

Review the reflection of the cultural realities of Tajikistan in Iranian press

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Abstract: Given the current state of the world and devastating wave of globalization, the importance of interaction and relations between countries in the context of old governments-nations and the current stable governments in order to counter the wave of globalization is undeniable. Interaction between developing countries, especially neighboring countries in a region or geographical area works for preserving the cultural identity, maintaining the boundaries, consolidating the national authority, having efficient workforce, and gaining economic income. Establishment and development of optimum interactions and relations are the first step for knowing the situation, interaction features, and mutual interests and expectations which can provide the groundwork for connection from different dimensions. Part of this knowledge is achieved through the media for communities. Since the media reflect the cultural ideas and information and various knowledge of each community, social and cultural components and the condition of cultural interaction between communities can be realized by reviewing them. Content analysis method was used in this study and its trend was deductive. The unit of analysis was news and statistical society included all issues of newspapers and magazines of *Kayhan*, *Ettela'at*, *Shargh*, and *Abrar*, news agencies, *Central Asian Studies Quarterly*, and so on from 2005 to 2008. The results show that among notable cultural issues, identity and issues related to Persian culture have attracted most attention (30.3%), while issues such as intellectual freedom, religious rituals, and women's issues have gained the least attention. Orientation in presenting the contents was 28% positive and 2.5% negative; contents emphasizing on cultural relations were maximum (49.8%) and contents emphasizing on social relations were minimum (3.5%). In terms of presentation style, news and translation had the highest and the lowest share with 43% and 0.5%, respectively. Contents with educational and press function showed the highest figures with 62.3% and those with recreational and promotional function showed the lowest figures with 6.5%. Contents aimed at developing the personal aspect of knowledge had the highest share with 75.3%, while those aimed at enhancing the behaviors had the lowest share with 3.5%.

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1. Introduction

Paying attention to the informational space and its efficiency is of importance in today's world. Part of this importance is defined in the field of relations between governments and the security of this process, while other part has a broad relation with planning for the national development. So, states that have less or no attention to the development of information technologies actually miss the most important components of development.

As this new phenomenon is unfamiliar and non-native to some countries, it is treated differently in these countries. So, dealing with this new phenomenon is very sensitive and crucial from various dimensions. Hostile confrontation with it on the pretext of eliminating the national values, corrupting public morals, obscuring the relationship between government and citizens, revealing the decisions dealing with the fate of people, and so on are some of the explanations. Citizens' easy access to information, increased level of public knowledge, more coherence to the international information system, and educating informed and conscientious

citizens are considered to be the main reasons to join this movement. Therefore, given the current situation of the world, the fate of the community should not be abandoned in limbo of these enmities and friendships on an issue. There is no doubt that this phenomenon should be taken into account in development planning, but how to use it is something extremely important and serious and requires a careful plan. "Information space became a field for political struggle in the 20th century," said Mohammad Shakoori (107, 224). So, interaction between developing countries, especially neighboring countries in a region or geographical area works for preserving the cultural identity, maintaining the boundaries, consolidating the national authority, having efficient workforce, and gaining economic income.

1.1. Problem outline:

Establishing and developing optimum interactions and relations pave the way for knowing the situation and investigation of interaction features and mutual interests and expectations which can provide the groundwork for connection from

different dimensions. Part of this knowledge is achieved through the media for communities. Since the media reflect the cultural ideas and information and various knowledge of each community, social and cultural components and the condition of cultural interaction between communities can be realized by reviewing them. Hence, it is of value both in theoretical and experimental research. Activities of the media require a deep and pervasive analysis.

The present study was carried out based on experiences and realities of two countries (Iran and Tajikistan) which have a common history, language, and culture. Undoubtedly, such research improves the theoretical and scientific references of journalism and positively affects the form and the content of the honest writers' works.

Among the research conducted on theoretical and scientific history of journalism, the current subject has never been specifically studied in Iran and Tajikistan. In some scientific works about the history of journalism, there references about the activity of Iranian press media. Abdol al-Sattar Noor Aliev, a Tajikistani scientist, has studied the history and the main methods of Iranian press media in his treatise called *Journalism history in foreign countries*. Also, he has briefly mentioned the activities of *Ettela'at*, *Kayhan*, *Islamic Republican*, *Resalat*, *Salam*, and *Iran* newspapers and *New Message* magazine for reflecting the reality of literature in the Soviet Union. A bibliographic article under the title of *Transoxiana in the Iranian Press* has also discussed this issue (168; 78-79). From 91 article about Transoxiana in the Iranian press in 1372 (According to the Iranian calendar), the oldest one dates back 1351 (According to the Iranian calendar). The objective of this study is to know the structure of the Iranian newspapers and the cultural realities of Tajikistan reflected in these newspapers and also present an appropriate analysis to be reflected in press.

2.1. Necessity and importance of research

1.2.1. Theoretical necessity and importance:

This project can lead to the recognition of the content structure of the Iranian newspapers in terms of the cultural components of Tajikistan and shows the guidelines and frameworks to the development of cultural relations.

Practical necessity and importance:

Given there are many cultural commonalities between Iran and Tajikistan and both of them have undergone remarkable changes during the past few decades (The collapse of communism in Tajikistan and the Islamic revolution in Iran), this project can pave the way for the expansion of interaction between governments and resolve the pessimism in relations between two countries.

2.2. 1.Theoretical principles of research:

There are several theories about the role of communicator (Message sender) in a communication process, especially in processes related with the mass media which can form the interactions in the media space. What that has been regarded as the theoretical framework in this study is the following communication theory.

3.2.1. Agenda setting theory:

This theory says that the mass media use Agenda setting and give priority to some news in order to direct the attitude of their addresses. Agenda setting process is like a hopper that a large number of issues enter through its open mouth but few of have the chance to be presented in the media Agenda. This requires a coordinated and integrated management and also considering organizational and national interests (Rubin, Barry M.1993).

Walter Lippmann, an expert of propaganda, says that the mass media are the main connection point between the events occurring around the world and the image of these events in our mind. In fact, he is the founder of Agenda setting in the media. Although Lippmann didn't use the term "Agenda setting," he believed that it seems necessary to study these processes (McCombs, Maxwell E, and Donald L. Shaw.1977).

40 years after publication of Walter Lippmann named *Public opinions* 15 years after the controversial discussion of Lasool, Bernard Kuhn, a political sciences expert inspired by Scott Schneider, developed the concept of Agenda setting in 1960. Kuhn came to the conclusion that the press may not be always successful in inducing people "How think", but they are usually successful in inducing "What think about".

The first systematic study on Agenda setting was done by MacCombs and Shaw in 1972. Koort Lang and Gladiz Ingerland also studied the theory of Agenda setting. They believe that the mass media lead the attention of their addressees to specific issues and subjects and continuously present the subjects indicating the things that the populace should think about them, know about them, and sympathize with them (Littlejohn, Stephen W. 2002).

4.2.1. Needs assessment theory:

It is another theory which was used to analyze the data in this study. In this theory audience are assumed to be dynamic and use the mass media to meet their informational needs. It has undergone different stages in its evolution. In the third stage, in which needs assessment theory reached maturation, remarkable steps were taken for the theoretical consistency of this theory. Cans and his colleagues had a great role this stage by presenting a different

approach of needs assessment (Use and satisfaction). In Cabs idea, a person faces the social and psychological origins of his/her needs that these needs lead to having expectations from the mass media or other obstacles and finally different patterns of paying attention to the media. Satisfied needs and other income are the results of this that commitment is not involved in many of them.

5.2.1. The news goalkeeping:

The news goalkeeping is process, in which billions of news is collected, summarized, divided into hundreds of messages, and transferred to a specific group of people in a specific time. It is usually assumed that the news goalkeeping is news selection for newspapers, whereas it is something beyond a simple selection. Tichner defines the news goalkeeping as an extensive process of information control including all aspects of message encryption, preventing from publishing, transfer, formation, presentation, repetition, and timing during the transmission path from source to receiver (Herman, Edward S and Mc Chesney, Robert W (1998).

The news goalkeeping is a term to describe the role of individuals who decide about the content of each mass media and what that should be presented by them. In fact, they are editors-in-chief, newspaper editors, and producers of television and radio shows. They are goalkeepers that open the goal for some information and ideas and close it for others and also present a very selective assumption of the facts (Kiousis, S & McCombs, M, 2004).

6.2.1. Fragmentation of reality:

The mass media are usually accused of presenting a fragmented image of reality. For example in radio news, the addressee usually hears short reports of events on a special subject which contain several other themes and topics. Such events are mostly confined in time and space and mention the previous or relevant events that have happened in other places, as if the audience had a mental history of the subject. In these cases, a kind of text correlation unintentionally appears, not necessarily with reports concerning the same subject but with other types of stories which are mostly different. This kind of news reports may convey this deeper and more general message that the world has messy situation and humans are alone and nobody can help them. Fragmentation of reality, which is usually problematic for less informed individuals, is one of the factors that cause the knowledge gap (Mansell, Robin. 2004).

7.2.1. Research questions:

- What is the investigation of the cultural relations of Iran and Tajikistan reflected in the Iranian press?

- Which cultural values of these two countries have been discussed in the press?
- Which cultural commonalities of Iran and Tajikistan have been mentioned?
- What are the styles of presentation in the press?
- What are the accepted cultural components in the press?
- How is the performance of cultural activities in the press?

8.2.1. Hypotheses:

- There is significant relation between the content of materials related to Tajikistan and the type of newspaper or magazine.
- There is significant relation between orientation in presenting the materials related to Tajikistan and the type of newspaper or magazine.
- There is significant relation between emphasis on the various cultural issues related to Tajikistan and the type of newspaper or magazine.
- There is significant relation between the style of presenting the materials related to Tajikistan and the type of newspaper or magazine.
- There is significant relation between emphasis on different occasions in Tajikistan and the type of newspaper or magazine.

2. Material and Methods

Content analysis method was used in this study and its trend was deductive.

3. Results

Table 1: Frequency distribution of newspapers and magazines

Cumulative Percentage	Net Percentage	Percentage	Frequency	Newspapers and magazines	
1.1	1.1	1.0	4	Iran	Net
7.8	6.7	6.3	25	Abrar	
9.4	1.6	1.5	6	Kayhan	
63.0	53.6	50.0	200	Ettela'at	
78.6	15.5	14.5	58	Central Asian Studies Quarterly	
90.3	11.8	11.0	44	Bokhara Quarterly	
91.4	1.1	1.0	4	Iranology	
92.0	.5	.5	2	Asian Civilization Culture	
93.0	1.1	1.0	4	Soroush	
94.1	1.1	1.0	4	Shargh	
100.0	5.9	5.5	22	News agencies	
	100.0	93.3	373	Total	
		6.8	27	System	
		100.0	400	Total	

According to Table 1, from 400 encrypted cases, the maximum with 50% or a frequency of 200 belongs to *Ettela'at* and the minimum is related to Asian Civilization Culture magazine with 5% and a frequency of 2.

Table 2: Frequency distribution of the content of materials in newspapers and magazines

Cumulative Percentage	Net Percentage	Percentage	Frequency	Content		
3.0	3.0	3.0	12	Military and defense	Net	
31.7	28.6	28.5	114	Political foreign relations		
34.4	2.8	2.8	11	Local political government		
41.5	7.0	7.0	28	Economic and trade affairs		
44.7	3.3	3.3	13	Education and scientific exchange		
89.9	45.2	45.0	180	Culture and art		
93.0	3.0	3.0	12	Accidents and events		
94.0	1.0	1.0	4	Social and services		
95.0	1.0	1.0	4	Fuel and energy		
97.0	2.0	2.0	8	Construction and development		
97.7	.8	.8	3	Sport		
98.0	.3	.3	1	Religious		
99.0	1.0	1.0	4	Media		
100.0	1.0	1.0	4	Other		
	100.0	99.5	398	Total		
		.5	2	System		Missing
		100.0	400	Total		

According to Table 2, from 400 encrypted cases, the maximum with 40% or a frequency of 180 belongs to Cultural and artistic content and the minimum is related to religious content with 3% and a frequency of 1.

Table 3: Frequency distribution of orientation of newspapers

Cumulative Percentage	Net Percentage	Percentage	Frequency	Type of orientation	
91.1	91.1	28.0	112	Positive	Net
99.2	8.1	2.5	10	Negative	
100.0	.8	.3	1	11.00	
	100.0	30.8	123	Total	
		69.3	277	System	Missing
		100.0	400	Total	

According to Table 3, from 400 encrypted cases, orientation of newspapers is 28% positive (with a frequency of 112) and 2.5% negative (with a frequency of 10).

Table 4: Frequency distribution of content emphasizing on relations in newspapers and magazines

	Cumulative Percentage	Net Percentage	Percentage	Frequency	Emphasis on relations
	50.8	49.8	199	Cultural relations	Net
	54.3	3.5	14	Social relations	
	76.8	22.4	88	Political relations	
	90.6	13.8	54	Economic relations	
	99.5	8.9	35	Other relations	
	100.0	.5	2	8.00	
		100.0	392	Total	
		2.0	8	System	Missing
			100.0	400	Total

According to Table 4, from 400 encrypted cases, the maximum with 49.8% or a frequency of 199 belongs to the content emphasizing on cultural relations and the minimum belongs to social relations with 3.5% and a frequency of 14.

Table 5: Frequency distribution of the styles of presenting the materials

Cumulative Percentage	Net Percentage	Percentage	Frequency	Style of materials	
43.9	43.9	43.0	172	News	Net
72.7	28.8	28.3	113	Report	
74.5	1.8	1.8	7	Interview	
80.6	6.1	6.0	24	Editorial/Leading article	
81.1	.5	.5	2	Translation	
82.9	1.8	1.8	7	Interpretation	
85.2	2.3	2.3	9	Analysis	
100.0	14.8	14.5	58	Other	
	100.0	98.0	392	Total	
		2.0	8	System	Missing
		100.0	400	Total	

According to Table 5, from 400 encrypted cases, the maximum with 43% or a frequency of 172 belongs to news and the minimum belongs to translation with 0.5% and a frequency of 2.

Table 6: Frequency distribution of news values

Cumulative Percentage	Net Percentage	Percentage	Frequency	News values
9.4	9.4	5.3	21	Comprehensiveness
22.0	12.6	7.0	28	Fame
31.8	9.9	5.5	22	Confrontation and conflict
32.3	.4	.3	1	Strange and exception
43.0	10.8	6.0	24	Freshness
44.4	1.3	.8	3	Frequency
73.5	29.1	16.3	65	Geographical proximity
100.0	26.5	14.8	59	Spiritual proximity
	100.0	55.8	223	Total
		44.3	177	System
		100.0	400	Total

Table 7: Frequency distribution of this question that which personal dimensions do the materials enhance?

Cumulative Percentage	Net Percentage	Percentage	Frequency	Enhancing materials
75.3	75.3	74.8	299	Knowledge
96.5	21.2	21.0	84	Attitude
100.0	3.5	3.5	14	Behavior
	100.0	99.3	397	Total
		.8	3	System
		100.0	400	Total

According to Table 7, from 400 encrypted cases, the maximum with 75.3% or a frequency of 299 belongs to knowledge dimension and the minimum belongs to behavioral dimension with 3.5% and a frequency of 14.

Table 8: Frequency distribution of the functions of the media in virtual space

Cumulative Percentage	Net Percentage	Percentage	Frequency	Media function
30.9	30.9	30.8	123	Guidance and advice
93.5	62.6	62.3	249	Educational and indicative
100.0	6.5	6.5	26	Recreational and promotional
	100.0	99.5	398	Total
		.5	2	System
		100.0	400	Total

According to Table 8, from 400 encrypted cases, the maximum with 62.3% or a frequency of 249 belongs to educational and indicative function

and the minimum belongs to recreational and promotional with 6.5% and a frequency of 26.

Table 9: Frequency distribution of interests in cultural issues

Cumulative Percentage	Net Percentage	Percentage	Frequency	interests in cultural issues
1.9	1.9	1.8	7	Scientific interaction between universities
2.4	.5	.5	2	Women issues
3.5	1.1	1.0	4	Personal and social rights and freedom
4.5	1.1	1.0	4	Economic turmoil
5.9	1.3	1.3	5	Promotion of foreign values
6.4	.5	.5	2	Intellectual freedom
6.9	.5	.5	2	Conflict of values
7.5	.5	.5	2	Promotion of religious rituals
17.9	10.4	9.8	39	Cultural bonds
20.3	2.4	2.3	9	Experts dispatch
52.5	32.3	30.3	121	Identity and issues related to Persian culture
73.9	21.3	20.0	80	Diplomatic relations
77.9	4.0	3.8	15	The history of Iran and Tajikistan
99.7	21.9	20.5	82	Other
100.0	.3	.3	1	113.00
	100.0	93.8	375	Total
		6.3	25	System
		100.0	400	Total

According to Table 9, the maximum with 30.3% or a frequency of 121 belongs to identity and issues related to Persian culture and the minimum belongs to intellectual freedom and promotion of religious rituals with 5% and a frequency of 2.

1.3. Hypotheses test:

Chi-square coefficients were used to determine the relations between variables. The results are shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Assessment and reflection of the content of newspapers and magazines with each of the variables

Level of significance	Variables
There is a significant relation	Newspaper content
There is a significant relation	Orientation in presenting the materials
There is a significant relation	Content emphasizing on relations
There is a significant relation	The style of presenting the materials
There is a significant relation	interests in cultural issues

It can be concluded from Table 10 that there is a significant relation between the content of newspapers and magazines and all variables.

4. Conclusion:

In some countries the press is a tool which is used in political and demographic strife, in other countries they have a commercial nature, and in others are a tool for affecting people and their beliefs. However, the cultural role of newspapers is undeniable. Tajikistan became independent after the collapse of East Bloc countries. Foreign relations of Iran have greatly changed during the recent years. Paying more attention to Central Asian countries is a good example. Among the Central Asian countries, Tajikistan has historical, cultural, and linguistic affinities with Iran and Iranians have been more curious to know about the events of this country. So, the press has reflected the news of Tajikistan to meet the needs of their addressees.

Among 400 items extracted from 11 newspapers and magazines, *Ettela'at* was the maximum with a frequency of 200 and *Civilization Culture Quarterly* was the minimum with a frequency of 2. *Central Asian Studies Quarterly* with 58 materials and *Bokhara Quarterly* with 44 materials ranked after *Ettela'at*.

The highest volume of cultural and artistic materials was published in *Ettela'at* newspaper and the lowest volume of religious materials was reflected in *Abrar*, while the highest volume of religious materials was reflected in news agencies.

Most of materials had no orientation that *Ettela'at* has the highest share and *Kayhan*, *Iranology*, *Soroush*, and *Shargh* have the lowest share in this case. The maximum of orientation in materials was observed in *Ettela'at*, while the minimum was observed in *Kayhan*, *Bokhara*, and *Civilization Culture*.

The majority of materials emphasize on cultural relations, while material emphasizing on social relations are in the minority. The maximum and the minimum volume of materials emphasizing on cultural relations are published in *Ettela'at* and *Kayhan*, respectively. On the other hand, the highest volume of content emphasizing on social relation was observed in *Central Asian Studies Quarterly* and the lowest was observed in *Ettela'at*.

In terms of the style of presenting the materials, news and translation are the maximum and the minimum, respectively that *Ettela'at* has the highest volume of news style and the lowest volume of news style is observed in *Iran*, *Abrar*, and *Shargh* newspapers and also the news agencies. The highest volume of translation is used in *Iranology* newspaper.

As far as the interests in cultural issues are concerned, identity and issues related to Persian language were the maximum and intellectual freedom, promotion of religious rituals, and women issues were the minimum. The maximum volume of

materials emphasizing on identity and issues related to Persian language are published in *Ettela'at* and the minimum volume belongs to *Shargh*. The highest volume of materials emphasizing on intellectual freedom, promotion of religious rituals, and women issues are published in *Abrar* and *Ettela'at*, *Ettela'at*, and *Central Asian Studies Quarterly*, respectively.

1.4. The following results were obtained from Tables:

1- Historical and literary works and language are themselves the main factors in history and culture of these two nations.

2- Although the cultural unit of Iranians and Tajikistanis was damaged at the beginning of 20th century, the newspapers were the main factor linking the two nations.

3- Iran and Tajikistan had no direct relationship before the collapse of the Soviet Union and the limited relations were designed by Moscow. Newspapers have helped to maintain bilateral relations.

4- Selection, analysis, and interpretation of Tajikistan realities in the Iranian press have been done in the Iranian press with a focus on regional proximity and historical and cultural authenticity.

5- Iranian newspapers and magazines have mostly focused on presenting the events which can enhance the security and stability of Tajikistan.

6- Publishing the cultural materials shows the positive orientation of Iran toward Tajikistan and proves the emphasis on historical and cultural background.

7- Iranian press have used different genre to reflect the realities of Tajikistan, most important of them are news, interview, article, analysis, and interpretation.

In summary, the press is one of the most important factors in reflecting the realities of life and formation of public opinions in each period and has a great role in enhancing the sense of patriotism. It also can guide nation and government to have a reasonable dialog or vice versa.

2.4. Recommendations:

- Facilitating the traffic of dealers and tourists between two countries, given the cultural proximity.

- Changing the clerical terms and expressions and choosing the original Farsi words instead of Arabic one.

- Cooperation of two countries in IRIB, news agencies, the Academy of Farsi Language.

- Consolidation and expansion of cultural relations in the future.

- Increasing the compilations and articles in Farsi.

- Improving the cultural relations and eliminating the cultural boundaries.

- Informing people through the old history, considering the cultural bond based on mutual respect.
- Giving importance to the necessity of developing the cultural ties in order to improve and promote the human civilization.
- Signing of agreements in educational and cultural fields.
- Improving the political relations by developing cultural activities.
- Expanding the international understanding through the cultural exchange and cultural activities.
- Organizing transportation and communication between Iran and Tajikistan.
- Developing the long-term programs and cultural convergence.

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