

## **Activities of the Society "Znanie" in the Karakalpak ASSR in 1940s-1960s**

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In the study of political, economic, social and cultural processes in the history of our nation, historical sources and literature play an important role in restoring historical reality. When we talk about the religious policy carried out in our country during the Soviet government, the persecutions in this area, the softening of the relations between the country and religion during the years of the Great Patriotic War in the labors of the Soviet government, first of all, depending on the decisions made by the Central Committee of the CPSU and the USSR Council of Ministers We are witnessing that the features of atheistic propaganda are highlighted in various regions of the USSR.

Scholars who dealt with the issue of the religious policy of the Soviet government noted that the attitude of the government towards religion was constantly changing, that in some years the government carried out a policy of restricting and persecuting religion, and in some years there is "the period of softening", taking into account the internal and external political situation in religious policy cites. For example, in the pamphlet «Очерки истории Каракалпакстана (1916—1991)» by B. Koshanov and H. Otegenov, the history of Karakalpakstan in 1916-1991 is written based on new archival documents and field notes, relying on the achievements of the science of history will be done. In the pamphlet, the Soviet government's policy of repression against Muslims did not stop even for one year, the lands of Muslim scholars were seized, some of them were shot, many books written in Arabic script were burned, in 1950-1952 Salmen Ishan and other religious spheres accusations are made about the repression of its representatives[1].

During the era of N. Khrushchev, Soviet population demanded to strengthen the party's ideological and educational work, especially the formation of a scientific-materialistic atheistic point of view, in the great tasks of the restoration and development of the national economy which they are facing. In the pages of regional newspapers of republican and autonomous republics, atheistic propaganda revived significantly. The published articles criticize religious relics, bottom drawer, fasting, Eid al-Adha, pilgrimages to the so-called «holy places», and the negative impact on the essence of Muslim traditions and rituals, as well as the psychology of people's minds. is spoken.

This process, with the establishment of the whole organization «Znanie» society, the scientific-atheist propaganda will become stronger. Experts of the population economy, teachers, medical experts, writers, journalists were more involved in it[2].

The history of the structure of the entire organization «Znanie» society began in the middle of the 20th century. Its history is connected with the restriction of the activities of the «Association of Fighting Atheists», which was active in the pre-war period. The beginning of the Second World War forced the country to reconsider its attitude to religion. However, the need for ideological education remained during the war. These works were carried out by political workers in the army and mobile brigades on the front lines. A special attention was paid to propaganda work aimed at mobilizing labor resources on the way to victory. By the beginning of

the second period of the Second World War, the need to coordinate this work arose, and by the decision of the Council of People's Commissars on July 31, 1943, a lecture bureau was established under the Committee for the Affairs of the Higher School under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR. The task of this bureau is defined as follows: «Organization of public paid lectures on the international situation, current military-political events, historical, military-historical and other problems in Moscow and throughout the country».

By the order of the CPSU of the USSR on September 2, 1945, the name of the lecture bureau was changed to the lecture bureau of the whole organization under the Committee of Higher Education under the CPSU of the USSR. In 1946, it was transferred to the Ministry of Higher Education of the USSR. On July 7, 1947, with the establishment of the All-Union Society for Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge, the All-Union Lecture Bureau ceased its activities[3].

All-Union Society for Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge (since 1963 All-Union «Znanie» Society. - R.M.) In 1947-1954, the society was established and developed as an organization consisting of certain scientific and public-political developers of the state. During this period, the lecture activities of the society were aimed at informing the citizens of the Soviet state about the achievements of science and technology, forming a communist worldview, and guiding the mass of the population to solve the tasks set by the party and the government[4].

On May 23, 1947, a group of 33 members of the scientific and cultural workers of Uzbekistan signed and introduced the petition on the establishment of the Republican Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge in the local press. On May 24, 1947, under the leadership of the President of Academy of Sciences of the Uzbek SSR T.A. Sarimsakov, the organization committee of the Society for Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge of Uzbekistan consisting of 13 people was formed. 212 people were confirmed as real members of the society. Among them, 19 were from the Karakalpak ASSR.

The society began its lecture work in October 1947, and in that year 109 lectures were given, involving 4,700 people[5].

Thus, until January 1, 1948, regional commissars were established in 6 regions of the republic (Tashkent, Samarkand, Fergana, Andijan, Bukhara, Karakalpak ASSR), and in 4 departments (Namangan - March, Khorezm, Kashkadarya, Surkhandarya - June, July). As of January 1948, there were 18 members of the society in Karakalpak ASSR, and as of January 1, 1949, the number of members increased by one and reached 19.

The Society for the Promotion of Political and Scientific Knowledge of the Uzbek SSR was established on April 22, 1948 on the basis of the charter approved by the decision No. 787 of the Council of Ministers of the UzSSR and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan. Society Administration The entire Organization follows the leadership of the Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge[6].

Thus, in 1947, a branch of this society was established in Karakalpakstan. The organization of the republican political knowledge dissemination society had a positive effect on the increase in the number of speakers, they significantly increased the level of work, and the forms and methods of lectures and propaganda have changed a lot. If in 1948 there were 19 active members of the society, by 1950 their number reached 117. During 1950, 11 district branches of the society were formed, there were 5 society members and 4 primary organizations, 7 collective farm lecture halls. In order to improve lecture promotion, an agreement was concluded with 41 collective farms and 31 enterprises on the organization and delivery of lectures. The number of members of the society reached 180 as of January 1, 1951[7].

In July 1949, the Central Committee of the party made a decision «On the organization of the dissemination of political and scientific knowledge and the improvement of its work». In the republics, the work of regional departments was criticized and revised. Heads of departments in

regions and Karakalpak ASSR were confirmed. Uakhit Shalekenov is confirmed as the head of the society in charge of Karakalpak ASSR[8].

Since then, the number of scientific-atheist topics among the topics of research carried out by the members of the society in the places began to increase. More than 20 lecture texts on scientific-atheistic topics are prepared and sent to places by the Uzbekistan Republican organization of society. Among them are «Marxism-Leninism about the reactionary content of Islam», «Religion is an opium for the people», «The fight against religious remnants in the minds of the people», «Science and religion about life and the origin of man», etc.

The All-Union Society for Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge continued its work in the 1960s, and as of January 1, 1961, the branches of the society in the districts of the Karakalpak ASSR and their heads were confirmed[9].

Matnepesov	Tortkul
Radjapov R	Beruni
Yusupov	Amudarya
Sarsenbaev	Khodjeli
Atamuratov N	Kungrad
Aldeshev B	Kegeili
Seytniyazov	Takhtakopir
Nurimbetov	Chimbay
Antipenko	Muynak
Nurushev	The Corresponding Secretary of the Council of the «Znanie» Society

During these years, a special department for promoting scientific-atheism knowledge was established under the administration of the republican «Znanie» society. In the 1960s, this section was headed by J. Bazarbaev, candidate of philosophical sciences, scientific secretary of the Karakalpak ASSR branch of the Academy of Sciences[10].

During these years, a system of atheistic propaganda was formed through the organization of the Society for Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge of the Whole Organization. A scientific-methodological council for the promotion of scientific atheism was established near the Republican branch of the society, a special department for the promotion of the scientific-atheist point of view was created, and its work schedule was fully covered in the newspapers.

The department of the Karakalpak ASSR of this society gave lectures of various contents in the districts of our republic. Among them, the number of lectures on the topic of atheism has been increasing. For example, from February 1958 to March 1960, 17,400 lectures were delivered to an audience of 900,000, of which 1,265, or 7%, were on the topic of scientific atheism. However, in 1958 alone, 443 (5.1%) of 8,520 lectures were on the topic of atheism[11].

The increasing number of lectures on the subject of atheism forced some people to withdraw from religion. For example, in July 1959, the famous akhun Abbaz Alew's son renounced the religion, expressing his opposition to all the rules of the Islamic religion. Then Abbaz the son of Alew appeared in newspapers with articles, calling on the mullahs and clerics who were practicing the practices of Islam to abandon the religion[12]. In April 1959, Kh.DJakhsimov who is the imam-khatib of the famous mosque in Tortkul gave up his religious practice and decided «Now I don't want to deceive people any more, I want to work honestly and have a happy life» and went to work in a construction office. In 1960, a pensioner living in the Sverdlov state farm, Djakhsimurat Paljanov, criticized the plans of religion and called his peers to get rid of the darkness of the religious fog[13]. Of course, these clerics published articles in newspapers about their apostasy and urged the population to leave religion, not by their will, but by the government of the Council.

During 1962, the society gave 1332 lectures on scientific and atheistic topics throughout our republic. In these lectures, among the 4 former religious workers, Abbaz Alew's son, Allanazar Kosnazarov, who returned from religion this year, took part[14]. In the following years, the number of lectures increased even more. In general, in the second half of the 1960s, the number of scientific-atheistic lectures continued to increase:

In 1966	In 1967	In 1968	In 1969	In 1970
2102	2071	2705	2449	2564

As for the issue of staffing of the All-Union Society for Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge, as of January 1, 1960, there were 1,451 members of the Karakalpakstan branch of the society. 124 of them were women (92 Uzbek, 32 Karakalpak). The number of lecturers consisted of members and candidates of the CPSU (1120), as well as 153 members of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League. There were 1 correspondent member of the Academy of Sciences, 2 professors, 37 candidates of sciences and docents. By profession, there are scientific workers, mainly employees of the Karakalpakstan branch of the Academy of Sciences of the UzSSR, institutes, laboratories, etc. (58 people), teachers of higher educational institutions (81 people), pedagogues of secondary special educational institutions (32 people), school teachers (414 people), engineers and technicians (55 people), economists (39 people), doctors (53 people), agricultural workers (142 people), lawyers (53 people), literary workers (writers, journalists) (12 people), art workers (composer, godman, musician, etc.) (8 people), military personnel (19 people). In addition, the members of the society are the employees of the party organizations (148 people), the employees of the Council (51 people), the employees of the trade union (27 people), the employees of the All-Union Leninist Communist League (27 people), production, transport, directors of construction enterprises (15 people), 2 employees of production, transport, construction enterprises, 35 MTS, collective farm directors and heads of collective farms, 25 collective farms, MTS, state farm employees, students of 9 advanced educational institutions, 83 people from other fields[15].

In 1963, the Society for Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge of the All-Union was reorganized as The «Znanie» Society of All-Union. In Karakalpakstan, its department was re-established in 1963, and 1,657 lecturers of the Karakalpak department gave 5,226 lectures in the first 4 months of the year. It was more than 200 lectures compared to the first 4 months of 1962. Also, 50 new members will be accepted into the society. In that year 1963, 70 lectures were given every day, or 43 lectures per thousand people per year. During this period, the departments of the society in Chimbay, Tortkul and Nukus gave quite a lot of lectures. During this period, 411 of the lectures were on scientific atheism. As a result of the lectures, Kasim Mukhambetyarov and Hayt Maksym Sadikov apostatized[16].

In the annual report of T.Izimbetov, deputy head of the department of the «Znanie» society, candidate of philosophical sciences, to A.Artikov, the head of the bureau of the scientific-atheistic section of the republican «Znanie» society, the scientific-atheistic section of the Karakalpakstan branch of the society He mentions that he has attached 132 lecturers-theists and 7 district sections, and with their power, 1351 lectures were taught in 1962 or 125 lectures more than in 1961. This indicates that each member of the section has read 10 lectures.

During the year among the works covered in the plan of the section discussion of lectures on the topics of «What is religion», «Propaganda against religion and national programs», «Islam and the Universe», «Criticism of modern Islam», «What is the harm of sacrifice», «Religion and science about the weather », «Women and Islam», involvement of apostate akhuns and imams in the propaganda of lectures and other problems were also mentioned. Furthermore, during the year, it was mentioned that Abbaz Akhun Alew's son, Kalimbetov, Kosnazarov participated among the former religious workers in the propaganda work[17].

Also, in the late 1950s and first half of the 1960s, scientists, propagandists and lecturers of our republic published more than 250 articles on the theoretical and practical problems of scientific

atheism[18]. In 1964, in order to increase the scientific quality of those articles, the department of scientific atheism was opened near the Institute of History, Language and Literature named after N.Dawkaraev, Karakalpakstan Department of the USSR Academy of Sciences. It trained several experts in the field of scientific atheism.

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