

A.M. Junusbayeva*

*Almaty Technological University, Almaty, Kazakhstan
(E-mail: aigul68os@mail.ru)*

Religious policy of Kazakhstan in the years of restriction (1985–1991)

The State's religious policy was part of a policy of restructuring during the period under review. However, the early years of restructuring ideological inertia were still strong, and preserved inductions into the increasing atheistic educational work. Authorities considered ideological rival in the religion not an ally. It was due to the inadequate dissemination of democratic processes in the public life of the Republic. Another reason for the stability of the state policy towards religious organizations and believers, especially Muslims, was the foreign policy factor. The meeting between N. Nazarbaev and representatives of religions was an important event which had a great importance in implementing new approaches. Special emphasis was placed on the need for clergymen to do more to disseminate and observe universal human moral and ethical principles, mercy, charity, protection of motherhood and childhood, and help the disabled and the elderly people. There was adopted the Law of the USSR "On freedom of conscience and religious organizations". The document changed the situation of religious organizations in the country, proclaiming democratic principles and norms. The new law reflected a new balanced and objective approach to religion and religious organizations. The rights of religious organizations have been considerably expanded and many unjustified restrictions have been removed from their activities in public life. The law enshrines respect for believers and religious organizations. The role of religion and religious organizations in society is being redefined and it grows the significance of confessions in the history and culture of the people. The religious policy of the state during the years of reconstruction served as a basis for the creation of a modern model of interfaith harmony in the country and contributed to the process of religious revival which is connected with the interest to religion as part of culture.

Keywords: restructuring, religion, state, politics, atheistic work, church, mosque, temple, inertia, law, normalization, relations.

Introduction

In modern conditions there is a need for rethinking and through study of the confessional association history while relations between the state and religions are facing a new qualitative stage. It is extremely difficult to carry out the right balanced state policy regarding religion and believers without studying and analysing the experience of the functioning of religious organizations and the nature of state-religious relations during the Soviet period, including the period of reconstruction.

It will contribute to a better understanding of the modern processes which is *going on in society* and setting the guidance in this issue.

Kazakh scholars Prikhodko L.E. [1] and Luparev G.P. [2] devoted their works on the problem of changing the position of religious organizations and the clergy in the context of perestroika (restructuring) period, democratization of public life and their influence on the religious believers.

The national researcher Sultangalieva A.K. in her work "Islam in Kazakhstan: history, ethnicity and society" [3] studied the specifics of the relationship between Islam, ethnicity and society in the territory of Kazakhstan in the historical past and at the present stage.

Since April of 1985 in the country had started the period of tremendous change which had been taking place under the slogans of publicity and democratization of all sides of public life, which was named reconstruction.

Discussions

Topical issues, which had a forbidden character in the coming period as formation of the rule of law, new political thinking, the relationship of general and class values, and others, were considered within the framework of new policy.

Political processes were deviated from previous ideological stereotypes, a rethinking of the spiritual values of society. The concepts of "democracy", "pluralism", "human rights", "multi-party system", "publicity", "consensus" became acceptable.

*Corresponding author's e-mail: aigul68os@mail.ru

The process of recovery, renewal of society, moral cleansing from gross deformations of the past began. Radical changes in the country revealed a multitude of acute socio-economic, political and psychological problems. Besides, many aspects of society life had not been subjected a serious review and rethinking: State-religious relations, politics of power structures regarding religions and believers.

It is necessary to immediately mention that the process of reconstruction received approval and full support from the sides of religious figures and believers of all denominations from the very beginning. Much of this was connected with the hopes of religious leaders on the general spiritual revival of the people, on the restoration of the fullness of the activity of confessional associations and the creation of normal conditions for their functioning. In addition, the need for renewal was particularly pressing in the background of the stagnant years and the early period of personality cult.

It is important to note that in the beginning of the process of reconstruction the leadership of the country normalized relations with believing citizens of the country. The number of believers in the country, including Kazakhstan, comprised a significant part of the population and had been gradually increasing in numbers despite the anti-religious policies of the state. There was accepted the fateful decision on the celebration of the 1000th anniversary of the christening of Russia by the request of the patriarch and the Synod in 1983.

The inertia of the previous years has been still preserved in religious policy despite the democratic processes that have taken place in the country. It manifested itself in a gross violation of the rights and freedoms of believers, in the interference of local authorities to the affairs of religious organizations, in the denial and removal of the registration of active communities, in the problems with construction, repair and reconstruction of cult buildings, etc.

So, the actual situation within the country was not considered. Participation of believers and religious associations as a specific form of public organization in socio-political, cultural and social life was ignored.

Ideological inertia was still strong and preserved inductions in the increasing atheistic educational work. Authorities considered ideological rival in the religion not an ally. There were raised the issues of strengthening atheist propaganda and expansion and implementation of new forms of struggle with religion as in the mass media, and in the activities of party structures. Also, the picture of religious person was propagated and introduced to the conscience of the population as a man alien.

The policy of state-party structures has been still preserved in relation to religions and believers in Kazakhstan. Thus, speaking at the XVI Congress of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, which was taken place in February 1986, Z.K. Kamalidenov, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Republic, noted: "...we are concerned about deep-rooted "peaceful co-existence" with religion. Things went so far in Kyzyl-Orda region, in other regions you could not find who had upper-hand: ideological workers headed by the secretaries of the district committees of the party or self-proclaimed mullahs" [1; 22]. The need to strengthen the atheistic work by preservation, in some areas by growth, the high degree of religiosity of the population was emphasized at the convention. This was due to the insufficiently active proliferation of democratic processes in the public life of the republic. Another reason that contributed to the stability of the state course in relation to religious organizations and believers, especially Muslims, was the foreign policy factor: The Islamic revolution in Iran and the events in Afghanistan. As a result of this, a powerful anti-Islamic company developed in the country.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan (CCCP) accepts a number of resolutions which has an open anti-Islamic orientation within the framework of this policy. So, on 4 December 1985, CCCP of Kazakhstan adopted a resolution on the implementation of the special resolution of the CPSU Central Committee "On additional activities in connection with the activation in the countries of Asia and Africa as the so-called "militant Islam". According to this document, the regional executive committees provided measures for its implementation.

The next step of authorities was Resolution of the politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU "On the strengthening of the struggle with the influence of Islam" on 18 August 1986.

It stated that party and public organizations of the republics of Central Asia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, the autonomous republics and regions of the North Caucasus had neglected the importance of struggle against the religious prejudices and many young people, women and intellectuals were being held captive by Islamic traditions.

The religious rhetoric continued to be on the rise, which requires the strengthening of atheistic work, but in 1989, the resolution was taken out of the control of the Council on Religion [2; 1].

The reconstruction proclaimed the ideology of "new thinking" which involves priority of public values in the foreign policy of the state. However, the "new thinking" inside the country also meant peaceful

coexistence and cooperation with representatives of different worldviews and attraction of them in the public life of the country. The leadership of the country understood that the success of reconstruction to a significant degree would depend on the degree of activity and involvement of people and those who believe in it and in the process of change.

However, the situation in the religious sphere began to change only since the late 80s. Real changes in state-religious relations begin after the famous meeting of Gorbachev with the leadership of the RPC on 29 April 1988 on the eve of the 1000th anniversary of the christening of Russia. As Gorbachev noted, “the church cannot separate itself from those complex problems that concern people, from those processes that occur in society because of the basic religious functions. So we have points of convergence and I hope that we will also have the fruitful dialogue. We have a common history, one Fatherland and one future” [3; 22].

This meeting became only an external sign of transformation. The fundamental changes that had taken place. In the internal life of religious organizations, namely the abolition of any form of dependence on the state, were more important. Under the established policy of the country's leaders on the establishment of a state governed by the rule of law and the protection of the constitutional rights and freedoms of citizens, they adopted amendments to the Constitution of the USSR and the New law on the election of people's deputies of the USSR (Art. 2) in 1988. They indicate that “any direct or indirect restriction of the electoral rights of citizens of the USSR on the basis of origin, social and property status, race, nationality, sex, education and language attitude to religion, time of residence in a given area, type and nature of occupation are prohibited” [4; 22].

However, it should be noted that the process of reconstruction was actively developing in the center of the country, in many union republics, the pace of democratization and the nature of change in different areas of society were slower. This was explained by the caution and inertia of the local party and soviet authorities, who feared that everything could return to the previous position. This can be fully attributed to Kazakhstan.

The meeting between N. Nazarbaev and representatives of religions had a great importance in implementing new approaches.

On September 25, 1989, the country's leadership was adopted by Kazakhstan's Kadi of Muslims Nysanbayev, Head of the Alma-Ata and Kazakhstan dioceses of the ROC, bishop Eusebius, Senior-Pastor of the All-Union Council of evangelical Christian-Baptists in Kazakhstan V.V. Gorelov, Senior-Adventist of the Seventh-day Adventist Church I.I. Velgosh, and others.

At the meeting, Nazarbayev noted the importance of restoring the “Leninist principles of attitude to religion” in recent years. He assessed the contribution of believers and religious organizations to the democratic processes taking place in the republic. Special emphasis was placed on the need for clergymen to do more to disseminate and observe universal human moral and ethical principles, mercy, charity, protection of motherhood and childhood, and help the disabled and the elderly.

This official course was confirmed by the statements of the leading party workers at the XVII Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan in December 1989: “We should move from a simple denial of religion to cooperation with the clergy, where our common interests are in contact, distinguishing between extremist elements and ordinary believers, without forgetting not for a moment about the need to form a scientifically materialistic worldview among the younger generation” [5; 46–47].

On October 1, 1990, there was adopted the Law of the USSR “On freedom of conscience and religious organizations”. This document radically changed the position of religious organizations in the country, proclaiming democratic principles and norms. The basic provisions of the law differed in principle from that which had prevailed in soviet legislation. The new law reflected a new weighted and objective approach to religion and religious organizations. It significantly expanded the rights of religious organizations, eliminated many unjustified restrictions from their activities in public life. The new law has established a respectful attitude towards believers, religious organizations. Finally, it guaranteed freedom of conscience. The adoption of the law was an indicator of the new course of the country and the readiness of politicians to include religion in the mass public consciousness.

They requested a return of the temple, mosque, church, during this period. Mainly inquiry about their disclosures came from ordinary believers, many things were organized by the initiative of the Council of Religions.

The Council on Religion Affairs was organized by the reception of believers from all over the Soviet Union once a month, on Saturdays. They all made one request: To open a church, a mole house, a mosque. At the same time, there were practically no offers from the hierarchs and priests about opening churches, mosques, madrasas or temples. For a long time, it was connected with the previously preserved fear of the

authorities and close ties dependence on state bodies. The pace of registration of new religious associations is accelerating with the passage of time.

Conclusions

Thus, there were occurring the changes of religious policy priorities as at the all-union and Republican level during the reporting period. There was reconsideration of the role of religion and religious organizations in society and increasing the significance of denominations in the history and culture of the people. The religious policy of the state in the years of reconstruction served as the basis for the creation of a modern model of interfaith harmony in the country facilitated the process of religious rebirth which was related to the interest in religion as a part of culture.

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А.М. Джунусбаева

Қайта құру жылдардағы Қазақстанның діни саясаты (1985–1991 жж.)

Қарастырылып отырған кезеңдегі мемлекеттік діни саясаты қайта құру саясатының аясында жүзеге асырылған. Алайда қайта құрудың алғашқы жылдарында идеологиялық инерция өте күшті болып, атеистік тәрбие жұмыстарын күшейтуге үндеу сақталды. Билік дінді серіктес емес, идеологиялық бәсекелес ретінде көрді. Бұл — демократиялық процестердің елдің қоғамдық өмірінде кең таралмауымен түсіндірілді. Мемлекеттік діни ұйымдар мен діндар адамдарға, әсіресе мұсылмандарға қатысты көзқарастың өзгермеуіне ықпал еткен екінші себеп — сыртқы саяси фактор болды. Мемлекет — дін қатынастарындағы жаңа тәсілдерді жүзеге асыруда маңызға ие болған тағы бір жағдай — Н.Назарбаевтың конфессиялардың өкілдерімен кездесуі болды. Жалпы адамзаттық моральдық-адамгершілік қағидаларды, қайырымдылықты тарату және сақтау, ана мен баланы қорғау, мүгедектер мен қарттарға көмек көрсету үшін ғибадат етушілердің көбірек жұмыс істеуі қажеттілігі ерекше атап өтілді. КСРО-да «Ар-ұждан бостандығы және діни ұйымдар туралы» заңы қабылданды. Бұл құжат — демократиялық ұстанымдар мен нормаларды басшылыққа алып, елдегі діни ұйымдардың жағдайын түбегейлі өзгертті. Жаңа заң дін мен діни ұйымдарға жаңа теңдестірілген және объективті көзқарасты көрсетті. Діни ұйымдардың құқықтары едәуір кеңейтілді, олардың қоғамдық өмірдегі қызметіне көптеген негізсіз шектеулер жойылды. Заң діндарларға, діни ұйымдарға құрметпен қарауды бекітті. Қоғамдағы дін мен діни ұйымдардың рөлін қайта електен өткізу процесі жүріп жатыр, конфессиялардың ел тарихы мен мәдениетіндегі маңызы артуда. Қайта құру жылдарындағы мемлекеттің діни саясаты елдегі конфессияаралық келісімнің заманауи моделін құруға негіз болды, мәдениеттің бір бөлігі ретінде дінге қызығушылықпен байланысты діни қайта өрлеу процесіне ықпал етті.

Кілт сөздер: қайта құру, дін, мемлекет, саясат, атеистік жұмыс, шіркеу, мешіт, ғибадатхана, инерция, заң, нормалау, қатынастар.

Религиозная политика Казахстана в годы перестройки (1985–1991 гг.)

В рассматриваемый период религиозная политика государства осуществлялась в рамках политики перестройки. Однако в начале перестройки идеологическая инерция была еще очень сильна, сохранялись призывы к усилению атеистической воспитательной работы. Власть видела в религии идеологического конкурента, а не союзника. Это объяснялось недостаточно активной распространенностью демократических процессов в общественной жизни республики. Другой причиной, способствовавшей неизменности государственного курса в отношении религиозных организаций и верующих, в особенности мусульман, явился внешнеполитический фактор. Важным событием, имевшим большое значение в реализации новых подходов в государственно-религиозных отношениях, явилась встреча Н. Назарбаева с представителями разных конфессий. Особый акцент был сделан на наличие и соблюдение общечеловеческих морально-нравственных устоев, проявление милосердия, благотворительности, охраны материнства и детства, помощи инвалидам и престарелым. Был принят Закон СССР «О свободе совести и религиозных организациях». Согласно этому документу, кардинально изменилось положение религиозных организаций в стране, которые провозгласили демократические принципы и нормы. Данный закон отразил новый взвешенный и объективный подход к религии и религиозным организациям. Значительно расширились права религиозных организаций, устранены были многие неоправданные ограничения на их деятельность в общественной жизни. Закон закрепил уважительное отношение к верующим, религиозным организациям. Произошло переосмысление роли религии и религиозных организаций в обществе, возросла значимость и положение конфессий в истории и культуре народа. Религиозная политика государства в годы перестройки послужила основой для создания современной модели межконфессионального согласия в стране, способствуя процессу религиозного возрождения, связанного с интересом к религии как к части культуры.

Ключевые слова: перестройка, религия, государство, политика, атеистическая работа, церковь, мечеть, храм, инерция, закон, нормализация, отношения.

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