

THE PRESENT SITUATION OF TEACHING U.S. HISTORY
AT THE NATIONAL
UNIVERSITY OF MONGOLIA

SFS/NUM

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In 1911, Mongolia gained independence from Manchu Qung Dynasty proclaiming the Sovereign Mongolian State under the leadership of Bogdo Khaan. That important event in the Mongolian history led to a rise of national consciousness and patriotism of Mongols. In that very period democratic reforms were started to be implemented political, economic, cultural and social spheres of life among of which was a creation of modern civil school.

From 1914 a subject named "The situation in foreign countries, their ways of living" was taught in a secondary school as a historical review. Starting from the academic year of 1938-1939 the universal history has been taught as a compulsory subject at schools of all levels in the MPR. Since that time on, Mongols have been with an opportunity to study American history.

Following the establishment of institutions of higher education in the MPR (1942), American history has been taught more widely and profoundly at their historical faculties. As of today, the US history is being taught (offered) at the NUM, State Pedagogical University as well as other public and private universities, institutes and colleges within the frame of teaching of the university history. Moreover, the US history is taught in the subject of the universal history at schools of general education.

Now, I would like to talk briefly about the present place of the US

History in activities of the Department of History, NUM, and American Studies Center of the School of Foreign Service.

The US history is studied within the subject of New and Recent History in total 20 hours NUM lectures and seminars. In the history classes of the Faculty of History. In addition, the above subject is on curriculum of other classes and department of the Faculty of Humanities of the same University.

The Faculty of Humanities has the Department of Ethnography which serves as an ethnographical research center at the same time. In the curriculum of ethnographical studies the theory, culture and history of ethnography is studied in the period of 4 years. Origins of American ethnos, its historical, economic and intellectual culture is studied within the frame of global culture.

The another Center which makes research on America is the Center of American Studies at the School of Foreign Service.

The Past and Present Situation of History Studies

After the democratic revolution in Mongolia, pluralism has been developed. Before that time, historical studies were based on the formation, theory, and materialistic understanding of the history written by Marx. According to this theory, in the studying of history of any country, the economic development was considered to be essential, and as a result other social issues and factors were left, history was abandoned and types of violence such as class tensions, social revolution viewed as historical mobile were put above all social conflicts. Moreover, the role of individuals and elites, specifics of the country and social development, national uniqueness, traditional style of life, climate and nature, realities of the country were not paid much attention in that history. (Marx)

The above mentioned disadvantages still influence our study. But today as a result of democracy we have opportunity to get familiar with progressive theories of other countries, views on history and historical textbooks of western countries.

Teaching us history at the NUM

The above mentioned two departments of the Faculty of Social Sciences have a common aspect of educational equipments on advertising America which is based only on the Russian historical scientific documents and educational equipments. Thus, the methods of theories and teaching are based on the Russian system wholly. Contemporary necessities are asking us to use something different things, however, we appreciate Russian sciences very highly. For instance, we should implement methods of teaching and theories and educational equipments of the historical science of the western countries, especially higher developed countries such as the USA by studying them very carefully. Thus, we can improve our teaching processes. So we have to work with our American colleagues by making direct contacts. Particularly, those related organizations of the NUM which advertise the USA should cooperate with the same American organizations by permanent direct contacts. Firstly, we have to prepare the professional staff, who work on advertising America. Why we have to begin from that. It's because of the facts that the Mongolians who introduce America have good English but do not have specialized knowledge of history and culture. But the teachers of history and professionals do not have more opportunities to study American research works because of their English language knowledge and unawardedly they'll have to be limited by studying only the Russian research works. And, today there's still a serious shortcoming in historical teaching methods of the NUM because of the teachers' limited knowledge and methods. So, they should be sent to those related organizations in the USA in order to learn English and to do some kinds of research works further, which are quite possible. And, also the departments of the historical and ethnic studies should be supplied with American books and teaching equipments and in the results of which teaching and advertising would always be renewed and their activities gotten better. We have done our request to the SOROS Foundation in Mongolia to assist us in the above mentioned two issues, but there is no result today. So, we are asking you to assist us using the podium of this seminar.

If there would be any chance to give lectures (lessons) on

American history and culture by American professionals in the historical and ethnical studies' fields and the Center of American Studies, we'll have an opportunity to learn from that and so get connected with American culture.

By studying American history our students are interested in the following issues and write course and diploma papers:

Independence war of the North colonies of England.

- The Establishment of the USA.
- The First Constitution.
- About American Indians
- Civil War
- Party system
- The development issues of the USA
- Social mentality and science's development
- The uniting of the American nationality
- Is there any racism in the USA, etc.