



**Development of state-confessional relations of tatarstan in conditions of the islamic-orthodox majority**

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**Abstract**

The article considers the experience of the last two decades on the implementation of confessional politics in conditions of the approximate quantitative balance between Muslims and Orthodox in Tatarstan, which is one of the largest polyethnic regions of the Russian Federation. The importance of the formation of the public institution "Culture, Religion and Society", which contributes to the scientific analysis of religious processes and the application in practice of a winning concept of the scientific, cultural and legal impact on religious revival in practice on a long-term basis, was emphasised. Important areas for the creation of conditions for the development of inter-religious dialogue and achievement of interethnic peace and an atmosphere of mutual respect were singled out. It is shown that the development of the legislative base, the development of religious education, cooperation in the social sphere, and the extension of educational practices to prevent the spread of religious and political extremist currents are important vectors for the development of state-confessional relations. Concrete steps and measures to promote the harmonisation of the development of interethnic and inter-confessional relations were noted. In particular, the announcement on an equal basis of non-working days of Islamic and Orthodox holidays, the restoration of "places of historical memory" within the republican "Renaissance" fund, supporting the activities of the Assembly of the Nations of the Republic, the organisation of visits to iconic places and events with national and religious content, the establishment of the Presidential Council republic on interethnic and inter-confessional relations.

**Key words:** State-confessional relations, Islam and Orthodoxy, harmonisation of inter-ethnoconfessional relations, Tatarstan, dialogue.



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The relevance of a subject is proved by need of judgment of a current difficult state of the interethnic and interfaith relations for the world. It is also defined by tasks and requirements of the Presidential decree of the Russian Federation "About the Strategy of the public national policy of the Russian Federation until 2025» [1] where the purpose of achievement of the all-Russian spiritual unity and maintaining ethnocultural identity of the people of the country moves forward. The efficiency and stability of the state and religious and interfaith relations depends on the level of an implementation of ethnoconfessional specifics in cultural and religious policy and practical activities of structures of the power.

For Tatarstan as to the multinational republic of Russia accounting of existence of the bi-confessional majority – representatives of Islam and Orthodoxy is important. Muslims and Orthodox Christians in the republic by different calculations about 50 for 50% that is a basis of need of the balanced approach for the solution of inquiries and the interests of the Tatar-Muslim and Russian-orthodox population dominating in a quantitative sense. The long-term policy of respect for balance of interests of two large faiths pursued in the republic plays an important role in preservation and strengthening of international and interfaith peace and harmony. It is reflected in the republican legislation. In particular, in a preamble of the law of the Republic of Tatarstan "About liberty of conscience and about religious associations" of 28.08.1999 it is fixed that "The State Council of the Republic of Tatarstan, recognising a special role of Islam and Orthodoxy in formation and development of spirituality and culture of the multinational people of Tatarstan, respecting and considering specifics of other religions making an integral part of historical heritage of the multinational people of the republic, ... adopts the present Law» [2]. Considering features of Islamic tradition in life of Muslim Tatars, the law in Art. 18.3 established that "the religious organisations have the right to have «waquf» property which legal status is regulated by the federal legislation»[3]. It gives the chance of development of «waquf» property, having stipulated in the spirit of tolerance admissibility of development of similar property and for others faith. Besides a number of provisions of the law reflected ethnoconfessional complexity and importance of versatile activity in the sphere of development of the state and interfaith relations that provided, for example, creation of special public authority for religions [4].

During religious revival Tatarstan accumulated the sufficient practical experience based on cooperation of the government and religious institutions with scientific community. Council for religious affairs of the Republic of Tatarstan became the coordination centre of collaboration in



sociocultural, legal and scientific cooperation. This experience in the accumulated form is offered to readers [5].

## **2. METHODS**

The analysis of discussions and discussions on problems of modernisation of the Russian historical education shows its suspense and allows to make a hypothesis that the paramount value in the solution of this problem is connected with preparation and implementation of measures and programs for prevention of extremism.

The base of a research was made by a complex of educational and methodical sources that shows historical progress on state-confessional relations of the Post-Soviet period.

For check of a hypothesis general scientific and theoretical methods such as analysis, synthesis, analogy and also a comparative-historical method most of which fully discloses the methodological principle of historicism were used.

The carried-out analysis showed that positive regional experience, in particular the Republic of Tatarstan which can widely be used during creation of a new educational and methodical complex is allocated.

## **3. RESULTS**

In difficult conditions of religious and national revival and development of the state-confessional relations, after the expiration of "trial" several years in the framework of disintegration of the Union State, requirement of the scientific, strategically verified action on the religious platform increased. This sphere became complicated still the fact that religious revival in the early nineties merges in the national movement that gave the mixed character of aspirations of these sociocultural directions in the conditions of formation of civil society. The first president of Tatarstan M.Sh. Shaimiev decides to invite to public service concerning religion of representatives of scientific community (from June, 1997 to 2007 for religions at KM of RT professor of Kazan State University R.A. Nabiev, PhD, concerning the state and confessional relations is appointed the chairman of the board).

It should be noted that the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the same approaches supports A.B. Derbisali (Professor, PhD, Diplomat) as the head of Muslims' Board of Kazakstan in June, 2000 who worked at this position till 2013 [6].

As a result in Tatarstan the activity that started within the Council for religious affairs in 1997 and was developed in the framework of practical complex named "Culture, Religion and Society" created by scientists of the Kazan university. Nowadays as a result of the continuation of activity within the Kazan university, this complex become a series of 27 scientific and methodical publications.



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The scientific and practical complex "Culture, Religion and Society" which arose on a voluntary basis purposefully studies and takes out on the practical platform questions of ethnoconfessional dialogue taking into account, first of all, interests of two major ethnoconfessional groups consisting of Tatars and Russians. Taking into account specifics of communities of Catholics, Jews, Lutherans and Protestants the special area of work in state agency for religious affairs is created. Important events and actions became carrying out at the State level celebration of two historical dates - the 2000 anniversaries of Christianity and the 1400 anniversary the beginning of distribution of Islam in the modern Russian territory, the edition of the Encyclopaedia on Islam [7], holding the large-scale conference "Orthodoxy in Polyconfessional Society» [8], realisation of a series of actions for development of interfaith dialogue, ensuring development of social service in interaction of religious and government institutions, etc.

Features of development of the state and confessional relations were accurately shown in the sphere of regulation of formation of religious education in Russia, in particular, in the conditions of polycultural communities of the Volga region region, for example, of the Republic of Tatarstan. It is about the balanced approach to a question of assistance, first of all, to the Orthodox and Muslim spiritual centres. New challenges that were mentioned on the agenda are related to rendering assistance in return of cult and educational buildings or construction new, execution of the license for educational activity, support of teaching secular subjects in religious educational institutions, before, all shots, interaction at the invitation of foreign citizens for teaching activity, counteraction to distribution of radical and extremist currents, etc. The main strategy is to observe the balance of interests of Islam and Orthodoxy and within to create suitable conditions for its education development: the Russian Islamic institute and its highest level - the Bulgarian Islamic academy, and the Orthodox theological seminary focused to revival of the Kazan spiritual academy. Soviet Period mostly defined as a regional or even a global challenge for religious education. After 1991 limited and lost experience of traditional education was replaced by different religious ideologies from Middle Eastern, North African regions. One of those events became a part of North Caucasian conflict. Islamic researches aimed to revival the traditional education system that has to be collected and picked up for sustainable development on Russia [9].

Researches of functioning of Islamic educational system distinctly appears by its consideration through a prism of different aspects of religious revival. Ideals and values of Islam, his idea of the world and good are broadcast in educational space in the course of work of different level of educational institutions. One of the key moments of development and improvement of Muslim education is an interaction of religious and government institutions on the Islamic educational



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platform that received a high point of development within implementation of the federal project of preparation of specialists with profound knowledge of history and the culture of Islam (the order of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 2452-r November 18, 2016).

To important components of maintenance of confessional policy is the fact that religious organisations are aimed to support and cooperate in the sphere of social service and charity with state institutions. Cooperation of state institutions and confessional centres are historically concentrated on social support with scholarships and charity programs. In Tatarstan during social and political transformation of society days-off mentioned as a religious holidays of Islam and Orthodoxy are defined as an equal principles. Activity of two centralised religious organisations - Spiritual Board of Muslims of Tatarstan and the Kazan diocese of ROC transformed to the Tatarstan metropolitanate territorially covers all republic. At the Kazan diocese 9 monasteries, 1 theological seminary conduct activity, and Spiritual Board of Muslims consist of 9 Islamic religious educational institutions, including the Russian Islamic institute. At the initiative of the State Counsellor of the Republic of Tatarstan M.Sh. Shaimiev within activity of republican fund «Vozrozhdeniye - Revival» started the large-scale project "The Republican Foundation for the Revival of Historical and Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Tatarstan". Besides this process, peculiar expression of respect of historical memory of representatives of Muslim and Orthodoxy take place [10]. Along with it with assistance of the country leaders zayersheno construction of the building of Bulgar Islamic academy successfully finished and 4th of September 2017 became an official ceremonial opening [11].

Progressive vision and strategical thinking of Tatarstan Government in the early 1990-th make this region as an example for sustainable development and respectful coexistence for confessional majority [12].

### **4. DISCUSSION**

Experience of Tatarstan Republic which is related to equal confessional majority and sustainable develop shows real ability to keep the society in balance. In the conditions of globalisation and need of integration of Muslim Umma into public and cultural life of the country, it becomes relevant to create a competitive education system in relation with the Islamic world. From 10 to 12 million immigrants whose parents or they arrived from the countries belonging to the Muslim world [13]. The matter is not less relevant for Russia. The migration situation emphasises that representatives of Central Asia and a number of neighbour countries where Muslims make the majority [14]. Unlike the countries of Europe, Russia earned a positive experience of interfaith dialogue and strong traditions of Islam. Thereby, at structural systematic formation of system of Muslim education, the program of adaptation according to traditional Islam in Russia assumes a positive result. Discussing point usually



comes from on extremely important issue - should Muslims integrate to secular society or have to keep it up. As a result of this antagonistic issues - implementation of radicalism and extremism into modern lifestyle take place and new challenge appears in face of this ideology. That why the Middle Eastern and Islamic researchers are interested in counteraction of radicalisation of younger generation, prevention of extremism and preventing to nonconventional ideology among human society [15].

## **5. SUMMARY**

According to research details it possible to notice that:

1. Political and legislative platform creates the equal conditions for all confessions and keep them in balance in face of government;
2. Scientific researches are the methodological base for sustainable development and that is shown on Tatarstan experience;
3. Development of traditional religious education gives the possibility for progressive social service and protects the young generation from non-traditional ideological distinctive views.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

Thus, the multinational and polyconfessional character of the republic that appears as a factor of competitiveness of Tatarstan, pays attention on development of the state and confessional and interreligious relations in general. Parity most of representatives of Islam and Orthodoxy on the basis of historical memory developed the traditional mutually respectful relation to each other. Sustainable development of society, creation of its strong social base depends on systematic improvement of the state and interfaith relations that assumes accounting of a factor of the bi-confessional parity majority in religious life of the republic. Such flexible approach in confessional policy promotes formation of modern sociocultural look of Tatarstan where it is formed conditions for interfaith consent and dynamic public and cultural and economic development in general.

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