

REASONS OF THE RETURN OF NEWLY CONVERTED INTO CHRISTIANITY TATAR AND CHUVASH PEOPLE BACK TO ISLAM IN THE SECOND QUARTER OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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Relevance of the problem is determined by the fact that by studying the interaction between the Orthodox and Muslim religions in historical retrospect, we can avoid mistakes and can find solutions to problems in church-state and interfaith relations. The beginning of the XIX century was the period of a new phase of inter-confessional relations based on more tolerant principles of interaction between two religious traditions. The unique and highly valuable experience of peaceful coexistence of Christianity and Islam today is in high demand due to rising international tensions and conflicts of civilizations. The article is aimed at the study of the reasons of the return of newly-baptized Tatars back to Islam in the beginning of the XIX century. The article is based on the documents from the National Archive of the Republic of Tatarstan and published sources of the XIX century. The article deals with inter-ethnic and inter-religious processes took place in the Volga-Ural region in the beginning of the XIX century. Some of the reasons of the return of newly baptized Tatars and Chuvash people back to Islam were studied in the article. The materials of the article can be useful for the further study of this topic as well as for teaching special disciplines on the historical faculties of universities and for teaching national history in higher educational institutions of the country.

Keywords: ethno-confessional policy; Christianization; russification; baptized Tatars; Muslims; missionaries.

INTRODUCTION

Deep and complex transformations, connected with migration, wars, global mobility of the population taking place in the modern world set the people and the government a very difficult task – to adapt people with different civilization and value orientations to the new conditions of coexistence. Positioning of the Volga-Ural region of Russia as the region of stability and the region of successful resolution of inter-ethnic problems is the result of many-centuries complex transformations, influenced by peaceful coexistence of peoples of Turkic, Slavic and Finno-Ugric groups. But it was not always like this.

Christianization of non-Russian people left a dramatic mark not only on the pages of history, but also in the historical memory, social consciousness of non-Russian people, in the archetype of their religious and ethnic identity. Objective analysis of the unsuccessful missionaries' experiment warns against simple solutions to ethnic and religious relations, including the attempts to transform Orthodoxy

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into the official state religion. In this aspect the problem is not only of great scientific, but also of great practical relevance and importance.

Problem of the return of newly converted into Christianity Tatar and Chuvash people back to Islam is a well-studied topic in the national historiography. Before the revolution Kazan missionaries like Mozharovskij (1870), Malov (1892,1893), Mashanov (1875,1892), Chicherina(1906)and others studied this problem. In soviet times this problem was raised in the works of Grigor'ev (1948), Klimovich (1936). Since 70-s of the XX century a series of western scientists studied this problem. Among them there are R. Pipes (1970), P. Ujert (1995), F.P. Bennigsen-Brajan (1994), A. Kappeler (2000). Lately a lot of scientists are writing on this topic: R.R. Ishakov (2011), I.K. Zagidullin (2014), L.A. Tajmasov (2010). The topic was studied on the basis of historical sources of the second half of the XIX century when the return of newly converted back to Islam showed itself most clearly. This problem is a multifaceted one, so we will study the second quarter of the XIX century when the mass return of newly-converted to Islam was noticed by orthodox missionaries and the importance of study of this process was stated on the governmental level.

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretical and methodological basis of the study was the conceptual information of scientific research in the field of state policy and Orthodox Church relation to the non-Russian peoples of the Volga and Urals in the first half of the XIX century.

In this research various methods of historical knowledge were implemented. The most important is the principle of historicism that requires studying any historical problem in dynamics, revealing the specific characteristics of each phenomenon and the factors causing it. Comparative historical principle that allows us to compare different stages of religious policy in dynamic development. The problem-chronological principle that allows us to select different aspects of Orthodox-Muslim relations and to study them in chronological evolution

RESULTS

In the missionaries literature of the XIX century (Mozharovskij, 1870; Malov, 1872, 1892; Mashanov, 1892) the following reasons of the return of the newly baptized non-Russian people back to Islam were mentioned: educational activity of Muslim clergy among Tatar population; Muslim influence on Kryashens and other ethnic groups; ethnic and religious cohesion and solidarity of Muslim Tatars;lack of understanding of the language of worship and Christian religious doctrine by non-Russian people and lack of knowledge of the Volga region languages by the priests; as well as the fact that non-Russian people accepted Christianity for economic reasons, mainly for tax remission and escape from other obligations. However, bribery and misbehavior of Orthodox priests were not listed among the reasons.

Scientific study of information concerning finding out the reasons of the return of newly converted back to their religions made by Synod, as well as documents collected in the National Archive of the Republic of Tatarstan and a number of published sources creates a more objective idea of the phenomenon.

Before passing to a problem essence statement, we will specify the concept of “newly baptized” Tatars. According to F.G. Islyayev: “Newly baptized” in the pre-revolutionary historiography were considered Tatars, whose ancestors adopted Christianity after the first revision of 1722” (Islyayev, 2005). The majority of “newly baptized” Tatars was formed in the years of Newly baptized desk room activity in the region (1731-1755). At this time, the authorities put pressure on Muslims and pagans of the region by economic measures, although it is unnecessary to forget that Newly baptized desk room had a division of soldiers and didn’t shun to apply violent measures.

As a result, a significant part of the non-Russian peoples of the Volga region was baptized only for freedom from taxes, duties, recruitments, and also for the sake of punishments release for laws violation. Since 1720 benefits and privileges the government gave to baptized non-Russians were at the expense of those who remained in old faith. Newly baptized were exempted from recruiting and from all taxes for three years. Granting various privileges for three years, who accepted Christianity, was approved by the decree of 3 April 1731, the same privileged year by the decree of November 11, 1740 was 1741 (Grigoriev, 1948).

The sum of a community tax remained the same, despite the fact that newly baptized were exempted from it therefore the whole burden of the state taxes and duties, and also recruitments laid down on shoulders of Muslims and pagans of the Kazan region. From the declared on the eve of the Kazan conquest principle “in the name of faith and for faith” and “in the name of true teaching light” didn’t remain even a trace. According to R.R. Khairutdinov: “The main burden of economic pressure felt mainly Muslim Tatars, the most actively resisting Christianization. Economic oppression of Tatars assumed an unprecedented scale as in 1750 in the Kazan province including all the Middle Volga region, at 202.3 thousand male souls newly baptized (Tatars were only 35 thousand people) accounted 129.1 thousand souls remaining in the opinion of the church in disbelief - mostly Muslim Tatars (108.6 male souls)” (Khairutdinov, 2002).

Tired of the pressure, a lot of members of non-Russians unable to bear the yoke, registered Orthodox, but they did not understand Christian religion dogmas as well as church service language. The famous Kazan missionary Efimy Malov wrote in the diary: “There was at me Chuvash Vasily Yakimov and rendered: “Chuvashes perform pagan rituals in Cheboksarsky and Tsivilsky districts. They say that the Lord doesn’t yield a harvest when they live Christian way. Celebrate sinzya, and don’t profess the sins”. Further, he wrote that in the twenties years of the XIX century Chuvashes were gathered in a church by Cossacks. “But Chuvashes

didn't live Christian way long; those who did were oppressed, beaten, for such people a sacrifice for some evil would be fall was made." Another curious revelation of the missionary E.A. Malov: "It is as easily for a pigeon fancier to fly pigeons, as to drive Chuvashes to the God's temple; it's only necessary to address to a village constable: and he will do everything that is needed" (Malov, 1993).

Thus, the violent baptism, and also baptism on condition of granting various privileges didn't yield the wished results.

In the collection of documents "History of Tatarstan in documents and materials" (1937) one page of a table is given, drawn up in the Kazan history in the end of the XVIII century, from which you can see the reason why the Tartars from the village Ishevo accepted Orthodoxy.

"Stepan Afanasyev –The father Afanasy baptized Afanasyev with the godfather Yemelyanov for a three-year privilege from all taxes;

Pavel Petrov was baptized 8 years ago in order to avoid corporal punishment for stealing of a horse.

Yakim Ivanov was baptized 20 years ago in order to avoid corporal punishment for theft of different property from a barn.

Stepan Ivanov was baptized at his will came of age 25 years ago, on the occasion of marrying a woman, a former soldier's wife, in order to avoid her return to the first husband under their Mohammedan law.

Flegont Mikhailov was baptized 7 years ago in order to avoid punishment for stealing of horses.

Andrey Ivanov was baptized 30 years ago to avoid the recruiting queue"(History of Tatarstan in the documents and materials, 1937).

It should be noted that voluntarily accepted Orthodoxy, "captivated by Christ teaching" there is no a single person here, Christianity was accepted generally forcedly.

Important reason of apostasy was low level training of missionary personnel, as well as inappropriate behavior of their dignity. This is evidenced by numerous proceedings on misconduct of priests from non-Russian parishes available in the materials of the Kazan consistory of National Archive of the Republic of Tatarstan. For example, some of the headlines of cases: "On illegal extortions of the priest of the village Chekurchi of Kazan district Simeon Sitiperev and the Sexton Evlopiyev collected from parishioners. November 2, 1838, August 8, 1842" (NART, fund 4, list1, file3521), "On imposition of a fine on the priest of the village Kukmor of Mamadyshsky district A. Florinsky led the service. November 16, 1838- July 5, 1839" (NART, fund 4, file 3624), "On drinking of the deacon of the village Kirmeney of Mamadyshsky district Ivan Petrov. March 24, 1838-26June 1843." (NART, fund 4, list1, file 3513). About lascivious life of the sexton of the village Kubala of Chistopolsky district Alexey Toshevsky. May 16, 1838 - September 6, 1841" (NART, fund 4, list 1, file 3505).

The document “The Appeal of Cheboksarskiy District Administration of the State assets to Cheboksarskiy Territorial Court, on April 30, 1845.” brightly testifies to bribery of priests of foreign arrivals (History of Tatarstan in documents and materials, 1937, p.339). The document reflected the story that happened to the Chuvash peasant Fedor Sergeyev whose nine-month old daughter died. To bury her according to the rites of the church the peasant paid the priest 1 ruble 22 kopecks, but the priest demanded 2 rubles 20 kopecks. Sergeyev had no such money, and then the priest ordered him to pledge his last caftan there after the peasant had to stay without it in cold weather. The priest also didn't allow to leave the coffin with the child's body in the church. Then having despaired, the peasant left the coffin with the baby under the windows of the priest's house. Next day the enraged priest calls the volost clerk to punish Sergeyev with the rods. But the volost clerk refused to punish the peasant. The case is transmitted to the higher jurisdiction. This document shows humiliating and lawlessness state of the non-Russian people who accepted Orthodoxy and no matter the “new converts” (novokreshchenye) or the “old converts” (starokreshchenye) they were. The professor of the Kazan ecclesiastical academy M. A. Mashanov was right: “If the Russian roturier (common people) haughtily belonged to baptized, the people occupying that, or other official post, averted baptized from themselves and from Russians in general because of ill treatment and bribery to which foreigners and in particular Tatars especially were exposed. Without knowing Russian, intimidated by the Russian bureaucrats, almost defenseless before the highest administration, they bore a heavy Yoke, damning bureaucrats and through them all the Russians” (Mashanov, 1992).

A.N. Grigoriev (1948) writes about typical behavior of orthodox priests among indigenous people of the Volga region: “Often priests, being in “the new convert” (novokreshchenskaya) villages, chose “prosperity people” and having noticed good horses, cattle and others on his territory, made a chicane, threatening to take them the city for the most severe interrogations ...Usually priests, travelling around “the new convert” (novokreshchenskaya) boonies and villages collecting clergy tax, demanded from baptized Chuvash, Tatars, etc. everything that they liked, threatening with different punishments. Without any protection from the secular authorities, the new baptized (the new converts) gave them everything they demanded and through that lead to utter ruin” (Grigor'ev, 1948).

The baptized Tatars couldn't look with a complete apathy towards these acts. The Synod considered complaints of baptized Tatars on the 3rd February, 1827. They addressed to the Synod to ask it to convert them back to Muslim religion as their parish priests demanded unreasonable money for execution churching. At the meeting in the Synod it was offered to bring the priests accused of the abuse of power to justice. But it was impossible as “the above-mentioned Tatars don't give

the formal complaint and don't want to support it with the proofs." The same complaints were received from baptized Chuvashes.

In this case Synod ordered:

- "The above mentioned priests should be removed from their present places and send to other places where parishioners will wish to accept them, but not in "the new converts" at all.

New priests" primary from scientists" should be recruited to the vacate positions. They had to be "of good behavior and capable of urging the newly converted both the instructive word and a good example."

- The archpriests were recommended to visit parishes where the cases of the return of newly converted were especially numerous personally and to edify parishioners "with mildness, love and patience". They also had to keep the priests from abusing their official positions. About everything that "they saw in the clergy of a parish" it was required" to inform the diocesan administration which has to inform St. the Synod".
- It was required to take a written undertaking from all the priests of the newly converted parishes to "content with voluntary donations of parishioners and not to demand more".
- Decent it was entrusted "to have behind it vigilant supervision and to inform on abuses for the termination by all means, on pain of own responsibility under laws for their cover" (Orthodox discourser, 1870).

The archbishop of Kazan Filarett demanded to collect data on priests of those parishes where there was the greatest number of apostates. From the presented reference we learn that: "the moral level and intellectual development of pastors under inquiry were very unenviable: many of them were connected with legal inquiries, but very few of them ended a course of seminary, from 43 priests only 7 people."

CONCLUSION

The government and the Church were concerned about such situation. Since that time they refuse a pursuit of a number of the baptized population, and all their attention was concentrated on the strengthening the belief of the people who have already converted into Orthodoxy. The situation which developed in the first quarter of the XIX century in the sphere of the interfaith relations demanded change of the confessional policy of the government. First of all, the missionaries who received fundamental preparation for conducting missionary activity began to realize these phenomena. They living among the non-Russian population of the empire felt malignancy of the repressive policy in this sphere. They believed that it is possible to solve a problem of fixing of baptized foreigners in orthodox religion only by Christian education.

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