

EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF INNOVATION IN NONFORMAL EDUCATION

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 5, MAY 2022



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The Role of the Christian Church in Uzbekistan

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the confessional landscape of Uzbekistan, the place of the Christian denomination among them, the history of the penetration of Christianity in the country.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 05 April 2022

Received in revised form
03 May 2022

Accepted 06 Jun 2022

Keywords: denomination, freedom of conscience, Christianity, Orthodox Church, Catholic Church, Protestantism, Novoapostol Church, Diocese of Central Asia, Jehovah's Witnesses, Canalists.

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Introduction

Uzbekistan is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious country. Today, Uzbekistan is home to more than 130 nationalities and ethnic groups. They believe in different religions. Therefore, religious tolerance is one of the main principles of building a democratic society in the country. There are 16 religious denominations in the country. Among them, the second largest group after Islam is the Christian Orthodox Church. It has several churches and a central association. There are sects like Baptist, Jehovah's Witnesses, Adventist. The staff is mainly trained by seminaries in Moscow and other cities. Religious literature and periodicals are also brought from there.

According to the Constitution of Uzbekistan and the Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations, all religious associations in the Republic operate on a free, transparent, and equal basis. [2] These rights and freedoms are guaranteed by law. No denomination was privileged under these laws. Their activities are not limited by law.

The following are examples of the full implementation of the ideas of inter-religious tolerance in the Republic during the years of independence:

International Christian-Muslim Conference "Under One Sky" with the participation of Muslim and Christian theologians in 1995; The Tashkent Orthodox Theological Seminary and the Samarkand Protestant Seminary, which have been operating since 1998, are among them.

The 125th anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church in Tashkent and the Diocese of Central Asia and the 100th anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church were also celebrated during the years of independence. [1] Both the 2017 Action Strategy and the 2022 Development Strategy focus on interfaith tolerance. [3; 4]

Christianity, like Zoroastrianism and Buddhism, has a special place in the history of the peoples of Central Asia. This religion entered Central Asia, particularly Uzbekistan, in two ways: on the one hand,

the propaganda work of missionaries preaching Christianity, on the other hand, the Russian occupation of Central Asia and the conversion to Christianity caused a large influx of believers into the area. Early Christian missionaries arrived in various parts of Central Asia in the 3rd century AD. For example, in 280 the churches of Taroz (Merke) were built. In Samarkand (from 310 years), in Merv (from 334 years), in Herat (from 430 years). Episcopal and missions were established in Khorezm and other cities in Central Asia. Later, in Samarkand, Merv (430), and in Herat (658), bishopric religious-territorial communities and associations were formed. The Khorasans and Sogdians also practiced Zoroastrianism.

During the spread of Islam in Central Asia, the contradictions between Islam and Christianity began to intensify. However, until the 10th century, Samarkand, Khorezm and Tashkent regions had Christian settlements. Even during Beruni's reign (973-1056), Merv had an Orthodox metropolis.

In the 1870s, along with Orthodoxy, adherents of other denominations began to enter the Central Asian region. The Orthodox Church entered Uzbekistan through Russia. The deportation of German, Polish, Estonian, Swedish, Lithuanian, Latvian, and other Western European soldiers captured by the Russian army in World War I to Turkestan led to the influx of the religion or sect they believed in. This, in turn, led to the formation of religious communities and churches among European captives. Such activity of foreigners lasted until the 20-30s of the XX century. May 4, 1871 Russia

By the 1880s, the Russian Orthodox Church was trying to increase the number of its new churches. Most of them were built in Syrdarya and Fergana regions. On December 16, 1916, by the order of the emperor, the Turkestan Cathedral was moved from Verniy to Tashkent. Until the 1930s, the number of churches in Uzbekistan was higher than in other parts of Central Asia. Between 1920 and 1940, various ethnic groups in Christianity flourished in Central Asia and Kazakhstan. He has been the Bishop of Central Asia and Tashkent since July 20, 1990. In addition to Uzbekistan, it has Russian Orthodox churches in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. The Diocese of Central Asia and Tashkent of the Russian Orthodox Church has its own churches and central government, as well as religious schools in 11 territorial units of Uzbekistan.

Another current of Christianity in Uzbekistan is Catholicism. According to some estimates, there were about 2,300 Catholics in Tashkent in the late 19th century. The first Catholic church in Tashkent was built in 1917. The Vatican recognized Uzbekistan's independence on February 1, 1992, and established diplomatic relations on October 17. On October 31, 1994, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan IA Karimov received Marian, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Vatican

The Armenian Apostolic Church is one of the oldest Christian churches in Uzbekistan, with an Echmiadzin magazine and a special religious school. The Catholicosate of Cilicia, the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and Constantinople, and the dioceses of the United States, South America, Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East are subordinate to the Echmiadzin Catholicosate.

Protestantism, one of the three main branches of Christianity, is also widespread in Uzbekistan. Indigenous Koreans are predominantly Protestant. On the one hand, this is due to the fact that Koreans travel to South Korea, the United States and other developed countries to meet with their relatives and for various other purposes. From abroad, they came under the influence of a certain religious sect and began to propagate the teachings of this sect to their relatives in Uzbekistan. South Koreans and U.S. Koreans also carried out missionary work among indigenous Koreans at the expense of wealthy Protestant centers.

Almost all Korean Protestant churches in Uzbekistan are Pentecostal. Worship is similar to Protestantism. Currently, there are Pentecostal and Baptist churches in Uzbekistan, as well as a single Methodist church. Some sources state that the first Adventist missionaries appeared in Russia and Central Asia in the early 19th century. The first group of this movement in Tashkent was founded in 1910, and within a year its supporters reached 150 people. The group disbanded in 1912 because of secret meetings. After 1917, it began to operate in Tashkent, Tashkent region, Samarkand and other regions with a total of 450 supporters. During this time, the sect grew, church leaders were elected, and organizational work began.

In 1925, the Central Asian Adventist administration was established in Uzbekistan as part of the Southeastern Union of Adventists. Its first congress was held in 1926, marking the fifth All-Union Adventist Union. By the end of the 1930's, religious groups, including Adventist ones, were disbanded

and persecuted. Teams from all walks of life went underground.

On August 26, 1976, the first Adventist community was registered in Tashkent. Informal Adventist communities have also been formed in Tashkent, Fergana, Samarkand, Surkhandarya and other regions.

According to some sources, in 1967 in Tashkent V.A. Adventist reformers led by Shelkov emerged. Adventists now have 9 churches in the five territorial divisions of the republic.

The first Baptist community in Turkestan appeared in 1891. On July 2, 1909, the Tashkent city administration allowed the opening of a prayer house for 60 Baptist communities. In October 1911, the "Samarkand team" was formed. Beginning in 1921, efforts were made to elect a governing body to unite the Turkestan Baptists. In 1922, at the Tashkent Baptist Congress, the Central Asian Baptist Union was formed, and then the Turkestan branch of the All-Russian Union. In 1946, Evangelical Christian Baptists were registered in Uzbekistan, and in October 1948, T. Pen'kov was appointed Representative of the All-Union Council in Uzbekistan. By 1958, the number of Baptists in Uzbekistan was 2,000. There were 32 unofficial teams during this period.

In 1964, these communities formed the informal Central Asian Council of Evangelical Christian Baptist Churches, later renamed the Baptist Brotherhood Council of South Asia. At the 1st Congress of Baptists in Moscow in November 1992, the Federation of Evangelical Christian Baptists was renamed the Eurasian Eurasian Evangelical Christian Baptist Union. Evangelical Christian Baptists have their own churches and central government in eight regional structures of the republic.

The first communities of the Full Bible Christians (Pentecostals) operating in Uzbekistan were formed in Tashkent in the late 1920s. By the 1930s, their number had grown to 950. Although they are not listed as an organization, the Tashkent team is central. By 1945, the Baptists and Pentecostals had decided to unite, but this did not happen. The organization has been operating since 1992.

Lutheranism in the Republic is a doctrine recognized by Lutheran churches. It is one of the largest sects in Protestantism and has about 75 million followers. The religious teachings of the Lutherans were established in the European Reformation in the 16th century by M. Luther and his followers, primarily through the efforts of Melancthon.

Since 1989, it has been merged with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Central Asia. The supreme legal body of Lutherans is the General Synod. The church is divided into five dioceses in the CIS, with centers in Moscow, Omsk, Odessa, Almaty, and Tashkent. [6]

Evangelical Lutherans have been active in Uzbekistan since 1877. Since 1884, Lutherans have officially performed their prayers. In 1890, architect A.L. Construction of the church, which began under the leadership of Benoit, was completed by December 1896.

Another church in Uzbekistan is the Novoapostolic Church, a Protestant denomination of Christianity. Novoapostol Church has been operating in Uzbekistan since 1992 and is registered in Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara and Navoi. The Novoapostol churches in Uzbekistan are part of the Berlin-Brandenburg district. There is also a Protestant Jehovah's Witnesses in Uzbekistan. In 1870, the American businessman Ch.T. Founded by Russell. The sect is based in Brooklyn, Akio, and is run by a 15-member Leading Corporation.

Some sources suggest that Jehovah's Witnesses appeared in Central Asia in the 1940's. At the time, they called themselves "canalists."

It has been officially registered as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in Uzbekistan since 1994 in Tashkent and Fergana regions.

RESULTS During the years of independence in Uzbekistan there has been an atmosphere of religious tolerance, and all religions and faiths are free to practice their faith on a legal basis.

Legal guarantees and conditions have been created for citizens of other religions, as well as for those who practice Christianity.

Active cooperation has been established with the countries that believe in Christianity and the central organizations of various Christian denominations.

CONCLUSION. In conclusion, we can say that, like other denominations in the Republic, citizens of Christianity and its various sects have equal rights in all spheres and actively participate in the political, social and cultural life of the country. By freely exercising their faith, they make a significant contribution to the education of the people in peace and harmony with other denominations, and to the maintenance of peace and security.

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