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ATTITUDE TO OUR RELIGIOUS VALUES DURING SOVIET RULE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Sanjarbek DJUMANOV

Researcher of Imam Bukhari International Scientific-
Research Center, Doctor of Philosophy in History (PhD)

During the Soviet rule, not only material wealth was taken from our country, but also the struggle against our national and religious values and the scientific heritage of our scholars. This, in turn, had a painful effect on the spiritual life of Uzbekistan. This article analyzes information about the scientific heritage of our scholars and the attitude to our religious values and its consequences during the years of Soviet rule.

Keywords: our great scholars, historical buildings, Islam, atheism, sovietization of our values.

It is known that during the Soviet era, the policy of colonization was implemented in all spheres, including the religious and educational sphere. These include banning our religious values, limiting education, concealing the scientific heritage of our scholars from our people, and so on. As a result, many rare works of our great scholars were lost, holy places were trampled, historical buildings and cemeteries were destroyed. This situation has left a deep impression on the spiritual life of our people. For this reason, it is important to study and analyze the history of this period, which, in turn, makes it possible to draw deep scientific conclusions.

Islam was the second largest religion in the Soviet Union. Muslims constituted the bulk of the population in six of the 15 republics that comprised these states, namely the Azerbaijan SSR, the Tajik SSR, the Turkmen SSR, the Kyrgyz SSR, the

Kazakh SSR, and the Uzbek SSR. In addition, large numbers of Muslims lived on the coasts of the Volga and the Urals, as well as in the North Caucasus of the RSFSR [1: 58-60].

In various works written on the state of Islamic education in Uzbekistan during the Soviet period, the local population was discriminated as “challasavod” –illiterate (auth.). In the literature written during this period, the fact that the system of religious education in our country has been perfectly formed for more than a thousand years and has its own stable traditions has been neglected. Similarly, in the educational works of Soviet-era authors, there were many instances of distortion of reality in religious education in order to reinforce the tyranny of the colonial government. Such works on the “reactionary nature” and “residues” of Islam were mainly intended for use in atheistic propaganda. [7:5-6].

During this period, the Soviet government promoted atheism in Uzbekistan, as in all republics, in a fanatical manner. This had a painful effect on the intellectual life of our country. Despite this, the Soviet government was forced to grant partial permission for the religious practices of the population in the six Muslim republics mentioned above. In particular during the Soviet era, mosques continued to function in large cities. However, as a result of the Soviet government's anti-religious policy, the number of mosques were reducing from year to year.

First the Russian Empire, and then the Soviet colonization caused great damage to the Uzbek national and spiritual identity. Especially, the period after 1917 is characterized by the crisis and devaluation of the national-spiritual values of the Uzbek people, and at the same time, by the emergence and formation of "new socialist spiritual values". The Soviet government focused on "socialist values" as the best way to keep other nations, especially the Uzbek people, in obedience. Various methods have been used to do this. Sovietization of values, false theories and ideas such as “Soviet culture”, “creating a national in form, socialist culture in content”, “formation of a new single unity of peoples - the Soviet person”, “the existence of nations is based on the idea of proletarian internationalism” have had tragic consequences in the history of our national-spiritual values [3:91].

The Soviet Union's anti-religious policy and false theories became apparent on the eve of World War II as being far from the truth. Despite the closure of mosques and threats to the scholars, the population did not abandon their religious beliefs. The threat to the country led the Soviet leadership to examine various aspects of its religious policy. The defeat of the Soviet army in the early days of World War II also showed the need for people to be in the spiritual field for the rest of the war. The threat to the country forced Stalin to pursue a new policy, abandoning some principles. The Muslim population was allowed to visit mosques and perform some religious ceremonies. People started asking government agencies to open mosques that had been closed during the anti-religious policy. Most of the clergy supported the policy against invaders during the war. In this period, prayers would perform openly in mosques, and at the end of Friday prayers, the imam would ask for help from Allah to the Soviet Union [9].

The Soviet government authorized its Muslim citizens to perform Hajj in 1944 in order to reestablish relations with Muslim countries. After the end of World War II, the religious policy of the Soviet government began to change again. With the exception of some changes, the work in this regard began to return to the previous state. During this period, the fight against religious values was intensified. In many events held under the slogan of a new lifestyle, the European lifestyle was promoted, and Uzbek customs, family relationships, and religious ceremonies were declared superstitious [4:277]. Such a situation was a blow to our national and religious values.

The Soviet government, during its rule over all of Uzbekistan, fought against religious values, sometimes openly, sometimes covertly. In this period, the policy of “scientific atheism”, which was adopted by Soviet intellectuals in an artificial manner, took a special place in the struggle against religious values. In fact, “scientific atheism” would not be in any scientific field. This policy was adopted only in order to implement the political goals of the Soviet government at that time, and to justify the activities of the government in the religious sphere [3:93].

The Soviet government fought against religious values systematically. Anti-religious propaganda was strongly controlled by ideological agencies. Here, the

decision of the Central Committee of the CPSU of June 16, 1971 on the intensification of atheistic education of the population and the decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan of August of the same year on this issue were of great importance. These documents demanded that all the ideological organizations, party and Soviet administrations intensify the struggle against religious values, renew control over the observance of the law on religious ceremonies, and “identify the religious fanatics” [5:350].

Since the beginning of the 80s of the 20th century, efforts to fight against religious values have intensified in Uzbekistan. In these years, praying, following the Islamic obligations, and all forms of Muslimness were once again condemned as "old fashioned". During these years, many mosques and madrassas were closed in the republic, and they were turned into warehouses. This resulted in irreparable damage to many monuments related to our religious values.

In addition, during this period, the Soviet government strictly limited religious ceremonies, it was forbidden to read funerals, accompany the dead on their last journey, and bless religious people. A ban was introduced on the ceremonies related to Navruz holiday. The communists banned Navruz and invented “Navbakhor” holiday instead. But the Uzbek people did not accept this fake holiday [4:586].

Besides, in these years, commissions were formed in all local councils to resolve the issue of relations with religion and religious people. The main task of such councils was to conduct the party's policy towards religion and believers, to “curb” religious values. Such activities were more clearly defined in the decision of the Central Committee of the CPSU on September 22, 1984 “On the strengthening of atheistic propaganda”. In the decision, it was emphasized that religious values should be organized according to the ideas of communist ideology [6:56-57]. At the same time, in order to further strengthen such activities, on August 4, 1985, the Central Committee of the CPSU adopted the decree “On strengthening the fight against the growing influence of Islam.” The measures to be implemented in this regard were determined in this decision too. In addition, such events as “Young Atheist”, “Islam and Woman”, “Atheist”, “Religion is Heresy”, and atheistic clubs were organized by Soviet ideological institutions. But in the late 1980s, the changes that began in the

Soviet Union as a result of the “Perestroyka” policy were also reflected in this area. In particular, the above-mentioned decision was canceled on August 7, 1990 under the influence of the public [6:56-57].

During the Soviet era, the government's aggressive anti-religious policies led to the decline of religious institutions, especially mosques, year after year. In total, in 1917, the number of mosques in the Soviet Union was 25 000, but by 1970 it had decreased to 500 [2:176]. By the end of the 1980s, almost 45-50 million citizens of the Soviet Union considered themselves Muslims, but the number of mosques in which they worship did not exceed the above number. During this period, it was forbidden to engage in religious activities outside the officially registered mosques and madrassahs [8].

At this point, it is also worth mentioning that the sights where the great scholars found their last resting place were turned into ruins. The destruction of the place where Imam Bukhari was buried is an example. Not only our local Muslims, but also some of our foreign guests were dissatisfied with this situation. The visit to the Soviet Union in 1956 of Sheikh Naeem al-Jisr, one of the most prominent Lebanese community leaders, proves this idea. The visitor had seen the grave of the scholar in a dilapidated state and returned to his country in a very depressed mood.

As a conclusion, it can be said that during the years of Soviet rule in Uzbekistan, the struggle against our religious values was carried out. This happened in different ways. These include destroying the works of scholars, destroying or demolishing the places where they lived, restricting religious education, and so on. Also, relevant decisions were adopted in different years to implement such works. Despite the government's oppression, the true sons of our land not only tried to preserve our religious values, but also took steps to develop them. However, the persecution and restrictions continued in one form or another until Uzbekistan declared its independence.

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