

## CEMENTING STATE AUTHORITY: THE SOVIET EDUCATION CASE

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### ÖZ

Bu makalenin amacı, eğitimin Sovyet Sisteminde devlet otoritesi oluşturmak için nasıl kullanıldığını ortaya koymaktır. Eğitim her zaman devlet otoritesini kurmanın bir yöntemi olmuştur. Farklı ulusların da takip ettikleri şekilde, Sovyet örneği de hem devlet hem de sendika düzeyinde benzer bir seyir izlemektedir. Devlet, devletin kendi toplumunu şekillendirme niyetiyle tutarlı bir çevre inşa etmeyi hedeflemektedir. Merkezi planlı doğasıyla Sovyet eğitimi, liderlik değişiklikleri eğitim politikalarına meydan okuduysa da, komünist doğaya sahip verimli alanlarda standart bir birey yaratacak şekilde tasarlanmıştır. SSCB'de eğitim yalnızca rejimi değil, aynı zamanda siyasi liderlik değerlerini desteklemek için de bir araç olmuştur. Bununla birlikte, devlet merkezli, merkezi olarak planlanan eğitici çevreler, bireyin özgür zihnini eğitmek yerine, genel sistemi sürdürmek için beslemiyorlardı. Bu kapsamda, Sovyet eğitim sisteminin tarihçesi, ideolojisi, amacı ve felsefesi, Sovyetlerin çok kapsamlı bir eğitim politikası belirlediğini ve 'mükemmel' toplumun temelini güçlendirmek için yöntemler uyguladığını gösterecek şekilde analiz edilecektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sovyet, Otorite, İdeoloji, Devlet, Eğitim.

### ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to explore how education was used to build state authority in the Soviet System. Education has always been a method of building state authority. As it was followed by multiple nation-states, the Soviet case presents a similar course both at the state and union level, whereby the state pursues to construct an environment that is consistent with the state's intent to shape its own society. Soviet education, with its centrally planned nature, was designed to create a standard individual that was in line with communist principles, even though leadership changes had ultimate challenged education policies. Education in the USSR appeared to be a tool of justifying not only the regime but also the promotion of the values of political leadership. Nevertheless, state-centric, centrally

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planned educative circles, failed to feed the overall system in order to sustain itself instead of educating the individual's free mind. The history, ideology, purpose, and philosophy of the Soviet education system will be analyzed in order to show how the Soviets had established a very comprehensive education policy, as well as how they had employed various methods in order to strengthen the basis for the 'perfect' society.

**Keywords:** Soviet, Authority, Ideology, Education.

The Soviet education system was simply not focused on the maximization of choice; the education outputs were instead carefully arranged to fulfill state economic and political needs (Cox 2011:3). The aim of the Soviet authorities had always been the building of a new kind of society. Lenin was faced the problem of realizing a revolution in Tsarist Russia using the peasants and urban worker. Especially conditions of the urban workers became the organizational theme for revolution. The Bolsheviks organized the workers benefiting from the educational standards of the day and instilled in the workers [by] a desire for change in their social milieu. Once in power, Change in educational, authority figures, the effect of Church occurred while a movement to create a "New Soviet Man" was undertaken (Hughes 1992: 3).

The educational system was the main mean to attain this goal. It is, therefore, designed not only merely as a machine for the production of scientists, engineers and technician, but as an instrument of mass education from which the younger generation gain [both] their formal learning, [and] their social, moral and political ideas as well (Grant 1972: 15). Education in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was primarily a political tool for the construction of a communist society. Lenin's remark concerning the linkage of education to communism provides a clear educational context of USSR: "Without teaching there is no knowledge, and without knowledge there is no communism" (Grant 1972: 23). V.I. Lenin also stated that, "it is hypocritical to say that the school is outside of life, outside of politics." (Cox 2011: 4, Holmes 1991: 6). "Politics and education are symbiotic variables in all societies. Each is interwoven with the other and each is influenced by the other. This complex, symbiotic relationship is viewed as being interdependent. Usually the interaction between these two variables results in cooperative efforts to achieve the goals and needs of the society." (Cox 2011:9, Sorrentino and Curcio 1986: 1)

If the ideological background of education is taken into consideration, the consequence of such an educational context can be evaluated in terms of preferred methods in different layers of education circles, hidden messages instilled to the curricula and finally the human-source output of the education system. But the context and method of the education with its linkages to various aspects of social life will provide basis on what courses a system feeds itself by benefitting education.

If the conditions of 1920s are compared to the following decades of the Soviet regime, achievements can easily be observed. The illiteracy of 1920s, especially among the urban workers and rural peasants can be compared to numerically superior USSR in terms of qualified workers in 1960s presents what the educational system generated. Hence an analytic examination of education system in the USSR may contribute to understand the education's role in building and sustaining a system.

Education in the USSR appeared to be a tool of justifying not only the regime but also the promotion of the values of the political leadership. The handover of the authority to a new leader challenged educational system by redefined priorities and a shift in the exercises in schools. Every political currency suffers to create and feed its own elite by means of both official and unofficial education systems. The Communist regime is not exceptional from this tendency. As a self-defense mechanism, existence of any regime ought to be sustained by centrally planned and executed educational policies. Then education processes provides indicators what type of regime is desired by the prevailing regime.

From the aforementioned point of view the theme of this study is to search the education system of the USSR. The main frameworks will be focused to identify the context of Soviet education. In what ways the ruling regime benefits from the education to sustain its longevity and efficiency? What subjects did the Soviet regime avoid to include in the curricula? The answer of these questions will contribute to understand how, not only the Soviet but also any other regime can exploit education system to build and sustain preferred world view.

The first part of the study will cover a historical overview of the Soviet education. But only general events and remarks will be mentioned. The second part will focus on the purpose and philosophy of the Soviet education that gives the spirit and general principles of the system. Following section will underline the education policies pending to the leadership shifts. The basic tenets of the policies are assessed to remain unchanged, but priorities were challenged. This search will go through if education system is more prone to unchanging ideology or shifting leaderships. The general characteristics that differentiate Soviet system from the other systems will be examined at the fifth section. The USSR was composed of many republics autonomous regions and other administrative formations with their own languages and distinguishing culture. Soviet system was able to employ these characteristics in almost all of these formations. Hence these characteristics may define the capability of Soviet educational institutions. Following section will search the linkage of education to ideology in Soviet perception. The focus is to see how the education was benefitted to spread ideology and preserve its efficiency. Finally, last section will cover the Soviet's approach to religion and education. Education was a mean to promote the 'scientific atheism'. Conclusion will cover the analysis of the findings on the education system of

Soviets. This study covers the 1950-1960s of Soviet era. But period from 1920s to 1940s will sometimes be mentioned to provide comparisons of different terms.

### **A History of Soviet Education**

Early Soviet educators were themselves kids of a tsarist regime; many educators brought into the Soviet era traditional teaching methods and values, this group proved an important and unanticipated resistance force to the early reforms of education. (Cox 2011: 6) Rosen clarifies and classifies periods of the Soviet education pending to the main perceptions and exercises (Rosen 1971: 36-63). Russian education before the Communist revolution in 1917 was undergoing an evolution from an elite privilege to a popular institution. The political and social disturbance of the February and October Revolutions in 1917 overturned the growing tsarist education system and instituted a new education authority (Cox 2011: 10). The educational policies of the 1920s were a rather experimental and present a transition period from Tsarist era to Communist term. Literacy campaigns were common for pupils and adults country wide in an idealistic but chaotic way. Obligatory primary schools and higher echelons were set up under the title of 'unified labor schools' though; there were difficulties to generalize the education. On the other hand, remnants of the Tsarist era were concern for the new regime. The authority of the 'non-communist' teachers had to be broken and replaced by the trusted and ideologically motivated ones to employ a consistent education program to Marxist ideals.

The term 1930-1950 is delineated as 'conservative' period by Rosen (1971: 36-63). Five year plan of 1928 required a competent and disciplined labor force since there were quantifiable deficiencies in the quantity of human resources. This need led to the decree of 1931 stating that theory with practice should be combined. Hence the term 'polytechnic' emerged in the curricula. The fee system was established in 1940 excluding the students in hardship, pupils of military and the ones who had outstanding success. Fee was a contradiction with the socialist character of the regime though; the war economy was the main cause for this attempt. This term brought a state examination system and discipline oriented education to acquire a devoted and unquestioning individual to society and regime. Successful students who qualified in the state examination were eligible to the higher education, but the rest had to work in agriculture or industry. The Stalin's influence on the ideological aspect of education was apparent.

Post 1950, until 1970's, was the Polytechnical period. This period affected all layers of education by its priority of combining 'general education' with 'polytechnic education'. The basic elements were, first, to teach the relationship of theoretical subjects to their practical application, second, to teach the fundamentals of production and, finally, to teach vocational skills (Rosen 1971: 42-43). The curricula were renewed in the direction of new priorities. The Soviet system seemed to swing toward a

concept of an extended and practical primary school followed by various forms of vocational training (Bereday 1972: 3). On the other hand this term can be characterized as destroying the felt effects of Stalinization. Lack of infrastructure in accordance with the 1958 Law of Education was the main impediment. It was the motivation of 'modernization' that challenged the whole education system (Ross 1958: 540).

### **Purpose and Philosophy of Education**

Among the established goals by the Soviet government, two of them are very important. They are to "instill in the student the values encompassed in the term 'New Soviet Man' that is a good communist, and ... to produce an adequate number of trained people in the fields that best advance the economic and military interests of the Soviet Union" (Hughes 1992: 13). These two goals could be observed in the overall Soviet education system from the revolt till its demise. These goals present political and ideological aspect on the one side, economic aspect on the other side.

The purpose of the educational system can be raised on three factors, according to Ross (1958: 540). First, in the Soviet Union, there is a quite different concept of the knowledge essential to every human being and the kind of individual [that] the educational system is trying to produce; secondly, there is a marked difference in the degree of individual freedom permitted in the choice of subject matter; and thirdly, there is [an emphasis] in the ideology. These purposes take the state essential in defining the context of the knowledge and status of the individual. Education can be considered as the prime mean for realizing the state's goals in the planned Soviet economy. Individual serves to the Communist system and must be donated by the ideological knowledge that forms the basis of standardized mechanic member of the society. The state's needs seem foremost for designing the curriculum rather than needs of the individuals and society. The self-realization of the individual is not a method, nonetheless behaving in desired mode and serving to the state are crucial. Type of the knowledge to be taught favors the state to create a unique citizen loyal to the regime. Freedom of individual to select the context and type of education is severely limited. Hence individual is part of the society and the overall objective can be delineated as to create a perfect society within the requirements of the regime.

Soviet educational philosophy could be rest on three major premises. The first of these is that the advancement of science and technology is best promoted through the central planning of education and research. The second is that scientific and educational efforts are primarily a means for the advancement of the social, economic, political, and military interests of the nation. The third is that the basic truths of human life, of nature and of the universe, and of social, political and economic reality, have been discovered and proclaimed and are beyond debate, so that the task of the teacher and of the scholar is to demonstrate and to apply these truths

rather than to question them or to seek alternative truths. Hence an obedience culture is expected from both teacher and student. Innovation is the regime's collective effort, not of the individuals.

Soviet education rests on 'pure reasoning' that stems from the confidence of the regime leading a social change. But change has to be regulated by the Communist Party. Because it is the leadership who knows what the good is for everyone in conducting education. Education is perceived as a preparation for life under the auspices of the regime.

### **Education Policy**

The educational system of any country is conditioned by the economic system prevailing at the time (King 1936: 25). If the reality that Soviet economic system was hardly separable from its political system, a close connection between economic, political and educational system can easily be observed. Education should be expected to satisfy the needs of political strata and economic infrastructure. If the aforementioned features of Soviet education are taken into consideration, central planning capability of Moscow directed the educational priorities in accordance with the state needs, specifically within the limits of ideological and economic ones.

The Soviet system allows for general policy to be formulated at the top of the Party structure and governmental ministries (Hughes 1992: 65). Then all else – implementation – is left to apparatus. The political socialization was to be realized by a centrally planned, but de-centrally implemented sequence of 'consciously-built' political education. In this sense, the five-year planning circles of the Soviet government are benchmarks to delineate the educational policy of the USSR, especially after 1950s. The industry, which was planned to expand, was also determining the educational policy. For instance the decision of increasing oil production in 1955 gave birth to amendments to educational priorities. New schools were built and pupils were selected to satisfy the needs of oil industry.

Ideological-political motivation cannot be assessed as a frequently changing determinant of educational priority though; the change of the leadership was a significant factor that affects the educational policy. The education policy had been challenged after the changes of the leadership as could be seen in 'De-Stalinization' process or after the major events such as World War II. The termination of World War II required changes in educational content and practices. Anti-western sentiments diffused to the education system to heighten Soviet consciousness to inculcate a bias against the West (Bereday and Brickman 1972: 84). The new system was delineating the promotion of Communist levels more than pre-war period. The focus was the Communist education that will make the youth solid against the western capitalists. Moreover the apotheosis of the leadership was making the system contextualized by the leader, mainly by Stalin until his death. For instance an English class text was indicating Stalin as "the

leader and teacher of the workers of the world, who leads country to Communism” (Bereday and Brickman 1972: 85).

The death of Stalin introduced the ‘De-Stalinization’ process in the political life and education system as well. Khrushchev’s report to the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party frankly underlined the lack of coordination between teaching and life, and the inadequate training of school graduates for practical work. Polytechnical training was designed to meet the needs of the economy. The new youth had to be productive and be prepared for the production that the Soviets needed to sustain the super power status. As a part of this process, school textbooks were revised and the subjects blended with Stalin’s prominence were cleared. The history was re-written.

If the developments in educational-policy-making-processes are concerned, there can be observed some fundamental requirements to design the context of the education. These requirements are the vital interests of the society that maintains a reliable human resource. The initial requirement of the education system was that all citizens, without any discrimination, must be educated to share the Communist ideal. Hence a monopoly of moral and political views was acknowledged that can be named as ‘indoctrination’. Communist teaching addresses all layers of education that makes the regime inevitable to qualify in the society. Another requirement is to create a common culture that ought to be formed along with insistence of common subjects and uniformity of issues. Multi-ethnic structure of the USSR puts the ideological identity forefront. Educational standardization such as common qualifying criteria, country-wide youth organizations and rewarding system can generate a common culture both in educational institutions and society. Finally, third requirement of the USSR was to have citizens to possess vocational skill to fulfill the economic ambition (Bereday and Brickman 1972: 12). Especially 1950s was a turning point for building vocational skills of the students. But this requirement also brought problematic issues. First of all, while the number of students increased accessing the schools, the variety of taste and demand of the societies also increased. This fact had contradicted to the feature of planning centrally. The more divergent the society is the more efforts were directed to the centrality of education system for the purpose of keeping the education system under tight control. On the other hand some issues could not be centralized due to the prerequisites of the various Soviet Republics. The issues such as wages, curricula or political content of the classes would be centralized, nevertheless minor curricula divergences and language issue had to be de-centralized to some extent.

Apart from the requirements, some problematic issues were hindering the fundamental requirements. For instance the mobility of the work force between Soviet Republics required certain type of vocational training. A field of vocational training in a certain Soviet Republic would not suit the need of another Republic. Hence flexibility had to be needed. Economic

division of the Republics and autonomous regions was not that much similar. Hence decentralization would articulate better solution rather than centrally controlled education system, enabling the local officials decide on the native problematic issues.

The check mechanism of the education system was based on the absolute control of the whole system. The motivation behind such a policy would be to have 'classless' society. A society was desired that no middle class exists. Then two poles of the society is the ruler and ruled. The probable formation of bourgeoisie would be prevented by rejecting the middle class (Bereday and Brickman 1972: 11).

### **General Characteristics of Soviet Education**

General characteristics of the Soviet education can be utilized to define the framework of the management of education that links it to ideology. Generally, scholars of comparative studies in education provide two preeminent features of communist education. These are, first, employing a 'centrally' planned system and, second, a 'mass' system (Bereday and Brickman 1972: 4). These characteristics may be outnumbered pending to the perspectives.

Regarding central planning of the education, the needs of the 'society' were essential but it was a fact that "state" mechanism of the communist regime pre-dominated the society (Grant 1972: 32). Central planning ought to be assessed in state's absolute control on the education system. It was the Central Committee of Communist Party that identifies the 'desired' communist values and priorities in the context of education. Then an up-to-bottom hierarchy of education programming was essential rather than bottom-to-up chain of transforming education. Central planning mostly dealt with the quantification of manpower in comparison to the perceived rival, the USA.

Mass character' of the education can be felt in almost every taken step by the leadership. Education had to raise the entire population of the Soviet Republics to clear them off from the illiteracy inherited from the tsarist era. The Bolsheviks came to power promoting the idea of mass literacy to lead the Soviet Union into a period of prosperity and world leadership. Vladimir Lenin's famous formula "electrification and literacy equals communism" was expressed in a vast national effort to educate peasants, workers, and other illiterates altogether to the point where they could read. By 1930, the Soviets claimed, this goal had been achieved. Regarding the 'compartmentalization' of the schools, homogenous schools were built such as schools for ballets, music, and sculpture. Mass oriented education model was a consequence of central planning. But education planners criticized some mass-behaviors since they contradicted with the 'scientific' aspect of the educational central planning. For instance, regarding the skill-building capacity of the schools, the use of right hand was encouraged for pupils (Chabe 1970: 679). The belief was that the left part of the body had more

blood and organs while commanding the rights side. The pragmatic reason was that factories and production circles needed workers skillfully using their right hand. It was the expected behavior of all workers to standardize the control of the body.

On the other hand values and attitudes that pervade Soviet education are not to be explained by Marxism-Leninism alone, Grant claims. Despite there was a strong emphasis on proletariat, the system had strong roots in the tradition of Russian Empire (Grant 1972: 28). Additional to socialist context of education, Russian nationalism was the main source of pride in delivered messages in the textbooks. Soviet era may be perceived as triumph of the Communist regime though; there was a great delineation to the 'positive achievements of the past. For instance national heroes were Russian in the fore roll like Pushkin, Chekov, Tchaikovsky in arts or Peter the Great and Ivan the Terrible in the domination of Russian Empire in political domination. Russian dominance was apparent, especially, if the Central Asian states were concerned. For instance Russian schools were built apart from the schools for Asians. Public school system was favoring the Russians and to disadvantage the native (Bereday and Brickman 1972: 85). This reality questions the reliability of the Communist regime, since classless society was breached by discrimination of non-Russian ethnicities.

The linkage of propaganda and military preparedness to a common threat is another feature. Such a course of education will create a general threat perception that would keep the community firm against this 'created' enemy. Hence ideological motivation of Soviet education system leads to compete and check the rivaling ideology, the USA (Ross 1958: 1). The society was prepared to war by means of the education circles in schools. Periodic military exercises and civil defense training were a continual part of Soviet life in peace-time. Military classes for both boys and girls in all schools were an important ideological tool of Soviet education. Pupils received drills, the war games Eagle and Wildfire in which millions of children took part. The units and activities such as military departments at universities, courses for military nursing, as Andrei Sakharov Museum exhibits, prepared youth to war ([www.sakharov-center.ru](http://www.sakharov-center.ru)).

Science and technology has a distinguished prominence in the Soviet education circles. Applied sciences were the priority such as engineering, industrial chemistry or agronomy. Especially 1958 act was a sharp turn to vocational training rather than academic pre-university line. It was a need to betterment the economy by means of highly trained scientists and skillful workers (Grant 1972: 40). Polytechnic schools were built to teach the practical experience of production. Acute man power shortage would be overcome by these schools if the economy was to be promoted. But the curriculum covers not only the vocational training, but also basic citizen-level-education of Russian language and literature, mathematics, history, foreign language and physical training, because Soviet perception of a

general education consists of knowledge which “all men should have” (Ross 1958: 539).

Discipline and morale form the crucial aspect of Soviet education. Throughout the USSR, every child was expected to be familiar with, and observe, twenty standard ‘Rules for Pupils’ on which his disciplinary training is based. If chilled was to be accused of misbehaving, the violated rule would be searched to punish. The rules cover not only the ‘what to be observed’, but also ‘why’ it had to be observed. Morale and discipline was a function of political training because the purpose of the education was to grow up the ‘future citizen’ of dreamed society. Moral education was a joint enterprise, in which the school, the youth organizations, parents and others were expected to play their parts within the ‘communist moral’. Hence a ‘communist character’ had to be infused.<sup>1</sup> Pupil was under the direct control of the family, who were organized by strict rules in the circles of the school and youth organizations (Grant 1972: 47). It can be assessed that morale and discipline were means not only for creating an ideal Soviet citizen, but also for providing a control mechanism.

Youth organizations were integrated part of the education system by its party sponsored and patriotic structure. Student was under pressure to join these organizations that fits their age and grade. The Octoberists, Pioneers and Young Communist League (Komsomol) were the organizations that the League was the most Communist Party oriented (Hughes 1992: 16). The League engaged to a social network with its purpose to educate the members as communist and a member of a communist society. These organizations complimented the schools in providing ideological education and full control of social life. The perception of the community was built on to improve the skills of the youth. But ideological training and loyalty to Communist values were the main motives of the organization. Whatever bricks the student piles, the basement had to be communist values and Marxist-Leninist ideology.

### **Ideology and Education**

The ideological motivations and directions of the society as a whole are always foremost in the minds of the leadership clique which pays the piper and calls the tune (Salisbury 1958: 463). Lenin argues that “Everything that contributes to the building of a Communist society is moral; everything that hinders this is immoral and amoral”. This perception takes the propaganda and indoctrination in the schools legitimized to create an ideologically motivated individual. Additional to the needs of the Soviet society in terms of skilled labor force, political awareness and a solid loyal public was

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<sup>1</sup> Communist character was described as “elementary ideas of good and bad, love of the Motherland, industriousness and frugality, truthfulness-honesty-modesty-kindness, friendship and comradeship, discipline, love of studies and conscientiousness, good social contact”.

ultimate goal of the curricula in accordance with the theories of Marxism and Leninism (Chabe 1970: 679).

1917 Revolution ushered in Marxist-Leninist education philosophy and restructured educational organization, methodology and curriculum. The Stalinist educational era brought a return to the European academic model while Khrushchevian period reconsidered polytechnical training with its aim of developing needed blue collar workers. Education was related to life. Post Khrushchevian period acceded to science and technology (Chabe 1970: 678). It may be claimed that the priorities of education changed pending to the leadership's choices.

Educational reform mostly reflects a change in the context of the ongoing system while promising a much more brilliant replacement. It was the Marxian ideas of "false consciousness" that led development under Lenin and his successor's system of education. The awareness of the youth had to be raised to emulate the tenets of the revolution and aversive capitalist system of exploitation. Hence the education had to be rescued from 'the influence of ruling class' by the words of Marx and Engels (www.anu.edu.au, 1848). The reason was that the bourgeoisie supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education to fight against the "other" bourgeoisie. If this perspective is adapted to Lenin's 'what is to be done' article, the ideological motivation of the revolution would find its body by justifying the revolt by means of education in the dress of Communist rhetoric.

### **Religion and Education**

Great Soviet Encyclopedia offers references to the perception of religion and education in Soviet understanding. Atheism was introduced as an important component of education since religion is seen as a requirement of the ruling class to keep people in submission. Hence "Fundamentals of 'Scientific' Atheism" was introduced to universities, medical, agricultural, and cultural and educational institutions of higher education and specialized secondary schools. Training of cadres in atheistic propaganda is conducted by special atheistic departments of evening universities of Marxism-Leninist, in study groups and the like. The Specialized Institute of Scientific Atheism was established as part of the Academy of Social Sciences under the Central Committee in 1964 (Hughes 1992: 42). Socialist reasoning was the defined method to persuade the targeted cadres and train them in accordance with the official perception of religion. In this sense 'Atheistic Education' consists of the dissemination of scientific knowledge about nature, society, man, and religion within the perception of origins and essence of religion, its social roots and opposition to science. The compatibility of scientific of scientific knowledge with the communist ideology is stressed in the Soviet Encyclopedia to justify the official perception. The topic of religion in the classes was discussed to present the anti-scientific and reactionary essence of the religion. However if any

individual was determined as believing in any religion, propagation of scientific knowledge was persuasively taught in a special class face to face.

### **Conclusion**

This study aims to search the education system of the USSR. In this regard, following research questions were designed to find out how Soviets used education system to state needs. In what ways the ruling regime benefits from the education to sustain its longevity and efficiency? What subjects did the Soviet regime avoid to include in the curricula? The answers of these questions contribute to understand how, not only the Soviet but also any other regime can exploit education system to build and sustain preferred world view.

Education in the Soviet system was merely not focused on the intensification of choice; the education outputs were instead carefully arranged to achieve state economic and political needs. The main motivation of the 1917 revolution was to create "New Soviet Man" who is loyal to Marxist-Leninist ideology. Educational policy was designed to meet this purpose prioritizing the state needs in terms of political, economic and ideological reasoning. Soviets determined a very comprehensive education policy and employed methods to strengthen the basis of the 'perfect' society. Consequently, education system was designed not only simply as a machine for the production of scientists, engineers and technician, but as an instrument of mass education from which the younger generation gain their formal learning, their social, moral and political ideas as well.

In terms of purpose and philosophy of Soviet Education, the established goals by the Soviet government, two of them are very important. They are to "instill in the student the values encompassed in the term 'New Soviet Man' that is a good communist, and ... to produce an adequate number of trained people in the fields that best advance the economic and military interests of the Soviet Union". In this regard, general characteristics of the Soviet education could be employed to describe the basis of the management of education that links to ideology.

Leadership shifts challenged the priorities and caused change in the commitment to education in terms of purpose and policies. Nonetheless the ideological basis was unchallenged. Education played the prominent role to grow up the generation inhaling the Marxist-Leninist ideology. Education was centrally planned to realize the defined goals. Youth was shaped, checked and directed to life by means of education circles. The concern was, first, to educate ideologically perfect individual as a member of the communist society. The second concern was the prerequisites of production. Regarding central planning of the education, the needs of the 'society' were essential but it was a fact that "state" mechanism of the communist regime pre-dominated the society.

The connection of propaganda and military preparedness to a common threat would be another feature. Such a course of education will create a

general threat perception that would keep the community firm against this 'created' enemy. Therefore ideological motivation of Soviet education system leads to compete and check the rivaling ideology. In this context, the society was prepared to war by means of the education circles in schools.

Individual was perceived as a mechanic mechanism donated by the Marxist-Leninist ideology fulfilling his/her duties. Education appeared to be the main tool to 'produce' ideologically educated society. As Lenin argues that "Everything that contributes to the building of a Communist society is moral, everything that hinders this is immoral and amoral". On the other hand undesired concepts such as religions were denounced in accordance with the official ideology. In this context, "Fundamentals of 'Scientific' Atheism" was introduced to institutions of higher education and specialized secondary schools. Training of units in atheistic propaganda is conducted by special atheistic departments of evening universities of Marxism-Leninist, in study groups and the like. Subsequently, socialist reasoning was the defined method to convince the targeted cadres and train them in accordance with the official perception of religion.

Schools were integrated to industry and agriculture to have the majority of the pupils actively join the production rather than higher education. The priority was the state's need rather than offering youth to decide on their future. It can be claimed that education was economy oriented process, especially after the Khrushchev.

Social dimension of the education provided that the individual was under the strict control of the regime. System benefited from education to improve its efficiency and longevity. Nevertheless demise of the USSR can be questioned if education system failed or not. We argue that education is not the whole responsible mechanism though; state centric and centrally planned education presented inadequate course to create a 'purple' society. The state could not achieve in sustain itself by commanding educative circles.

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