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GENDER DIMENSION OF ANTI-RELIGIOUS POLICY IN KAZAKHSTAN IN 1920-1930s

The given article considers the gender aspects of the State-Confessional policy of the Soviet government in the 1920-1930s in Kazakhstan. The main directions of the activities of state bodies to emancipate and involve Muslim women in the public life of the country as an alternative to its former patriarchal-religious life have been investigated based on the analysis of sources and literature. According to the results of the study, it was found that gender policy in the system of Islamic-State relations was carried out in all regions of the Republic, but the forms and mechanisms for its implementation had regional differences, due to the level of Islamization of the regions of Kazakhstan. In the northern and eastern regions of the Republic, Muslim women were actively involved in state building through the organization of "red yurts" and women's delegate conferences. In the southern regions, where Islam had deep roots and was closely intertwined with the traditions of the Kazakh people the policy to emancipate Muslim women was aimed at overcoming religious remnants in everyday life, at fighting against the paranja, and the legal protection of women taking off the veil. Against the backdrop of the growing religious anti-political policy of the Soviet government, the clergy use various methods and conduct their influence on women. The authors estimated and conducted a religious studies analysis on the problem between anti-religious gender policy of Soviet government and the clergy as well as the Muslim women occurring in this conflict during the research period (1920-1930s).

Key words: Islam, Soviet power, Muslim woman, Polygamy, Fight against the Paranja.

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1920-1930 жылдардағы Қазақстандағы дінге қарсы саясаттың гендерлік өлшемі

Мақалада Қазақстандағы 1920-1930 жылдардағы Кеңес өкіметінің мемлекеттік-конфессиялық саясатының гендерлік астары қарастырылады. Әдебиеттер мен дереккөздерді талдау негізінде бұрынғы патриархалды-діни өмірдің баламасы ретінде мұсылман әйелдерді елдің қоғамдық өміріне баулу және тарту бойынша мемлекеттік органдар қызметінің негізгі бағыттары зерттелді. Зерттеу нәтижелері бойынша ислами-мемлекеттік қатынастар жүйесіндегі гендерлік саясат республиканың барлық облыстарында жүргізілгені, алайда оны іске асырудың нысандары мен тетіктерінде Қазақстан өңірлерінің исламдану деңгейіне байланысты өңірлік айырмашылықтары болғаны анықталды. Республиканың солтүстік және шығыс облыстарында мұсылман әйелдерін "Қызыл отау" мен әйелдер делегаттық конференцияларын ұйымдастыру арқылы мемлекеттік құрылысқа белсене тартты. Исламның тамыры терең және қазақ халқының дәстүрлерімен тығыз байланысты оңтүстік өңірлерде мұсылман әйелдерді азат ету саясаты тұрмыстағы діни қалдықтарды жеңуге, пәренжеге қарсы күреске, пәренжені шешкен әйелдерді құқықтық қорғауға бағытталған. Кеңес өкіметінің өсіп келе жатқан дінге қарсы саясатының аясында дінбасылар әйелдер қауымына өздерінің ықпалын сақтаудың әртүрлі әдістерін қолданды. Мақала авторлары зерттеу кезеңіндегі (1920-1930 ж.) Кеңес Үкіметінің дінге қарсы бағытталған гендерлік саясаты мен дінбасылар арасындағы мәселе мен осы қайшылық арасындағы мұсылман әйелдердің жағдайына баға беріп, дінтанулық талдау жасады.

Түйін сөздер: ислам, Кеңес өкіметі, мұсылман әйел, көп әйел алушылық, пәренжемен күрес.

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Гендерное измерение антирелигиозной политики в Казахстане в 1920-1930-е годы

В данной статье рассматриваются гендерные аспекты государственно-конфессиональной политики советской власти в 1920-1930-е годы в Республике Казахстан. На основе анализа ис-

точников и литературы изучены основные направления деятельности государственных органов по раскрепощению и вовлечению женщин-мусульманок в общественную жизнь страны как альтернативу ее прежней патриархально-религиозной жизни. По результатам проведенного исследования установлено, что гендерная политика в системе исламско-государственных отношений проводилась во всех областях республики, но формы и механизмы ее реализации имели региональные различия, обусловленные уровнем исламизации регионов Казахстана. В северных и восточных областях республики женщин-мусульманок активно вовлекали в государственное строительство посредством организации «красных юрт» и женских делегатских конференций. А в южных регионах, где религия ислам имела глубокие корни и тесно переплеталась с традициями казахского народа, политика по раскрепощению женщины-мусульманок направлена была на преодоление религиозных пережитков в быту, на борьбу против паранджи, правовую защиту женщин, снимающих паранджу. На фоне нарастающей антирелигиозной политики советской власти духовенство использовало разные приемы и методы сохранения своего влияния на женщин. Авторы статьи дали оценку и провели религиоведческий анализ возникшего сопротивления между антирелигиозной гендерной политикой советской власти и духовенством, а также положения женщин-мусульманок, оказавшихся между этим конфликтом в период исследования (1920-1930-е гг.).

Ключевые слова: ислам, Советская власть, женщина-мусульманка, многоженство, борьба с паранджой.

Introduction

In the 1920s, with the victory of Soviet power in the country, a state religious policy was formed; a legal framework was created that determined the nature of state-confessional relations. In Kazakhstan, as in the country as a whole, anti-religious propaganda and a struggle to overcome religious vestiges in the minds of the masses unfolded. Particular importance in anti-religious policy was given to the gender component, the women's issue.

It was due to historical trends in the predominance of the Muslim population and the religion of Islam in the region, in which, according to Sharia law, a woman was significantly lower in the social ladder than a man was and practically did not have the civil rights in everyday life, in property relations sphere and in land use. In the Soviet state, in regions with a Muslim population, the solution of the "women's issue", which meant giving women all rights on an equal basis with men, was seen as overcoming patriarchal-religious vestiges caused by the tenets of the Muslim religion. That is why the women's issue was closely linked to the issues of anti-religious struggle.

Justification of the choice of the article: goals and objectives

The choice of the research topic is due to the scientific interest in the problem, its relevance and poor scientific development. The women's issue in religion makes it possible to study its influence on the spiritual processes in society, since religion is able to offer certain ideals and values, guided by

which one can answer many relevant questions of the present. The problem of the women's issue in the religious policy of the state is relevant and interesting from the point of view of identifying and disclosing the features of the Soviet model of state-confessional relations in Kazakhstan in the 1920-1930s. In the process of a radical reorganization of society, a struggle was conducted against the religious worldview of the population, religious institutions were liquidated, and ideological stereotypes were dominated.

The category of "women's issue" in the field of historical confrontation between the Muslim religion and Soviet power refers to the little-studied problems of state-religious relations in the 20-30s of the XX century. Within the framework of the proposed article, the authors set the task of carrying out a discursive analysis and giving a scientific assessment of the gender aspect of the confessional policy of the Soviet government. It showed the main forms and directions of anti-religious work among women, and identified the importance of the gender issue in the modernization processes of the 1920s. Such a formulation of the problem will bring us closer to a deeper understanding of the problems of the relationship between the state and Islam, a scientific understanding of the Soviet model of religious policy.

Scientific research methodology

The methodological basis of the article was the theory of modernization, which makes it possible to rethink the problems of social transformation in society in the 1920s-1930s. The modernization of the spiritual life of society, carried out by administrative

methods, caused desperate resistance from the believers who fought for the preservation of religious dogmas in the society. In addition, in the study, the authors relied on the methodology of K. West and D. Zimmerman, through the prism of which gender is viewed as a social construct (West, Zimmerman, 1997: 94–120). The conditionality of the social structure depends not only on the level of development of social relations, but also on the degree of religiosity of the society. In this sense, the theory can be applied to study the gender aspect of confessional politics.

Materials and methods

The source base of the research was made up of documentary materials from the Archive of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the State Archive of the Orenburg Region (before 1925 Orenburg was the capital of the Kaz ASSR), regional archives of Kazakhstan. The funds of these archives contain the normative and legislative acts of the Soviet state on the emancipation of Muslim women, the administrative documentation of the central authorities regarding the women's issue, the minutes of the meetings of the Presidium of the KazCEC and regional authorities on gender policy. Materials of women's Muslim meetings and conferences, reports on the work of women's departments and commissions under the provincial executive committees are informative as sources. Published sources collected in thematic collections were also used (Bukhonova, Gribanova, 1990: 256).

The study was carried out using the theoretical provisions and conclusions set out in the works of domestic and foreign authors. In the studies of Kazakh authors, gender issues are considered in the context of the analysis of the internal social, demographic, cultural policy of the Bolsheviks (Amanzholova, 2017: 26-43; Rysbekova, 2009: 214-217). In A.R. Sharafeeva's works, the women's issue is considered on the materials of the All-Russian Congress of Muslim Women, in which mainly Muslim Tatar women from Kazan took part (Sharafeeva, 2020: 22-64). The author states the growth of the Muslim women's movement in the Russian Empire on the eve of October 1917, but at the same time notes the weakness of the women's movement in Kazakhstan for a number of reasons.

In working with sources and texts, general scientific research methods were used: analysis and synthesis, generalization. Special historical methods - historical-systemic and problem-chronological - made it possible to formulate the author's view on

the problem of the gender component in the anti-religious policy of the Soviet government. The comparative-historical method to compare the general and the particular in the processes of state-confessional interaction was used.

The main part

In matters of overcoming patriarchal-religious remnants and emancipating Muslim women, the following Decrees of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the Kaz ASSR played an important role: the Decree of December 28, 1920 on the abolition of the kalym, the Decree of January 17, 1921 "On the marriage law of the Kirghiz" and the Decree "On punishability polygamy and coercion of a woman to marry among the Kirghiz" dated September 29, 1921. In the Decree on the abolition of kalym (bride price), any transactions, deals and agreements on the payment of the kalym for the bride were recognized as legally invalid. The Decree on Marriage Law stated, "Polygamy, as a custom deeply humiliating for the moral dignity of a Kyrgyz woman and creating enslavement and exploitation of her personality, is positively prohibited." Only a Soviet civil marriage, registered in the department of civil status records in the prescribed manner, was declared legal. The decree introduced age limits for marriage; for men - at least 18 years old, for girls - at least 16 years old (GAPO. F. 7p. Op.1. D. 213. L.19). The gender component in the religious policy of the Soviet state emerged from the very first years of the victory of Soviet power. In the regional and district power structures, women's departments were created, the task of which was to support women and implement the gender policy of the state on the ground. At the district, county and district executive committees, the Bolsheviks formed special commissions to combat the seclusion of women, the removal of the veil and chapan. From the Central Administrative Department (CDA) of the KASSR which was in charge of religious issues, the provincial and district executive bodies received circular orders on the need to conduct a decisive and systematic fight against such manifestations of Islamic vestiges as kalym and domestic crimes, forcing women and girls to marry against their will, beatings of women and their exploitation, the marriage of a man to his second wife in the existing marriage with his first wife (GAJU-KO. F. 838. Op.1.D. 2. L. 136).

Throughout the republic, a struggle for a woman broke out. A widely used form of anti-religious work

among women was regional and district delegate conferences of Muslim women, conferences of girls of national minorities (national minorities) with the participation of the wives of communists, as well as women's Muslim meetings. They discussed issues of the powerless position of women in Muslim society and their protection from domestic violence by the husbands. The resolutions of the conferences aimed at a vigorous struggle against such customs and rituals that deprived women of their rights and placed them in an unequal position with men. They called for explaining to women the position on the abolition of bride price and polygamy, promoting the arrangement of a new way of life, and involving Muslim women in the public and cultural life of the republic (GAPO. F. 7p.Op. 1. C. 228. L. 21).

The complex of anti-religious measures in support of women, carried out in the regions and districts included the fight against quackery and underground medicine, the protection of motherhood and infancy, and the dissemination of sanitary and hygienic knowledge and skills among women. In some provinces, "cultural patronage" was practiced over Kazakh auls, within the framework of which anti-religious meetings were held with the invitation of women (OGASPI. F. 1. Op 1.D. 557. L. 30-31).

In the republic in the 1920s, various campaigns to emancipate women were carried out the Day of the Abolition of the Kalym, the Day of the Abolition of Polygamy, the Day of the Kyrgyz Woman; the Day of the Muslim Woman. Their goal was to attract the broad masses to the struggle against the old religious and everyday survivals. Party, Soviet and public organizations were involved in the campaigns. Particular importance was attached to participation in campaigns of young people - members of the Komsomol and pioneers. The protocols of the commissions for the "Day of the abolition of kalym" reflect the scope of the ongoing campaign. During the campaign in sponsored auls and volosts; women were informed at meetings about the achievements and extraordinary tasks of the party in the field of emancipation of Kazakh women. They practiced staging plays on anti-religious themes, staged show trials related to domestic violence against a woman. The opening of demonstration institutions of Soviet and economic bodies dealing with the emancipation of women was timed to coincide with the Day of the Abolition of the Kalym. To popularize the ideas of the liberation of women, the local press was widely used (OGASPI. F. 1. Op.1. D. 569.L. 6). Theses, slogans and other propaganda materials were de-

veloped centrally and sent to the localities from the Kazakh district committee of the RCP (b).

It was difficult to overcome the religious traditions and rituals that were established in society, since the population formally abandoned them, but in fact continued to follow the traditions in their modernized version. Officials noted this in their reports: "Kalym still reigns in our corners, the Kyrgyz woman was and is the subject of purchase and sale, the subject of exploitation and speculation in the hands of bais and their adherents. All decrees issued by the Soviet government on the abolition of the kalym ransom remain on paper. "They renamed the dowry (kalym) to kiit, i.e., mutual remuneration of interested parties," wrote the newspaper "Kirghiz Steppe" in December 1922. "Kiit consists of several heads of cattle (from 1 to 20 heads) with different items: carpets, robes..." (Bukhonova, Gribanova, 1990: 55).

To combat kalym and polygamy, the Bureau of the Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks in July 1928 decided to create a community "Down with kalym and polygamy." Kazakh women were involved in the membership of the society, using such forms of work as delegate meetings, women's clubs and red women's yurts (AP RK. F. 29. Op.1. D. 390.L. 19). Therefore, according to the information of the women's department of the Almaty District Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks on the progress of work to combat the seclusion of women, presented in Kazakh district committee in April 1929, a club for women of the national minorities was opened in the city (Bukhonova, Gribanova, 1990: 191-192).

Involving women in local Soviet governments, in artels and cooperatives, in various public organizations, such as the Koshchi Union, the Union of Atheists was considered to be as an effective method for resolving the women's issue. The task set before the Soviet authorities was to increase the percentage of women in the composition of local councils and people's assessors in Soviet courts (Bukhonova, Gribanova, 1990: 191-192). By the end of the 1920s, the number of female advisers was growing. Thus, as of December 1927, 17 women were elected to Chimkent City Council. Of these, 11 were homemakers, two were teachers, two were employees in economic cooperatives, and two were employees in Soviet institutions. Two women sat on the presidium of the city council, the rest participated in the work of sections and commissions (GAJuKO. F. 74. Op. 1.D. 151. L. 66).

In December 1927, 27 women were involved in the composition of Kyzyl-Orda city council, 14 more were candidates for members of the city council. In the national context, the gender representation looked like this: 22 women of Russian nationality, three Kazakhs, one Latvian, and one Georgian. From the total number of women members of the City Council, 7 were members of the CPSU (b), 1 candidate member of the CPSU (b), one was a member of the Komsomol, 18 were non-party. Women worked in sections of the city council: the section of health - 11 women, education - 6, the section of labor and working life - 4, the corporate and trade section - 3, the RCH section - 2, the communal and housing department - 1, the administrative and military department - 1 woman. The most active was the participation of women in the commissions for public education, the protection of motherhood and infancy, in the council of social assistance (GAJuKO. F. 74. Op.1. D. 151.L. 67). 38 women worked in Aulie-Ata council, of which 11 people participated in the work of the asset, 7 in the health section, 2 in the public education section, 2 women took a place in the presidium of the city council (GAJuKO. F. 74. Op.1. D. 151.L. 69).

The political education of women, as an integral part of the gender policy of the Bolsheviks, was also carried out in Kazakhstan. In Tashkent, special courses to train female advisers of Eastern nationalities from Kazakhstan and the republics of Central Asia were organized. Women - members of city, rural, volost, district executive committees, who proved themselves in practical Soviet work, were sent there. Candidates were approved at the plenums of the relevant councils, and requirements were put forward for applicants: literacy in their native language and at least one year of experience in practical Soviet work (GAJuKO. F. 74. Op. 1.D. 151. L. 23).

The implementation of gender policy in the field of state-religious relations in different regions of the republic had its own characteristics, due to the state of the religious situation. In the southern regions of Kazakhstan, Syr-Darya and Semirechensk, the policy to emancipate the Muslim woman was aimed, first, at the fight against paranja. Most Muslims lived in these areas, and the clergy campaigned against the removal of the veil by women. In this regard, the executive authorities paid great attention to the organization of legal assistance, protection of the rights and interests of "women who take off the paranja and thus strive for their emancipation from centuries-old slavery supported by the mullahs" (GAJuKO. F. 838. Op.1.D. 2. L.122). Militia bodies

of all levels were obliged to provide them with full assistance when women applied them. Any oppression of an oriental woman in matters of removing the veil was declared a criminal offense.

In the southern regions, cases of domestic violence and reprisals by husbands against their wives were not uncommon. The reason for male aggression was the social activity of women, which was contrary to the canons of Islam. There are many documents in archival funds containing facts of violence against Muslim women. We present only some of them. A resident of the village Bayserke, Enbekshi-Kazakh district, citizen Serikbayev killed his wife because she participated in the production of the play on Red Army Day. Citizen Smerutdinov brutally dealt with his wife when "she left him as a mocker of a woman" (Bukhonova, Gribanova, 1990: 191-192). The show trials of wife killers were used as the main form of combating domestic violence against women.

The organization and activity of "red yurts" was considered as the most acceptable and effective form of education of a Kazakh woman in nomadic regions. These were mobile agitation and propaganda centers for gender support. At these places, women were provided with outpatient care, given smallpox vaccinations, and sanitary and hygienic education of women was conducted here too. Women could receive legal and law assistance not only in the form of advice and consultations, but also referral to the judiciary in cases of kalym, polygamy and alimony. At the yurts, there were points for the elimination of illiteracy among women.

The Muslim clergy insisted that unconditional submission and obedience to the husband in all respects are the highest ideal, the main principle of Islamic morality. In the 1920s, in an attempt to resist the anti-religious policy of the Bolsheviks, the clergy used various tricks and methods to maintain influence over women. Oblast officials reported cases of opposition by the Muslim clergy to the emancipation of women in the Kazakh district committee, Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks. "The mullahs traveled around the villages under the guise of "trip to koumyss" and campaigned," they wrote (Bukhonova, Gribanova, 1990: 148). In the reports and summaries of regional officials, it was noted, "baystvo and mullahs slow down the work of red yurts and conduct agitation so that the Kazakhs do not let their wives and daughters study" (Bukhonova, Gribanova, 1990: 147).

On the other hand, the clergy made certain concessions on the gender issue. It is known that Islam

denied the social equality of men and women, asserted the superiority of men over women. According to Sharia, the social status of women was significantly lower than that of men; one man is equivalent to four women, a woman should not talk to a man, be in a room in the presence of men. However, in 1920 and at the beginning of 1930s the Muslim clergy, trying to resist the anti-religious propaganda of the Soviets and take possession of the female masses, changed their attitude towards women. In the reports, officials of the Soviet government reported, "the mullahs in the sermons said that women in Islam now have broad rights." They cited the facts of the involvement of women in Muslim management structures. So, in Atbasar district, one woman was elected to the mahalla.

The wives of mullahs and muezzins conducted religious agitation among women by organizing special meetings - majelis. The women's department of the Akmola provincial committee reported that the Muslim clergy tried to influence women, through their wives to drag women into the mosque for prayers, although earlier women were strictly forbidden to visit the mosque. In Petropavlovsk, at least a hundred women visited each mosque, and special women's departments were set aside for them in the mosques (Bukhonova, Gribanova, 1990: 152).

Results and Discussion

In the development of state-confessional relations in Kazakhstan in the 1920-1930s, great importance was attached to the gender issue. The solution of the "women's issue" in the interpretation of the Soviet authorities was closely linked with the general measures for the Sovietization of the Kazakh village, the conduct of mass political, cultural and educational work. However, the point, one way or another, concerned the religious policy of the state, since the patriarchal remnants that the Soviet government struggled with were due to the canons of

Islam. In this sense, the gender policy of the Bolsheviks became an important factor in the restructuring of the entire society, the establishment of new social forms and practices in the national regions. The involvement of Muslim women in the political, economic and socio-cultural life of the state was considered by the Bolsheviks as the main way to combat the religious prejudices of the population and a mechanism for transforming the interaction of organized management structures with various social groups of the population, as a way to reorganize the entire system of social relations.

Conclusion

Thus, it can be summarized that the gender component in the confessional policy of the Soviet government in Kazakhstan in the 1920-1930s occupied a significant place and was due to the political tasks of strengthening the power of the soviets. Muslim women were actively involved in state building and Soviet government, in the public life of the country. Forms and methods of implementing gender policy in the system of Islamic-state relations had regional differences, due to the degree of Islamization of the regions of Kazakhstan. In the southern regions of the republic, where Islam had deep roots among the settled agricultural population, and the norms of Islam were closely intertwined with the customs and traditions of the people, gender policy was mainly aimed at combating remnants in the family and household sphere. In the steppe regions, where the nomadic population predominated, mobile "red yurts" became a common form of anti-Islamic gender politics.

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