. The demands elaborated by central political and cultural institutions were implemented in the provinces under specific sociocultural conditions. For this reason, it is insufficient to interpret the history of regional literature merely as a local replication of ideological directives issued from the center.

The Bukhara oasis is of particular scholarly interest in this regard. Endowed with ancient literary and cultural traditions, this region developed a distinctive literary milieu under

conditions of Soviet modernization and ideological policy. The materials under investigation demonstrate that the institutional environment, the role of individual figures, the press, and creative compromise functioned as significant factors in the formation and consolidation of regional poetry in the Bukhara oasis during the 1950s–1970s.

The scholarly problem of this article lies in the fact that interpreting the development of regional poetry during the Soviet era exclusively from the perspective of ideological pressure—or, conversely, exclusively from the perspective of creative freedom—yields a one-sided result. To elucidate the essence of the historical process, it is necessary to identify the relationship between ideological demands and the internal needs of the regional literary milieu.

The aim of this research is to identify the mechanisms through which Soviet ideological policy and social order influenced the formation of poetry in the Bukhara oasis during the 1950s–1970s, and to provide a historical grounding for the developmental characteristics of the regional literary milieu under those conditions.

The scholarly novelty of this research lies in interpreting the development of Bukhara oasis poetry during the Soviet era not as a straightforward product of ideological control, but as a system of mutual influences among political demands, social order, the press, literary institutions, and the local creative milieu.

Methodology. The research is grounded in the principles of historicism, objectivity, systematicity, and comparative analysis. The historical-genetic method was employed to examine the formation of the Soviet-era regional literary milieu in chronological sequence. The institutional approach facilitated analysis of the role of the press, literary organizations, and circles within the literary process. The historical-sociological approach made it possible to identify the relationships between literature and social order.

Regional poetry is treated in this study as an independent historical and cultural space. This approach enables one to move beyond evaluating provincial literature as a secondary or peripheral form of central literature.

Analysis and Discussion. Soviet Ideology, Social Order, and Literature

In the Soviet political system, the functions assigned to literature extended well beyond the bounds of artistic and aesthetic activity. Literature was conceived as a means of forming such values as attitudes toward labor, social engagement, collectivism, moral education, and loyalty to the state. In this way, artistic creation became one of the cultural mechanisms for managing social consciousness.

Under such conditions, the poet's choice of subject matter itself became a historically significant question. Themes such as labor, upbringing, morality, patriotism, and human relations emerged as ideologically acceptable directions. The materials under review similarly note that regional poets sought to preserve artistic thinking through the adoption of 'safe' thematic registers.

From this perspective, interpreting the concept of social order narrowly—merely as a political assignment issued by the state—is reductive. In a broader sense, the social order manifested as an expectation, held by both society and the state, that literature would perform certain moral, pedagogical, and ideological functions.

Yet the role of literature in the historical process was not confined to fulfilling this order. Writers employed a variety of artistic devices to express their individual aesthetic views within the bounds of prevailing demands. The history of Soviet-era poetry must therefore account not only for the ideological content of texts but also for their poetic form, system of imagery, and local cultural context.

The social order's influence on regional literature operated through several mechanisms. First, the selection of themes and imagery was constrained by specific ideological boundaries. Second, a work's access to the public depended on the press and publishing system. Third, a young writer's standing within the literary process was contingent upon relationships with established writers, editorial boards, and literary organizations. It was therefore insufficient to understand the literary process solely through the triad of 'author – text – reader.' In the Soviet era, this system incorporated a range of mediators: state ideology, editorial boards, literary organizations, publishing houses, and public oversight.

The Regional Press and Literary Legitimation. In the Bukhara oasis, the workings of these mechanisms were conditioned by the distinctive characteristics of the regional literary milieu. The reviewed materials indicate that provincial publications served as testing grounds for young writers, and that publication in the press functioned as a mark of recognition by the literary community.

The historical function of the press was thus twofold. On one hand, it constituted a mechanism for ideological selection and control; on the other, it provided young writers with access to the literary field. It is precisely this dual function that accounts for the complexity of the Soviet-era regional literary milieu.

The press was one of the most important institutions for implementing cultural policy during the Soviet period. Newspapers and journals served simultaneously to disseminate state policy and to convey literary works to the public. Regional publications mediated between central cultural policy and the local creative milieu.

For a young writer, appearing in print was not a simple act of publication but a stage of literary legitimation. The printing of a poem indicated recognition by the local literary community. For this reason, the study of press history represents an important source-historical direction for reconstructing the history of the regional literary milieu. The materials surveyed note that publication in the press introduced young writers to the literary public, strengthened their creative confidence, and transformed them into participants in the official literary process. Accordingly, evaluating the press solely as an instrument of control would itself be one-sided; it was simultaneously a component of the cultural infrastructure necessary for the formation of a new generation and the transmission of literary experience.

Local Cultural Memory and Creative Adaptation. One of the factors defining the historical distinctiveness of poetry in the Bukhara oasis is the coexistence, within a single space, of Soviet ideological demands and local literary-cultural memory. Although the centralized political system sought to apply uniform ideological criteria to literary creation, local historical experience and cultural memory were preserved in literary texts in a variety of forms.

In this process, themes such as folklore, traditional imagery, human relations, moral values, and depictions of nature assumed considerable significance. The materials under review similarly indicate that the cautious use of folklore and traditional imagery, alongside the continuation of aesthetic exploration through poetic form, constituted important characteristics of regional poetry.

This circumstance demonstrates that Soviet ideological policy did not yield uniformly absolute results. Central policy defined the general boundaries, but within those boundaries the regional creative milieu generated its own forms of internal development.

Conclusions. An analysis of the development of the poetic milieu of the Bukhara oasis during the 1950s–1970s yields several historical conclusions. First, Soviet ideology defined the external conditions of the regional literary process. Second, the social order influenced writers' selection of themes and imagery. Third, the press and literary institutions simultaneously implemented this policy and created conditions for the entry of new writers into the literary field. Fourth, the local literary milieu did not mechanically replicate official ideological demands but adapted them to its own historical and cultural context.

In this sense, regional poetry should be assessed not as a passive object of the Soviet era, but as an active cultural phenomenon that generated its own internal mechanisms of development within the given historical conditions.

The formation of poetry in the Bukhara oasis during the 1950s–1970s was closely bound to the ideological policy and social order of the Soviet era. State cultural policy defined the general ideological boundaries of literature, exerting influence over the selection of themes, the publication process, and the mechanisms of literary legitimation. However, this process did not entirely negate the internal potential of the regional literary milieu.

The experience of the Bukhara oasis demonstrates that it is insufficient to interpret Soviet-era literary history through the model of 'ideological pressure – passive writer.' Mechanisms such as adaptation, creative compromise, the exploitation of institutional opportunities, the preservation of local cultural memory, and the assurance of generational continuity were equally operative within the literary process.

As a scholarly result, the development of poetry in the Bukhara oasis during the Soviet era can be explained through three interrelated levels of mechanisms: first, state ideological policy; second, the institutional systems that implemented the social order; and third, the strategies of adaptation and self-preservation employed by the regional creative milieu. It is precisely this triad that accounts for the historical durability of regional poetry.

Future comprehensive study of the periodical press of Bukhara province during the 1950s–1970s, the activities of literary circles, documents pertaining to the regional branch of the Writers' Union, and the personal archives of poets will make it possible to elucidate the regional mechanisms of Soviet cultural policy with greater precision.



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