Activities of the Commissioners of the Council on Russian Orthodox Church and the Council on Religious Faiths under the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR on the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic during the Great Patriotic War and Early Post-War Years

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Abstract

The significance of the present study is caused by the necessity to do a research on the experience of the relations between power structures and religious organizations in the context of civil society mobilization in the face of external threat. The study aims at the research of the activities of the Commissioners of the Council on Russian Orthodox Church and the Council on Religious faiths to the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR on the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (TASSR) during the Great Patriotic War and early post-war years. Civilizational approach is the basic approach to the present research, which allowed examining the study subject along with political and socio-cultural aspects. The research resulted in definitions of the status of the abovementioned Councils’ commissioners in the power structures system of the state, their official and practical functions, and legal basis of their activities. Based on the commissioners’ quarterly plans and reports examination, techniques and methods of the commissioners’ work under relative normalization of relations between the state and confessions in 1943-1948 were revealed. The research materials can be used in the development of training aids, practical activities of the structures implementing state’s policy in the spiritual sphere.

Keywords: relations, the State and confessions, Commissioner, the Council on Russian Orthodox Church, Religious faiths, religious organizations, clergy, believers

1. Introduction

1.1 Significance

Since origin of state, religion has been an integral part of it, and played an important role in spiritual and socio-political life of society. During the whole period of historic development of the Russian State relations between the state and confessional institutions were based on different principles; general political situation in the state in certain periods was a determinant component.

During Soviet period all religions without exception were in disgrace. Relations between state authorities and believers and clergy were determined not only by official legislation acts proclaiming principles of separation of church and state, freedom of conscience and others; mostly they were based on resolutions, directives and circulars of dissimilar nature, which in their turn determined actions of local authorities on religious organizations. This was the real subject matter of religious policy.

Significance of the problem for scientific community is confirmed by works devoted to the problem which were published at various times (Odditov, 2011; Mukhometshin, 2007; Fletcher, 1981; Nabiev, 2002; Yunusova, 1999; Pospelovskiy, 1995; Yakunin, 2002; Roy, 2000; Minnulin, 2006, and others).