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STATE-RELIGIOUS RELATIONS IN CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRIES

Due to communist ideology religious education was not available to Soviet citizens. For a long time, Central Asian countries did not have their own religious educational institutions. After having had their independence and opening of the borders, active interaction of the Central Asian states with the outside world began: many citizens left to receive religious education in Arab countries. During the theological training of young people in foreign Islamic centers, students were imbued with religious views and values alien to the mentality of their people. When they return to their homeland, they begin to promote the ideas of radical Islam. Islamists understand that such activities are prohibited and illegal, they go underground, having unconscious young people involved in the confrontation with the state. The article describes how administration of the republics representing the region has to balance between protecting the citizens from religious extremism and preventing the infringement of the rights and freedoms of law-abiding believers. The article examines peculiarities of the religious situation in the post-Soviet countries of Central Asia, describes the legal basis for regulating religious issues, significance of state concepts and programs. In addition, the article examines peculiarities of religious and theological education in the countries of Central Asia. The article defines the significance of secular principles and the regulation of religious issues in a secular country.

Key words: religion, Central Asia, religious organizations, law, religious situation.

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Орталық Азия елдеріндегі мемлекет пен дін арақатынасы

Коммунистік идеология кезінде Кеңес одағындағы бірқатар азаматтары діни білімге қол жеткізе алмады. Ұзақ уақыт бойы Орталық Азия аймағындағы мемлекеттерде өздерінің діни білім беру мекемелері болған жоқ. Тәуелсіздік алғаннан кейін және шекара ашылғаннан кейін Орталық Азия елдерінің сыртқы әлеммен белсенді өзара іс-қимылы басталды, соның ішінде, көптеген азаматтар араб елдеріне діни білім алуға кетті. Өз кезегінде, шетелдік ислам орталықтарындағы теологиялық білім алу барысында студенттер өз халқының менталитетіне жат діни көзқарастар мен құндылықтарды бойына сіңірді. Елдеріне оралғаннан кейін олар ислам атын жамылған радикалды идеяларын насихаттай бастайды. Өздерінің бұл іс-әрекеттеріне тыйым салынғанын және заңсыз екендігін түсінетін исламистер көзге көрінбестен құйтырқы әрекеттерін жүзеге асыратын жастарды арбай бастайды. Радикалды діни көзқарастарды уағыздаушылар арбау барысында жаңа мүшелеріне қатыгездік пен жек көрінушілікті діни канондармен ақтап, саналарында қалыптастыра бастайды. Мұсылмандардың көпшілігінің діни сауаттылығының төмен деңгейде болуы, шынайы дінді фанатизм мен экстремизмнен ажырата алмауы радикалды көзқарастың таралуына ықпал етеді. Исламдық негіздегі экстремизмді жақтаушылар санының өсуіне қарай олардың зайырлы мемлекетпен діни-идеологиялық күресі қарулы шайқасқа ұласуы әбден мүмкін. Аталған мақалада өңірді таныстыратын республикалардың басшылығы азаматтарды діни экстремизмнен қорғау және заңға бағынатын дінді ұстанушылардың құқықтары мен бостандықтарына нұқсан келтіруге жол бермеу арасындағы тепе-теңдікті сақтау қажет. Сондай-ақ, мақалада Орталық Азияның посткеңестік елдеріндегі діни ахуалдың ерекшеліктері қарастырылады, діни мәселелерді реттеудің құқықтық негіздері, мемлекеттік тұжырымдамалардың, бағдарламалардың маңызы сипатталады. Сонымен қатар, Орталық Азия елдеріндегі діни-теологиялық білім беру мәселелерінің ерекшеліктері қарастырылады. Мақалада зайырлы қағидаттар мен зайырлы елдегі діни мәселелерді реттеудің маңызы анықталған.

Түйін сөздер: дін, Орталық Азия, діни ұйымдар, заң, діни ахуал.

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Государственно-религиозные отношения в странах Центральной Азии

В силу коммунистической идеологии советским гражданам было недоступно религиозное образование. Долгое время в государствах центральноазиатского региона не было собственных религиозных образовательных учреждений. После обретения независимости и открытия границ началось активное взаимодействие стран Центральной Азии с внешним миром: многие молодые люди уехали получать религиозное образование в арабские страны. В ходе обучения молодёжи в зарубежных исламских центрах студенты прониклись деструктивными религиозными идеями, чуждыми для менталитета своего народа. Вернувшись на родину, они начинают распространять идеи религиозного радикализма. Понимая, что подобная деятельность запрещена и преследуется по закону, они уходят в подполье, вербуют на противостояние с государством молодёжь. Идеологические рекрутеры радикальных религиозных течений формируют в сознании adeptов убеждения оправдывающие жестокость и насилие. Религиозная неграмотность или поверхностные знания о религии большей части мусульман, их неспособность отличать истинную веру от религиозного фанатизма и экстремизма способствуют распространению радикального исламизма. По мере роста числа приверженцев деструктивных религиозных течений их идеологическое противоборство со светским государством может превратиться в ожесточенную вооруженную борьбу. В статье описано, как руководству республик, которые представляют регион, приходится балансировать между защитой граждан от религиозного экстремизма и недопущения ущемления при этом прав и свобод законопослушных верующих. В статье рассматриваются особенности религиозной ситуации в постсоветских странах Центральной Азии, описываются правовые основы регулирования религиозных вопросов, значение государственных концепций, программ. Кроме того, рассматриваются особенности получения религиозного и теологического образования в странах Центральной Азии. В статье определяется значение принципа светскости и регламентации религиозной деятельности в светском государстве.

Ключевые слова: религия, Центральная Азия, религиозные организации, закон, религиозная ситуация.

Introduction

Global challenges of today's world put a number of important issues on the agenda. The issue of religion is especially relevant. Obviously, the threat to the peace and the peaceful coexistence of the country will not leave anyone indifferent.

In independent states, there was an excessive demand for religion after an atheistic ideology's attempt to create a non-religious society. The place of religious search has been often occupied by dubious religious doctrines. Initially, the states' policies were shaped in a neutral position and involved only registration of religious associations. The neutral position of the state in the religious sphere has led to a widespread incidence of non-traditional religious organizations, destructive religious ideologies. In different countries, religious communities have different reasons for and ways of opposing the state; however, there is one common denominator: the gap between the religious interpretation of justice and the duties of the faithful, on the one hand, and state expediency, on the other. Not all religious communities disagree with the state: the Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) insist on obedi-

ence to the authorities (since all authority is given by God, Allah). These religious teachings contain certain reservations, which permit disobedience, and religious radicals never miss the chance to exploit them (Laumulin, 2012: 2).

Also, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the Republic of Kazakhstan that are secular states of the post-Soviet Central Asia, have not been able to avoid these issues. The religious situation in these countries is similar and religious issues are common. It can be said that the similarity arises from the commonality of our history. Since the first days of independence, almost all Central Asian republics have been guided by the principles of a secular state, enshrined in national Constitutions and similar laws "On Freedom of Religion and Religious organizations": ensuring the rights of citizens to freedom of conscience and religion, non-interference of the state in the religious life of citizens and equal rights for representatives of all faiths. The State policy in the sphere of freedom of conscience is based on the principles of neutrality, tolerance and parity. In the Central Asian republics, except for the Republic of Tajikistan, since independence, it has been declared that it is unacceptable for religion to

interfere in politics. The laws “On Freedom of Religion and Religious Organizations” and “On Public Associations” did not allow the activities of parties on a religious basis and defined the principles of the activities of religious organizations. The provisions of these laws established that religious associations do not have the right to participate in the elections of State authorities. In general, the legislation of the Central Asian republics laid the necessary legal foundations for state-confessional relations and provided equal opportunities for religious associations.

Justification of the choice of articles and goals and objectives

The relevance of the chosen research topic has been based on the increase in the level of religiosity of the population of the Central Asian countries. The need to study the development of the religious situation in the countries of Central Asia is related to the significant impact of religion on the socio-political and economic development of the region. The main purpose and objectives of the study are to give an idea of the development of the religious situation, to consider the issues of religious “revival”, the main signs and characteristics of the types and models of state-confessional relations in the Central Asian region.

Research methods

The research was carried out through theoretical, historical and comparative analysis. The methodological basis for the interpretation of religion as a philosophical socio-cultural phenomenon was theoretically fulfilled in the field of religion.

The main part

After the fall of the Soviet Union, Central Asia has been involved in a process of formation and consolidation of nation states. This process entails the development of a new set of shared values. This, together with the abolishment of the Soviet atheist ideology, has given religion a prominent, yet ambiguous role in present day Central Asia (Ohlsson, 2014: 2).

The peculiarity of the religious situation in post-Soviet Central Asia is reflected in the fact that the state comes from the name given in the Constitution, the period of the adoption of a special law on religion, its peculiarities, the availability of information about the religious situation in the country, and the analysis of the religious-confessional diversity picture. The study also included the functions of the authorized body responsible for issues of religion. The objects of study of this article are religious schools, religious education peculiarities in the above-mentioned countries, as well as features of religious and educational Programmes in the Re-

public of Kazakhstan. These features are generated either by the introduction or lack of instruction in the basics of religion in secondary and higher educational institutions. Programmes and professional training of specialists, adopted at the state level, are recognized as one of the ways to assess the religious situation in the country. This distinction is due to the fact that the disciplines taught in secondary and higher education institutions have been or are being taught. State-recognized Programmes and training are recognized as one of the ways to assess the religious situation in the country. Here is an example of how the issues raised in the Central Asian states have been solved.

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan adopted on August 30, 1995, in the republican referendum, the Republic of Kazakhstan is a democratic, secular, legal and social state [1]. Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, adopted on 27 June 2010 by the national voting, is a “sovereign, democratic, legal, secular, unitary, social state” [2]. And Uzbekistan is recognized as a “sovereign democratic republic” in accordance with the Constitution of 8 December 1992 [3]. According to the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, “Tajikistan is a sovereign, democratic, legal, secular and unitary state” [4]. The fact that Turkmenistan has declared itself “a democratic, legal and secular state and public administration is in the form of a presidential republic” is clearly outlined in Article 1 of the Constitution adopted on May 18th 1992 [5]. Among a number of Central Asian states, the secular direction of the above-mentioned states is mentioned in the first chapters of their Constitutions (other than Uzbekistan).

During the Soviet era, the ideology of atheism was praised everywhere. And after the collapse of the Soviet Union, each state began to take a religious view and began to consider the issue of spirituality. «The Central Asian governments need to get out of a mindset that still retains the Soviet legacy of separation of state and religion understood as the prohibition of religion interfering in affairs of the state, but under which the state has the right to control all, or the majority of, religious activities» – said Sebastian Peyrouse, research professor of the Central Asian Program at the Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies at George Washington University’s Elliott School of International Relations [6].

At the state level, there was a need to adopt a Law that regulates the issue of religion. Each state has its own signatures in this regard. In our country, the Religion Law was passed on January 15, 1992, and the Law on Freedom of Religion and Religious

Associations has been operating until 2011. In the new era, the law was in need of change and in parallel with the impacts of the global world, the Law on Religious Activity and Religious Associations was adopted on October 11, 2011, in order to address some of the issues arising from the relaxation of religion. Over time, Kazakhstan's realities have put these issues on the agenda. There is a need to make changes to the law, and this law is being debated now.

The Law "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations in the Kyrgyz Republic" was adopted by the Kyrgyz Republic on December 16, 1991 and was subsequently repealed in 2008 and amended in 2011 and 2012. Also, in Uzbekistan, the law "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations" was first adopted on June 14, 1991, and was amended in 1998 with the adoption of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations". According to the law, it is forbidden to wear religious clothing in public places. The law on religion details the scope of and limitations on the exercise of the freedom of religion or belief. The law criminalizes unregistered religious activity; requires official approval of the content, production, and distribution and storage of religious publications; and prohibits proselytism and other missionary activities [7].

In the early years of independence, the Law "On Religious and Religious Associations", adopted on December 1, 1994, was adopted over again in 2009 as the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations" (the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan On External Violations and Advocacy). The state-confessional relations are defined by the separation of the state from religion and the principle of secularism in the state educational institutions. Religious fanaticism and extremism are strictly prohibited in the activities of religious associations. The amended Law on the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations states freedom of conscience and worship may be restricted for reasons such as ensuring the rights of others, maintaining public order, ensuring state security, defending the country, upholding public morality, promoting public health, and safeguarding the country's territorial integrity [8].

Also, in 2003, the Republic of Turkmenistan's Law on Religious Legislation was revised in March, 26th, 2016, and the Law "On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations" (Türkmenistanyň Kanuny Dine uýmak erkinligi we dini guramalar hakynnda), in connection with the public demand and urgency of regulation of religious situation. Accord-

ing to the law, the "Commission for Working with Religious Associations in Turkmenistan and the Religious Content Resources, Printing and Print Media Materials Review Commission" has been given more authority in regulating state-confessional relations.

The religious situation in the Central Asian states can be determined by the multi-religious nature of the country. As the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan clearly states, Kazakhstan is a multi-religious, polyethnic state. Despite the nature of its diverse culture, it does not go stray from a peaceful way of life. The relationship between state and religion in Kazakhstan bears similarities to the rest of Central Asia; yet it also presents important unique characteristics. To begin with, Kazakhstan's society is considerably more multi-confessional than any other regional society. This is one factor in the leadership's ironclad embrace of civic nationhood and secular – indeed, laicist – governance: maintaining a state identity based on citizenship and not ethnicity is a *sine qua non* for the country's stability (Cornell, Starr and Tucker, 2018: 89). Every citizen of Kazakhstan is convinced that he does not feel pressured due to his/her nationality, beliefs, language, and will work for the benefit of the country. Based on the principles of secularism in the policy of religion, Kazakhstan formulates the values of interconfessional consensus.

While 3658 religious associations operating in the Republic of Kazakhstan belong to 18 confessions, 2,399 religious associations operate in Uzbekistan, with 16 confessions and most of the religious associations belong to the Muslim community. In Kyrgyzstan, the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Kyrgyzstan officially rules the Muslim community, and in our country, the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Kazakhstan belongs to the official control centre of Muslims in the country.

It is worth mentioning the peculiarities of the religious situation in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. Among the post-Soviet Central Asian states, Uzbekistan is one of the first countries to pursue counter acts against Islamic radicalism and strictly adheres to its policy of religion. In addition, in Tajikistan, pupils and students of higher educational institutions are prohibited from entering the walls of classrooms in a Muslim cloak, and public opinion towards women who wear religious dressing is one-sided.

Besides, as for Tajikistan the latter is one of the most distinguished countries in Central Asia since nascence of the Islamic Renaissance Party (Tajikistan's Islamic Revival Party) in 1990. Turk-

menistan's position in Central Asia is different because it does not provide official information in line with the religious identification of the population. The mosque and the Muslim community have state funding in comparison with other self-financed associations.

The religious situation in the country is directly related to the establishment and functioning of the competent authorities. While each state gives different powers to the competent authorities, the establishment of these institutions shows that the state is indifferent to the policy of religion. The religious situation in the country is directly related to the establishment and functioning of the competent authorities. While each state gives different powers to the competent authorities, the establishment of these institutions shows that the state is indifferent to the policy of religion. In particular, in 1994, the Council of Religious Affairs (Gengeş) was established by the President of the Republic of Turkmenistan. The peculiarity of the structure of this council remains under criticism from a number of foreigners, organizations for the protection of freedom of conscience. Specifically speaking, the head of the Muslims of Turkmenistan - the mufti and the head of the Orthodox Church of Turkmenistan are being appointed as the deputies to the Chairman of the Council. In each of the provinces, the imams, whom have councils of religious affairs under the local administration and are appointed as their leaders, receive salaries as state employees. It is, of course, a worthy experience for the rest of post-soviet states to consider Turkmenistan's way of controlling religious situation at the state level. Tajikistan has initiated the authority to regulate the religious situation with the Ministry of Culture, and then with the Committee of Religious Affairs, which was approved by the Government. The Committee for Religious Affairs in Uzbekistan is under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan. More than 90% of the population of Uzbekistan belongs to the Islamic belief has established the Council for Religious Affairs under the Committee for Religious Affairs in order to develop interfaith and interethnic harmony and interfaith culture in Uzbekistan. In Kyrgyzstan, this service is entrusted to the State Commission for Religious Affairs, and on September 13, 2017, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Civil Society has been established in Kazakhstan and the Centre for Research and Experimental Centre and the International Centre for Cultures and Religions are implementing the state policy in the sphere of religion.

The relevance of the religious sphere in the post-Soviet republics, where the majority of the

population in these countries adhere to the Islamic religion, has created the need to adopt legislative decisions and pursue a state policy on religion in one direction. In particular, Kyrgyzstan initially in 2006 adopted the Concept of Public Policy in the Sphere of Religion. Currently, the tasks set out in the Concept for 2014-2020 are being solved. The work on the "State Program on combating religious extremism and terrorism in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2013-2017" was adopted and the Concept of the state policy in the sphere of religion in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2017-2020 was adopted and the concept was amended to the Law, the relevance of religious education, work for introduction of a new subject in secondary schools curriculum is being carried out.

In order to clarify the state's religious policy, education is crucial. Religious education and Religion Studies are a great part of their work. Along with religious education, Religion Studies has its own peculiarities. In many cases, differences between religion and religious education are ignored, and due to this fact, misunderstandings exist.

Considering the religious education and Religion Studies in Kazakhstan, a document that is subject to the most justification is the Law on Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Law on Religious Education states as follows: spiritual (religious) educational organizations are educational institutions implementing educational programmes for clergy (Article 1: Basic concepts used in this Law) and admission to the spiritual (religious) educational institutions shall be carried out in accordance with the procedure established by founder among the persons having secondary education (Article 26. General Requirements for Admission of Students and Pupils to Educational Institutions) [9]. This is a legal expression of the general religious education. However, there is no personal commentary about religious education, since religion education is not secular education.

For religious education in the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Kazakhstan has an Institute for Advanced Training for Imams, 9 madrasahs and 2 centres for the preparation of reciters of the Quran. The gradual transition from the nine madrasahs to the status of college is profitable for society, with the introduction of secular disciplines on the one hand and, on the other hand, the graduates of the Madrasah College that continue to study not only in religious, but also in secular institutions. Religious education is provided in institutions of secondary education and higher educational institutions. At school, it was

first called “The Foundations of Religious Studies”, and then it was called “The Foundations of secularism and religious studies”. In following six higher education institutions, religious disciplines are introduced as a subject of choice: Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University, Y.A. Buketov Karagandy State University, Khoja Akhmet Yassawi International Kazakh-Turkish University, Nur-Mubarak Egyptian University of Islamic Culture and religious scholars are being trained in the Academy of Business Career and Foreign Languages.

In Kyrgyzstan, according to 2011 data, there are 3 Islamic universities, 7 Islamic institutions and 52 madrasahs. 9 Islamic universities and 60 madrasahs have been officially registered in the State Commission for Religious Affairs. If the subject of “Religious Culture” in schools and higher educational institutions has been handled, then training of specialists is being led at the Kyrgyz National University named after Zh. Balasagyn [10].

The University of Islam, three madrasahs, and Orthodox and Protestant seminaries, International Imam Bukhari Centre were established in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Imam Bukhari Centre was established in 2008 based on the Hadith Research Centre and focuses on the issue of improving the qualifications of the mosque imams. Tashkent Islamic University has been training bachelors since 1999, and since 2005, it has been training its alumni for Master’s degree. In addition, specialists in Religion Studies are being trained in the International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan. In school, pupils of 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th forms are taught the subject of History of world religions, and the teaching of the general concept of religion is conducted in the first form among other disciplines. The discipline of Fundamentals of Spirituality. Religion Studies has been introduced as a subject of Religion starting from 2017-2018, as well as subjects related to religious bases, religious issues, and religious tolerance in colleges and lyciums. In Tajikistan, Islamic University and 19 officially authorized madrassahs function in Dushanbe. Religious education is strictly controlled abroad and in Tajikistan only after obtaining the first religious education and for students who want to continue their religious education abroad it is permitted by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Committee for Religious Affairs.

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in Tajikistan only after obtaining the first religious education and for students who want to continue their religious education abroad it is permitted by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Committee for Religious Affairs. Since 2009, for of 8-11 forms of general education in secondary schools the subject of Islamic Recognition has been introduced, the discipline Religion is studied in the higher education institutions and the training of specialists is conducted within the walls of the Tajik National University.

Turkmenistan also has a rigid policy in religious education: the state does not provide any support for religious education. Islamic education is carried out only at the Department of Theology of the Department of History of the Turkmen State University. There is no religious education in schools and universities, and there is no data on the training of religious scholars. Speaking about the religious situation in Turkmenistan located in Central Asia, it can be said that there is no religious problem in the country. Experts have two reasons: the first is the strength of the Turkmen national tradition and, secondly, the strict control of the state.

Results and discussion

The majority of the population of Central Asia are Muslims. Nevertheless, the secularism of all States in the region persists. The relationship between state and religion differs from country to country. Different approaches often appear in the constitutions. The leaders of the countries managed to reduce the influence of foreign preachers. However, despite these achievements, we continue to encounter non-traditional religious movements that have penetrated the territory of the Central Asian countries in previous years.

Conclusion

Central Asian countries differ in their neutrality policy, unless they prefer a particular religion in state-confessional relations. At the same time, it is necessary to study the peculiarities of the secular states, the problem of religion in the state, the legislative ways of regulating the state-religious relations, and these problems themselves have difficulties. Analysis of multi-religious, multi-ethnic society and practice of controlling and regulating state-religious relations in any state is a necessity for the development of culture of the established inter-religious dialogue in the country and preservation of stable religious situation.

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