

**Ivan R. Luchenkov**

Russia, St. Petersburg

Postgraduate student

Department of Near and Middle East

Institute of Oriental Manuscripts RAS

Email: [lir-529@mail.ru](mailto:lir-529@mail.ru)

### **The Middle and Near East through the prism of the Soviet Press 1936–1939**

The research is devoted to the study of image construction and interpretation of Political, Economic, Social and Cultural processes that took place in the territory of the Near and Middle East in the second half of the 1930s by the Soviet Press. The relevance of the paper is determined by the consideration of the global system of international relations on the eve of World War II and its intra-regional component through the prism of the Official, Stalinist point of view.

The main aspect of the research is to examine the Soviet press's illustration of the dynamics in the Soviet Union's relations with Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan, the Genesis of the National Conflict between Arabs and Jews in Mandatory Palestine, the political instability in Egypt and Iraq, the British, French, German and Italian maneuvers in the Mediterranean basin in the context of preparation for the Coming War, and the processes surrounding the crisis and further transfer of the Alexandretta Sanjak under the French Mandate in Syria and Lebanon to Turkey.

The materials of the Moscow newspapers *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, as well as the Tbilisi-based *Zarya Vostoka* for the specified period were used as primary sources. The present research materials were collected on the basis of the Scientific Library of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the M. Gorky Scientific Library of the Eastern Faculty of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The research materials were collected at the Scientific Library of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the M. Gorky Scientific Library of the Faculty of Asian and African Studies of St. Petersburg State University, the Library of the Academy of Sciences, the Russian National Library, the Russian State Library, the Parliamentary Library of Georgia.

In developing the methods of this study, one used elements of structural-functional and sociolinguistic approaches, quantitative and qualitative content analysis of the publications by the selected Soviet press. One also draws attention to the fact that modern Russian research on similar topics do not consider the image of the Middle and Near East at the end of the Interbellum as part of a separate paper.

Having carried out a detailed analysis of the USSR printed press, one may state a certain degree of Eurocentrism and the secondary representation of the situation in the Middle and Near East. In quantitative and qualitative terms, a significant part of the few notes on this region is reduced to a dry retelling of articles from the West European press, the reason for which was the lack of correspondents on the ground, as well as brief summaries from Soviet diplomatic agencies.

The result of this study is to present and analyze data on Political, Economic, Social and Cultural developments in the Middle and Near Eastern countries as reflected in the pages of the Soviet press. On average, during this four-year period on the pages of 1,440 issues of *Pravda* [3], 1,208 issues of *Izvestiya* [2] and 1,440 issues of *Zarya Vostoka* [1], we can see about 250 articles about Political, Economic, Social and Cultural events that took place in the Middle and Near East. One can see about 250 references to various events mainly in Turkey, Egypt, Palestine, Iran, Iraq, Yemen and Afghanistan. In addition, the situation in British India, as well as in the Tuvan and Mongolian People's Republics allied to the USSR, is briefly summarized on the Asian front. The focus of the selected Soviet publications of the period 1936-1939 was, however, on issues outside the European area, connected with the Italian hostilities in Abyssinia (Ethiopia) and Japan in China, particularly against the government of Chiang Kai-shek.

### References

1. *Zarya Vostoka* newspaper. Tbilisi: Authority of the Central and Tbilisi Committees of the Communist Party (b) of Georgia and the Central Executive Committee of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, 1936-1939 (in Russian).
2. *Izvestia* newspaper. Moscow: Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the All-Russian, Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies, 1936-1939 (in Russian).
3. *Pravda* newspaper. Moscow: Authority of the Central Committee and the Moscow Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, 1936-1939 (in Russian).