

The History of Spiritual Life in the City of Darband in the Early XIX-XX Centuries

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Abstract

The purpose of the article is to study the cultural environment and cultural processes specific to the city of Darband, which is one of the ancient cities of Azerbaijan and distinguished by its ethno-cultural diversity at the beginning of the 19th-20th centuries. It is known that every society has its own multifaceted cultural patterns, beliefs, and way of life.

Although these socio-cultural features continue as organic components of a single, common culture within a certain framework, they are subject to change processes and are renewed from time to time as a result of various internal and external influences. In this context, it should be noted that in every culture, along with the main elements, changing elements are also important. In the cultural sphere of every society, religion and its structural components, religious institutions and religious outlook occupy an important place.

The used methodology and methods were widely studied with the help of a number of scientific works in Azerbaijani, Russian and Turkish languages as the theoretical and methodological basis of the research. In the article, a number of information gathering and analysis methods of history and humanitarian sciences were used, and a number of statistical indicators were included.

The main scientific innovation put forward is that the religious and cultural environment of Darband has been widely studied and the multicultural-tolerant characteristics of the city have been determined with concrete facts.

The results of the research is that at the beginning of the 19th-20th centuries, the religion, religious outlook, and religious institutions of the Muslim-Turkish population in the city of Darband and its surrounding regions were implemented based on the rules of the Islamic religion, and religious conservatism prevailed. More religious doctrines were preferred and religious ceremonies were performed on this basis. Also, during this period, the implementation of the process of enlightenment among the population helped the progressive development in the field of religion.

During this period, non-Muslims living in Darband also had their own system of religious beliefs and forms of worship. The way of life of every non-Muslim was directly related to the religious beliefs to which he belonged.

In general, at the beginning of the 19th and 20th centuries, the religious worldview, religious belief system, and religious traditions of the population of Darband were based on religious-mythological views whose historical roots go back to ancient times.

Keywords: the history of Azerbaijan, the city of Darband, the spiritual environment of Darband, the history of Darband, religious tolerance

Історія духовного життя в місті Дарбанд на початку XIX-XX ст.

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Анотація

Метою статті є вивчення культурного середовища та культурних процесів, характерних для міста Дарбанд, яке є одним із стародавніх міст Азербайджану та вирізняється своєю етнокультурною різноманітністю на початку 19 – 20 століть.

Відомо, що кожне суспільство має свої багатогранні культурні моделі, вірування та спосіб життя. Хоча ці соціокультурні особливості продовжуються як органічні компоненти єдиної спільної культури в певних рамках, вони піддаються процесам змін і час від часу оновлюються в результаті різноманітних внутрішніх і зовнішніх впливів. У цьому контексті слід зазначити, що в кожній культурі поряд з основними елементами важливі також елементи, що змінюються. У культурній сфері кожного суспільства важливе місце займають релігія та її структурні компоненти, релігійні інститути та релігійний світогляд.

Використовувана методологія і методика широко вивчені за допомогою ряду наукових праць азербайджанською, російською і турецькою мовами як теоретико-методологічної основи дослідження. У статті використано низку методів збору та аналізу інформації історичних та гуманітарних наук, а також включено ряд статистичних показників.

Основна наукова інновація полягає в тому, що релігійне та культурне середовище Дарбанду було широко вивчено, а мультикультурно-толерантні характеристики міста були визначені конкретними фактами.

Результатами дослідження є те, що на початку 19 – 20 століть релігія, релігійний світогляд та релігійні інститути мусульмансько-турецького населення міста Дарбанду та його прилеглих регіонів реалізовувалися на основі правил ісламського релігії, панував релігійний консерватизм. Надавали перевагу більш релігійним доктринам і на цій основі проводили релігійні церемонії. Також у цей період здійснення процесу просвітництва серед населення сприяло прогресивному розвитку у сфері релігії.

У цей період немусульмани, які проживали в Дарбанді, також мали власну систему релігійних вірувань і форм поклоніння. Спосіб життя кожного немусульманина був безпосередньо пов'язаний з релігійними віруваннями, до яких він належав.

Загалом на початку 19-20 століть релігійний світогляд, релігійна система вірувань і релігійні традиції населення Дарбанду базувалися на релігійно-міфологічних поглядах, історичні корені яких сягають глибокої давнини.

Ключові слова: історія Азербайджану, місто Дарбанд, духовне середовище Дарбанду, історія Дарбанду, віротерпимість

Introduction (problem statement).

As in other historical regions of Azerbaijan, religions such as Christianity, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism existed before Islam in Darband and its surrounding regions. Before Islam, the peoples of Dagestan, like all Caucasian peoples, were isolated from each other in terms of language, religion, ethnicity and geography. This situation led to serious conflicts between tribes.

The population of the Dagestan region, which fell under the rule of the Khazars in the 6th century, gradually accepted Islam in the second half of the 7th century - the 8th century. After the spread of Islam in the region, along with political conflicts between separate ethnic and ethnic-religious groups, religious conflicts also ended.

When talking about this region, let's note that during the Arab campaigns, first of all, the lacs living in the north-east of Azerbaijan and the southern regions of Dagestan, mainly around Ghazigumukh, adopted Islam, and gradually other regions also became Muslim. The process of Islamization in this region was almost completed in the 10th century, with the exception of some small groups, all of northeastern Azerbaijan and Dagestan became Muslim (Tiskov, & Filippova, 2001, p. 16).

However, despite all this, as a legitimate result of various historical processes, the city of Darband remained colorful due to the religious affiliation of its population in the early 19th and 20th centuries. In this period, it is possible to find some information about the region in various sources, although it is limited.

Results.

Religious and demographic highlights of Darband city.

F. F. Simonovich's writing from 1796 indicated that 2,080 families belonging to the Shia and Sunni sects of Islam and 90 families belonging to the Gregorian sect lived in the city of Darband. The author did not provide information about the religious affiliation of 780 families belonging to Darband district. N.F. Rtishshev's report of 1813 shows that according to the census of 1810, 3953 males lived in 1435 Muslim families registered in Darband, 50 in 28 Armenian families, and 166 in 59 Jewish families. This report does not show the ratio of the Muslim population of Darband between the Shia and Sunni sects, as well as the religious affiliation of the 284 families registered in 9 villages included in the Ulus district. (Kosvena, & Khashayeva, 1958, p. 250).

According to Gamba, who visited Darband in 1820, "The two-thirds of the 7-8 thousand people of Darband are Persians (Azerbaijanis), 600-700 Armenians, 200-300 Jews and a few Arabs". Although the author does not indicate the religious affiliation of the population, there is no doubt that the population he mentions as Persians and Arabs believe in Muslims, Armenians believe in Gregorianism, and Jews believe in Judaism (Kozubskiy, 1895, p. 162).

It is well known that almost all Shiites in the South Caucasus (with very few exceptions) are Azerbaijani

Turks. Therefore, on the eve of the Russian invasion, and immediately after it, the majority of the population of Darband were Azerbaijani Turks belonging to the Shia sect.

According to the results of the census conducted by Derbend commandant von Ascheberg in 1824, 10,377 Muslims (5,407 men, 4,970 women), 239 Armenians (136 men, 103 women), 444 Jews (230 men, 214 women) were registered in the city. (Kozubskiy, 1895, p. 166).

The report of Derbend commandant Colonel Rosenfeld dated April 22, 1830 also contains certain information about the religious composition of the population of Darband. It is clear from the report that in that period, 9963 (5184 men, 4779 women) of 1986 Muslim families, 455 (243 men, 212 women) from 87 Jewish families and 198 (107 men, 91 women) from 42 Armenian families in Darband city, Forshtat and Sabnova villages. people worshiped the Gregorian sect of Islam, Judaism and Christianity respectively. In 1832, the cameral description documents conducted in Darband did not provide satisfactory information about the composition of the population as a whole, including the religious composition. According to the census of 1832, "5139 male persons live in 1795 families registered in Darband city, Forshtat and Sabnova, 30 of them are Armenian, and up to 50 are Jewish families. The vast majority of the population of Darband believes in the Ali sect, and one tenth of them believe in the Sunni sect." (Movement of the highlanders, 1959, p. 20-21).

I. N. Berezin, who gave information about the language of the population of Darband, noted that "the Turkish language is dominant in Darband. The Darband dialect belongs to the Western Turkic language. Darbandi people changed the pronunciation of several letters. They use the suffix "di" instead of "dir"..." (Berezin, 1850, p. 151).

According to the official data of 1875, "out of a total of 449 thousand 534 people living in Dagestan province during this period, 427 thousand 615 people were Muslims - 95.12%, 5000 people were Christians - 1.11%, and 5 thousand 389 people -1.20% were Jews, a population that worshiped its religion" (Kozubskiy, 1895, p. 381).

Since the materials of the various censuses conducted in Darband until 1886 did not provide regular and detailed information about the religious composition of the population, it is somewhat difficult to give a complete description of the city's population in terms of religious affiliation. In the family lists of 1886, the materials of the All-Russian census of 1897, as well as in the governor's reports and summaries drawn up by years in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the religious composition of the population was described based on specific statistical figures for various religions and sects.

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the number of Jews believing in Orthodoxy, Gregorianism, and Judaism in the religious

composition of the population of Darband increased dynamically. While no jump was observed in the Gregorian population, such cases were observed in the growth of Orthodox and Jews. Thus, in 1902, 1906 and 1908, there were sharp jumps in the numerical dynamics of the Orthodox population of Darben, and in 1908, the number of Orthodox population reached a record level of 8,645 people. Significant increases in the number of the Jewish population were recorded in 1905 and 1908, and their record number was recorded in 1908, when their number reached 6,518 (Hacıyev, 2017, p. 107).

Religious and spiritual environment of Darband city.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Muslim religious sects also played a significant role in the Darband region. It is true that although the majority of Darband Muslims belong to the Shiite sect of Islam, the Nagshbandiyya, Qadariyya and Sazeli sects based on the Sufi religious worldview also operated in this region. (Qurbanov, 2002, p. 9).

The most common sect in this region was the Nagshbandiyya sect. As is known, the Nagshbandiyya sect played an important role in the history of the Caucasus. From 1879 to 1917, Sufi sects remained influential in this region despite being subjected to severe persecution by Russian colonialism. This sect played an important role in uniting the peoples of the Caucasus to fight against the occupation policy of Tsarist Russia in the Caucasus (Bennigsen, & Quelquejay, 1988, p. 100).

The first imams of this sect were Gimrili Gazi Muhammad, Hamzat Bey and Imam Shamil. In Western literature, this sect called "Muridism" is valued as a way of Sufism based on Sufism. Despite serious persecution, Qadarilik and Nagshbandi sects are still spreading in Dagestan and Darband region. Currently, the number of members of these sects is more than thirty thousand people (Qurbanov, 2002, p. 26).

It is worth noting that in the middle of the 19th century, the founder of the Caucasian rebellions that covered the entire Caucasus and shook the ruling circles of the colonial Russia, the ideology of Muridism, which became the ideological weapon of the liberation movement of the Caucasian peoples, the first teacher of the imams who managed to raise up the whole of Dagestan, the prominent philosopher and theologian of Azerbaijan - Sheikh Ismail Kurdamiri-Shirvani was. The Muslim theologians who laid the foundation of Muridism in Dagestan received their first lessons from Sheikh Ismayil, who came to Kurdamir and lived there.

It is impossible to imagine the religious life of the city of Darband and the surrounding region without the Friday mosque located in this city. It is not only the oldest mosque in the Caucasus built for the worship of Azerbaijanis, but also the oldest mosque in the Islamic world.

It is known that in the middle of the 8th century, during the Arab campaigns, Darband was occupied

by the Arabs and remained one of the northernmost fortresses of the caliphate for a long time. The Arabs paid special attention to Darban, and even called it "Fatal Abwab" - that is, "Gate of Gates". The Arab general Maslama moved 24,000 soldiers from Syria to Darban and divided the city into 4 parts or quarters. In addition to the construction of each neighborhood's own mosque, a city-wide Friday mosque was also built in 115 A.H. [733-734 AD] (Kərimov, 1994, p. 32).

This mosque, which was seriously damaged by a strong earthquake, was thoroughly renovated in the year 770 (1368-1369) by the architect Tajeddin Musa oglu from Baku during the reign of Hakim Afriburz. Apart from the first Arab mosques, Darband Juma Mosque is one of the oldest mosques in the Muslim world. Darband region has been a point of collision or intersection of different religions and religious sects. The religious and social life of the people living in this region, their devotion to religion, and their beliefs known as folk religiosity have special features. (Kərimov, 1994, p. 33).

E.I. Kozubski listed the total number of mosques and churches operating in the city of Darband in 1895 as follows: 11 Shia mosques, 2 Sunni mosques, 1 pro-Slavic church, 1 Jewish synagogue (Kozubskiy, 1895, p. 158).

The religious sensitivity of the Muslim population of Darband city can be characterized by devotion and commitment to religious worship. Despite the colonial policy implemented by Tsarist Russia, every village located in this region had a mosque. The mosques were noticeably crowded during prayer times. For many centuries, the Friday prayer, which was almost mandatory for Muslims, was performed in the "Friday Mosque" located in the center of Darband in this city.

Fridays have a special feature for the local Azerbaijani-Turkish population living in the city of Darband and its surrounding villages. On that day, in every house, different types of meals were prepared, some of which were distributed to neighbors and the poor. This custom was mostly followed by residents whose loved ones had recently passed away. Money, food and fuel were also provided to the poor.

Belief in the existence and unity of God, which is the first foundation of faith, has been very strong among the people of Darband region. All living things were created by God and Hazrat. The belief that prophet Muhammad [s.a.a] is the last prophet of God is very strong. In this period, a large part of the population was uneducated and had little religious literacy, which did not allow for a fundamental, substantial understanding of religious knowledge. Researcher G. Novruzova wrote about the religious life of this region: "All religious information is traditionally obtained from family elders and conversations between the population. Because religious information is obtained in this form, the most of the prophets. They know about prophet Muhammad, but they don't know enough about the other prophets" (Novruzova, 2005, p. 38).

As mentioned, the mass illiteracy and extreme dogmatism that prevailed in the Darband region at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century were the main factors that negatively affected the development of the religious outlook of the population.

As it is known, in the Islamic religion, the belief in “ghazavu-qadar” is one of the religious foundations. Belief in “destiny”, which is defined as the fact that God willed and knew from the beginning that everything will appear in the existing world in a certain way, and “accident”, which means that it will happen in time, was popularly known as “fate” or “predestination” (Günay, 2002, p. 82).

During this period, the belief in the “Forehead writing-Fate” existing in the Islamic religion took an important place in the religious life of the Muslim population of Darband region, and the belief in the “Forehead writing-Fate” became much stronger. The concept of “forehead writing-Fate” has become very popular, especially among the elderly and middle-aged people.

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the worship system of Muslims, who made up the majority of the population of Darband city and its surroundings, was distinguished by its conservatism. In this region, which is a Muslim society, worships such as prayer, fasting, zakat, hajj and sacrifice, which we know as the basic conditions of the Islamic religion, were performed, which were considered the practical measure of religious life. In addition to these, the population also performed various acts of worship, such as reciting the birthday, zikr-praying, and visited the “pirs-shrines” where “holy people” were buried (Günay, 2002, p. 82).

As it is known, after faith in the existence of God in Islam comes prayer, which is considered the pillar of religion. Prayer is one of the divine commandments regarding worldly and hereafter happiness and even the most important. Prayer is a sign of faith, the light of the heart, the strength of the soul, and the hope of a believer. A believer rises to the spiritual presence of God Almighty through prayer. Prayer, which is one of the fundamental principles of Islam, is an obligatory act of worship that is commanded to be performed five times a day (Bilmen, 2003, p. 31).

Among the Muslim population of Darband region, the five daily prayers, one of the fundamental principles of Islam, were given great importance. The number of people praying outside the mosque, especially at home, was very large. It can be said that the number of those who perform their daily prayers in the mosque is not small. It is interesting that in some villages in this region (e.g., in the village of the Mad Shepherd - N.H.) it is known that women also go to the Taraweeh prayer on Fridays and during the month of Ramadan (Novruzova, 2005, p. 41).

During this period, the percentage of elderly people praying among the population was higher. However, among the young and middle-aged, there was a special

weight of those who prayed. In this region, the rate of women praying was higher than that of men.

From the above, it can be concluded that the protection of religion and observance of religious rules continued in Darband throughout history. In this period, despite the ethnic and religious separation policy of tsarist Russia, the Muslim population maintained their religious beliefs and continued to perform their worship.

Fasting is one of the obligatory acts in Islam. Fasting in Darband region did not include the entire population. Basically, all the rules of fasting were observed by the representatives of the older generation. Among young people, “fasting for three days” is more widespread (Arslan, 2004, p. 283).

There is a tradition of women attending Friday prayers during Ramadan. It is interesting that this tradition continues today. Among the elderly, fasting was observed not only in the month of Ramadan, but also on other days, on Mondays and Wednesdays. There is even a belief that Monday is the “pilgrim’s day”.

There is a peculiarity of Ramadan customs in this region: special guests are not invited to the iftar table opened in this month. The Ramadan holiday has great spiritual significance for the people of Darband. In this region, Ramadan was celebrated with great pomp, as in other Muslim regions.

Historically, the traditions of celebrating Ramadan in the city of Darband, which is one of the oldest cities of Azerbaijan, and in the surrounding areas included the traditions that exist in other cities of Azerbaijan. Another peculiarity was that bonfires were lit in every neighborhood on the eve of Ramadan to welcome the holiday, just like on the eve and day of Nowruz. In this region, the customs of the Ramadan holiday were almost the same as the customs of the Nowruz holiday (Novruzova, 2005, p. 45).

The most visited place by the local population in Darband was the “The Forties Cemetery”. Among the people, this cemetery is known as the cemetery of the forty Companions who came to spread Islam in Darband from the time of the Prophet. Near the “The Forties Graveyard” there is a tomb where the wife, daughter, son and maidservant of Fatali Khan, one of the rulers of Guba-Darband, are buried. This tomb is also considered one of the shrines of Darbandi people.

I. N. Berezin writes about the Forties cemetery: “...the ancient tombstones of the Forties were distinguished by their colossal size. Great people, wrestlers, were sleeping here: graves 1.5 sagan long were made for them. Among them there were also small, probably children’s graves. The people of Darband confirm that they are the graves of Shahid boys. The number of ancient monuments is about 40, so they call it “forty” (Berezin, 1850, p. 138-139).

Another Russian traveler S.Q. Gmelin also states that in all other areas of the city, which is the southern part of Darband, the outer city has an extremely large number of tombstones (headstones) (Gmelin, 1783, p. 27).

Traveler I. N. Berezin's work contains information about the mausoleum of Fatali Khan's wife Tuti Bika. He noted that "...in the western part of the "Forties" there was a beautiful octagonal building. This was the mausoleum of the hero of Darband Tuti Bika. He was buried in 1202 (Hijri calendar) (1787-1788), near the grave of his son Ahmed Khan, the last Darband Khan. The graves of Hasan Khan, another son of Fatali Khan, Shekhali Khan, who ruled Darben after his brother..." (Berezin, 1850, p. 139).

Salbuz Mountain is one of the places considered a holy place by the Muslim population of Derbent. According to the religious beliefs of the people, a piece of wood in the lake on the top of this mountain is a piece of Noah's ark. People consider visiting this mountain as a "small pilgrimage" (Novruzova, 2005, p. 74-75).

Conclusions.

At the beginning of the 19th and 20th centuries, the religion, religious worldview, and religious institutions of the Muslim-Turkish population in the city of Darband and its surrounding regions were implemented on the basis of the rules of the Islamic religion, and religious conservatism prevailed. More religious doctrines were preferred and religious ceremonies were performed on this basis. Also, during this period, the implementation

of the process of enlightenment among the population helped the progressive development in the field of religion.

During this period, non-Muslims living in Darband also had their own system of religious beliefs and forms of worship. The way of life of every non-Muslim was directly related to the religious beliefs to which he belonged. Although the members of other religions seem to be more religiously tolerant than the Muslims, religious dogmatism prevailed among the population of the region in accordance with the religious policy of the Russian Empire and the existing outlook.

In general, at the beginning of the 19th and 20th centuries, the religious worldview, religious belief system, and religious traditions of the population of Darband were based on religious-mythological views whose historical roots go back to ancient times. In this period, although the classical concept of Islam prevailed among the Muslim population, views based on modern thinking were also emerging. Despite all the efforts of the official colonial authorities, planned colonial resettlement, and religious policy, Darband remained a predominantly Muslim-Turkish city, and Islam remained an important factor in the social-political, socio-cultural life of this city.

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