Closely interlinked as they were, the programmes of liquidation of the traditional pattern of socialisation and anti-religious propaganda were meant to provide ideological support to the Bolshevik objective of creating a uniform system of socialisation. The programme of liquidation of traditional pattern of socialisation centred around the education and re-socialisation of adults, particularly the native women, so as to draw them into the Soviet socio-cultural and political institutions. In order to ensure quick results, a mass campaign for the emancipation of women was launched and anti-religious agitation and propaganda were stepped up. The resources of the state, the Party, and the mass media were all pressed into service for bringing about behavioural changes in Soviet Central Asia. Indeed, such a massive programme was launched in the confident belief in and acceptance of, Soviet political system, and further strengthened later by the success of Five Year Plans.

There was, however, a marked departure in the strategy of liquidation of the traditional pattern of socialisation in Soviet Central Asia from that employed in the heartland of Soviet Russia. Whereas in the European parts of Soviet Russia the programme of liquidation of traditional pattern of socialisation began with a direct assault on religion, in Soviet Central
Asia, as the magnitude of the problem was considered greater because of the almost total absence of native women in public life and deep influence of religion, the Bolsheviks first gave the call for the emancipation of women and the liquidation of illiteracy. In March, 1919, the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (B) drew the attention of the local Communist Party towards the problem of re-socialisation of women in the eastern republics. It declared:

"At the present time one of the immediate tasks of our Party in the East is to work on emancipation of Eastern woman from the servitude in which she finds herself today because of the specific conditions of culture and the family traditions of oriental peoples."

The problem was indeed enormous and appeared to defy any quick solution. The basic unit of socialisation in Soviet Central Asia right up to the days of October Revolution was the family. There had hardly been any change in the role of the family as the basic unit of socialisation during the half century or so of Tsarist colonialism. The Bolsheviks naturally felt that unless the native family structure and its cultural ethos were fundamentally changed the programme of creation of a uniform system of socialisation would fail and Soviet political stability would consequently remain fragile.

Hence, soon after the Bolshevik Revolution steps were taken for putting the idea of the emancipation of native women in practice. In June 1919, certain institutional measures were adopted with the creation of a special society of female workers and peasant women in the Communist Party of Turkestan. An experienced Russian lady, I.I. Finkelishtein, wife of V.N. Finkelshtein who had been killed in the Civil War in January 1919, was made incharge of this society. Some trained agitators were also brought from the European parts of Soviet Russia. Making Tashkent their centre of activities, they made vigorous efforts to draw the native women to Soviet socio-political institutions and to involve them in the process of change. A large number of pamphlets, brochures and printed materials, brought from the A.S.F.S.R., were distributed among native women. The regional press regularly devoted columns to the activities of women workers in which topics relating to the ideological work among native women were discussed.

2. Tsentralnyi Partiinyi Arkhiv Instituta Marksizma-Leninizma, Pri Tsk KPSS, F.17, op. 10, d. 61. p.12, As cited in Shukurova, Ibid., p.72 (Hereafter Partiinyi Arkhiv).

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p.73.
Faced with heavy odds, the society of female workers and peasants' women was split into two sections - the Muslim section and the Russian section. Each of these sections had two sub-sections. While the Muslim section consisted of the economic sub-section and the political education sub-section, the Russian women's section was divided into the agitation-propaganda sub-section and the cultural educational sub-section.5

The creation of a separate society of women within the Turkestan Communist Party, however, came under sharp attack in the first All-Russian Congress of Women workers which was organised with the consent and blessings of V.I. Lenin. Hence, shortly after the conclusion of the Women's Congress, the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) issued a circular letter in which it prohibited the creation of separate society of women and advised the regional Turkestan Communist Party to create Department of Women workers.6 The idea behind the switchover from Society of Women Workers to Department of Women Workers within the Party was to ensure a strict supervision over the activities of the Department of Women workers.

The first priority in the programme for the emancipation of women was given to the training of activists and propagandists. One of the first activists in the field was

5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p.75.
Lukii Ivanovna Shumulova. In December 1919, I.I. Finkelshtein was entrusted with the job of planning agitational work among the native women in accordance with local conditions. Keeping in mind the political and educational background, it was also decided to provide material and juridical help to native Muslim women who were to come forward for participating in Soviet socio-political institutions. It was suggested that all the female artisans and handicrafts workers should be involved in professional unions. Training centres, schools and evening courses were started for the benefit of native women. An Information Bureau in the Department of Women was created to provide juridical help to poor women.

In pursuance of these programmes and guidelines, Mariam Iakubova, probably a Tatar Muslim, was made responsible to conduct certain courses for the training of nurses in the old city of Tashkent. Gradually, the Bolsheviks started creating a network of similar institutions which drew a large number of poor native women. The institutions included schools for

7. Partyiinyi Arkhiy, Instituta Istorii Partii Pri Tsk KP Uzbekistana, F.60, op.1, d.304, p.2 (Hereafter Partyarkhiy)

8. Ibid., p.1, Still the traditional courts were very popular and the Soviets were making concerted efforts to put an end to them. But as yet the Soviets were not strong enough to liquidate these traditional institutions. See also, Ia.E. Pesin, Razvitie semeino praovykh garantii prav zhenschin v Uzbekistane (Development of family-legal guarantees to the rights of women in Uzbekistan), (Tashkent, 1971), pp.74-5.

adult women workers, youth houses, maternity centres, orphanage and a few training institutions.\(^9\)

In the early twenties, however, the work of re-socialisation of native women and bringing them out of the confines of their hearths and homes remained mostly restricted to Tashkent and a few other cities. The reasons were varied. First, the Soviet system was still weak in certain regions, and territories of the former Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanate of Khiva were not yet under its direct control. Secondly, there was extreme shortage of trained and reliable cadres to work among native women. Thirdly, as mentioned earlier, the Central leadership of the Communist Party was pre-occupied with the aftermath of the Civil War and direct control and guidance of Central Asian affairs was yet to be firmly established.

In May 1920, the First Congress of Women workers of Turkestan was held. After reviewing its programme under the existing socio-political environment, it advised a cautious approach to the programme of emancipation of women.\(^{10}\) An analysis of the social and national origin of the women delegates who attended the Congress reveals some interesting details. An overwhelming majority of the delegates were Russian. Out of 119 delegates, 88 were Russians, 8 Uzbek, 3 Kirghiz, 1 Turkman

\(^{10}\) Partyarkhiv, no. 7, F.60, op:1, d.886, p.11
and 5 were others. From the viewpoint of social origin, 69 delegates belonged to white-collar professions, 21 were workers and 30 delegates were housewives.\textsuperscript{11} In his address M.V. Frunz, the Chairman of the Turkestan Commission, emphasised the urgent need to mobilise native women so as to root out traditional customs and values.\textsuperscript{12} Accordingly, in the second half of 1920, the Bolsheviks formed a network of the Department of Women workers in about 45 oblast and district towns.\textsuperscript{13} In December of 1920, a section of Muslim women was created in the Party in Andijan city. To attract the native women, a handicrafts exhibition was organised. Some native women did come to visit the stalls and, with veils on their faces, they also attended some meetings organised by the Department of Women workers.\textsuperscript{14}

The Party activists, it is reported, did not attach much significance during these days to the programme of enlightenment of native women. This mood of indifference was particularly strong in Samarkand and Syr-Darya oblasts. The Department of Women Workers from Syr-Darya oblast reported that under existing conditions agitational work among native women was not possible as there was little rapport and understanding between the native masses and the Bolshevik activists.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{11} Shukurova, no.1, p.84.
\textsuperscript{12} Partvarkhiv, no.7, F.60, op.1, d.861, pp.7-8.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., d. 425. p.14.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., d. 886, pp.43-5.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., d. 902, pp.15-23.
According to a contemporary Uzbek women writer, the work among the native women during the early period of Soviet power could not be effectively pursued because of opposition from the traditionalist elements who were strong in those days. She writes:

"In Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic the civil war was raging. Struggle with the Basmachis in Ferghana and in Bukhara continued for a number of years. With the help of the Basmachis and the Bais (landlords), the reactionary Muslim priesthood, the Pan-Islamists and Pan-Turkists elements who were the supporters of imperialists calculatedly turned Turkestan into one of the spring-boards for attack on Soviet Russia. The Basmachis have fought for class interests of native feudals, national bourgeoisie and the reactionary Muslim priesthood, and for the establishment of old order in Turkestan." 16

Thus, in certain regions of Uzbekistan the Soviets faced stiff resistance from the native elite in particular and the masses in general. In the fourth Congress of the Communist Party of Turkestan, the problem of legitimization of Soviet power in the interior parts of Turkestan, such as Ferghana Valley and Shahrisabz, was thoroughly discussed. It was noted that the Basmachis, having turned into a counter-revolutionary movement with the help of the traditional elite, was posing grave political danger to the Soviet regime. 17 For the time being, therefore, the Soviet government, on the advice of the Party, adjusted its policies towards the natives keeping

17. Ibid., p.94.
in view the natives' national traditions. Accordingly, the Tenth Congress of Russian Communist Party (B), decided: (i) to develop and strengthen the Soviet political system in the former Tsarist colonies which was in line with the national traditions of the native peoples; (ii) to develop and strengthen the use of native language in courts, and administrative organs of the economy and to draw a large number of natives to the Soviet system; (iii) to develop Soviet press, schools, theatres and cultural institutions in Turkestan, and use the native language in their activities; and (iv) to establish and develop a large network of schools and to design courses for general and professional-technical education in the native language. 18

In June 1921, the Soviet Government of Turkestan issued a decree to abolish the practice of kalym (bride-money) widely prevalent amongst the nomadic population of Central Asia. Marriage age of girls was increased to 16 years. 19 In 1923, another general decree on abolition of the practice of kalym (bride-money) and polygamy was issued. 20 However, these laws affected only a fringe of the native society because the traditional Kazis courts were still operating. It was only after the Kazis courts were totally liquidated in 1927 that these laws became effectively operative.

18. See KPSS v resoliutsiiakh i resheniakh Sezdov, koferentsvy i plenumov Tsk (ed.7) chapter 1, Moscow, 1954, pp.559-60 (Hereafter KPPS).
19. Ts.G.Arkhiv UzSSR, F.25, pp.1, d.413, p.31, as cited in Ia.E. Pesin, no.8, p.75.
20. Ia.E. Pesin, no.8, p.76.
So far as the programme of secularisation of political culture and anti-religious propaganda were concerned, the Bolsheviks in Soviet Central Asia had by 1926 engaged themselves only in the expansion of primary and secondary levels of general education. Here too, native children could not effectively be socialised in secular values as, until then, the influence of religion and traditional values was very deep and strong both on native teachers as well as native families. In April of 1923, the whole situation was reviewed in the Twelfth Party Congress. The Congress took a serious view of the situation and declared:

"Inasmuch as the thirty million Muslims of the Union of Republics have preserved almost untouched numerous medieval prejudices linked with religion and these are used for counter revolutionary purposes, it is necessary to formulate forms and methods of liquidating these prejudices keeping in mind the peculiarities of the different nationalities." 21

After protracted debates and discussions in the heartland of Soviet Russia, a clear and coherent picture of the programme of secularisation of political culture had by then emerged. Groups of atheists advocating an active struggle against religion and traditionalism had gained the support of Party circles. Legally speaking, the Soviet Government was neutral in matters of religion. As we mentioned in previous chapters, the Soviet

21. KPSS, no. 18, p. 744.
Constitution of 1918 did not take away the right to freedom of religious worship. But what it did was to grant freedom for anti-religious propaganda, and to deny religious societies and associations the status of a legal entity. On the other hand, anti-religious groups or societies did not suffer from this restriction. Instead, they enjoyed the patronage of the Communist Party and mass media. Consequently, in the immediate post-revolutionary years some groups of atheists operating under the banner of certain journals and newspapers, such as Revolutsiia i Tserkov (The Revolution and the Church), Ateist (The Atheist), Pod Znamenem Marksizma (Under the Banner of Marxism), Nauka i Religiiia (Science and Religion), Bezbozhnik (The Godless) and Bezbozhnik u Stanka (The Godless at the Work-bench) etc., were active. Mainly, they suggested the following two approaches to the secularisation of political culture: (i) Scientific-educational approach; and (ii) the liquidationist approach.22

The scientific educational approach was, in fact, first propounded by the Communist Party itself in its Eighth Party Congress held in March 1919. After the October Revolution this was the first occasion when the Party defined its policy

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22. See L. Dunaevsky, "Nauchno-issledovatelskaia rabota v oblasti voinstyuiushchego ateizma za 15 let (Scientific study in the field of militant atheism over 15 years) in Enisherlov (Ed.), Voinstyuiushchee bezbozhie v SSSR za 15 let (Militant atheism in the USSR over 15 years), (Moscow, 1932), p.433.
towards religion and religious organisations. The predominant view which emerged in the Eighth Congress was that formal separation of Church and State was not enough for the secularisation of politics. Instead, the Congress suggested that the Party should educate the working masses about the class character of religion. It declared: "the Party aims at the complete destruction of the link between exploiting classes and the organisation of religious propaganda, while asserting the actual liberation of the working masses from religious prejudices and organising the widest possible scientific education and anti-religious propaganda. At the same time it is essential to avoid carefully any injury to the feelings of believers, which leads only to the strengthening of religious fanaticism." 23 After the Eighth Congress, the expansion of political education and publication of some scientific literature on the lines suggested by the Congress were the main activities which the Party and the State carried on for the development of a secular political culture. The Tenth and Eleventh Party Congresses held in 1921 and 1922 respectively emphasised the role of Glavpolitkorovet (The Central Administration of political education) in spreading a secular world-outlook for creating desirable conditions for the secularisation of political culture. The role of mass media and publication of scientific ideological materials was again stressed by these Congresses. 24

23. KPSS, no.18, pp.420-1.
24. Ibid., pp.551, 644.
Krasikov, on behalf of the Moscow Party organisation, introduced an amendment to the official resolution in which he pleaded for strengthening the work of anti-religious propaganda. However, Krasikov's move did not get much support.

Until 1923, however, the programme of secularisation of political culture was carried through the strengthening and spreading of political education in schools, courses, reading rooms, workers universities, and other educational programme and propaganda centres. The year 1923 saw the emergence of two distinct groups in the field with considerable difference over the operational part of the process of secularisation of political culture. Iaroslavsky, the editor of the newspaper Bezbozhnik, who had also formed an organisation known as Obshchestvo druzei gazety Bezbozhnika (Society of Friends of the newspaper 'Godless'), pleaded for restraint in carrying anti-religious propaganda through agitational means. In one of his early articles he wrote about the desirability of maintaining good relations between believers and non-believers among the workers and avoiding coercion in religious matters. The other group led by M.M. Koslelovskaia, who was editor of Bezbozhnik u Stanka (Godless around the work-bench), charged


Iaroslavsky and his group of pursuing an enlightenment approach. It favoured a direct attack on religion and laid stress on exposing the class role of religion. This debate continued for almost four years. As the years of Civil War passed and political stability of the Soviets was enhanced, some protagonists of the anti-religious propaganda hardened their attitude and advocated firm measures against religion and religious organisations.

The Party, however, kept itself aloof from these public debates and advised need for caution. It favoured a dynamic-functional approach to the propagation of secularisation of political culture. By dynamic-functional approach we mean that it sought first to create such conditions by massive socialisation programmes in which anti-religious propaganda would not evoke much political tension and chaos. The Twelfth Party Congress in fact provided comprehensive guidelines for this purpose. A special section of its resolution entitled "O postanovke anti-religioznoi agitatsii i propagandy" (On anti-religious agitation and propaganda), was devoted to the problem of raising class consciousness by conducting anti-religious propaganda. Having directed to train a large number of anti-

28. KPSS, no.18, pp.743-4.
religious cadres, the resolution particularly stressed the need to draw upon all the resources of the State and the Party and the support of the Communist universities for carrying out anti-religious socialisation programme. It suggested organisation of special courses on the origin, development and history of religion and religious beliefs and cults. For the purpose of socialisation of school children, the resolution said that "these courses should be linked up with the study of society and the struggle between exploiting classes, and the exposure of the historically demonstrable connection between capitalism and religious propaganda. In addition to the inclusion of anti-religious education the general system of communist education in the schools, special anti-religious circles and seminars must be sponsored both in the schools and outside. This work should be conducted under competent Party supervision at all times." 29

For internalisation of new values by the broad mass of workers it suggested that the organisation of systematic anti-religious campaigns was the best course. 30 And for effective internalisation of anti-religious values, the resolution pointed out the need for close coordination between the programme of liquidation of illiteracy and anti-religious propaganda. The resolution laid down:

29. Ibid., p. 745.
30. Ibid., p. 730.
"The organisation of systematic anti-religious propaganda and agitation is one of the best means of spreading party influence among the broad mass of the workers. But the Party must not forget that all our anti-religious agitation and propaganda will fail to affect the masses until the programme of urban and rural education in the spirit of the scientific materialistic natural sciences moves off dead centre, that is, until the overwhelming majority of the rural population ceases to be illiterate. The proper organisation of the school, the training of teachers, the creation of a broad network of institutions of political education (especially village reading rooms) the supplying of the village with Soviet newspapers and books, the complete liquidation of illiteracy – all these things, in conjunction with the success of Soviet agriculture and industry, will create conditions in which the religious prejudices in the minds of tens of millions of citizens of the various republics can finally be eradicated."31

It can be seen that there was in this resolution a marked departure from Lenin's earlier vague assurance to the All-working Muslims of Russia and the East and the Party directives on the subject. The resolution made no secret of the Bolshevik approach towards religion in the Eastern republics and it suggested the adoption of a correct approach at the right time to combat religious prejudices. More or less similar views were expressed in the Thirteenth Party Congress, held in May 1924.32

31. Ibid., p. 745.
32. KPSS., no.18, Part 2, p.53.
A modern Uzbek author suggested that anti-religious propaganda began in Uzbekistan sometime during the year 1925. According to a report published in the journal Bezbozhnik in 1924, a large number of churches and other religious institutions were forcibly closed down or occupied by militant atheists. Churches and mosques were turned into clubs and recreation centres. The property of religious institutions was auctioned with the prior permission of the Soviet Government. As against such a policy of open struggle against religion, there had largely been any change in the cautious approach adopted by the Party towards the religious problems in Central Asian republics until 1926, although renewed efforts were made after 1921. Yet the policy implementation was beset with insurmountable problems. To name one such problem, the hold of the religious elite in Uzbekistan was far more strong than those of the Communists. For instance, in 1928, in the rural areas of Uzbekistan excluding Khiva, there were about 9.5 thousand Muslim missionaries as against 3780 Soviet propagandists. In the region of Mukhara there were only 33 atheist-propagandists as against 1471 Muslim mullahs.

33. There are no documentary proof to show that religious propaganda in Central Asia began in 1925. Cf. See Isa Jabbarov, Obshchestvennyi progress, byt., i religiia. (Social progress, morals and religion), Tashkent, 1973, p.129.

34. See, Bezboznik, no.3 (1925), p.3.
In 1927, there appeared several articles by leading atheists of the Soviet Union in which grave concern was expressed about the slow progress of anti-religious agitation and propaganda among the Islamic peoples of the Soviet Union. As a result, in 1928, the publication of an anti-religious journal 'Khudosizlar (Atheists) in Uzbek language was begun. According to Professor Jabbarov, who has done considerable work on the spread of atheism and cultural change in Uzbekistan, thousands of anti-religious booklets, pamphlets, journals and newspapers containing propagandidst materials in the Uzbek language had been published by 1937 and their total circulation ran into millions of copies.

35. Almost all these articles were written by the Russian atheists, who were the leading personalities of anti-religious movement in the Soviet Russia. While E. Iaroslavsky highlighted the continuing influence of the Muslim priests who were introducing certain reforms in traditional-religious educational institutions. Kobetsky, another important figure in directing anti-religious propaganda, pointed out the aggressive, anti-Soviet character of religious organisations. A. Lunacharsky suggested that for the realisation of rapid economic growth it was necessary to wage struggle for a new way of life. See Em. Iaroslavsky, "Desiat let na anti-religioznom fronte." (Ten Years on anti-religious front), Antireligioznik No.10, 1927, pp.16-17; M. Kobetsky, "Ocherednye zadachi anti-religioznoi propagandy sredi natsionalnostei SSR" (Immediate task of anti-religious propaganda among the nationalities of the USSR), Antireligioznik, No.12, (1928), p.13; Also see M. Kobetsky, "Islam v Srednei Azii" (Islam in Central Asia), Revollutsiia i Kultura, No.9 (1928), p.72, A. Lunacharsky, "Kultura, byt i religiia" (Culture, morals and religion), Anti-religioznik, No.4, (1927), p.4.


37. Ibid., pp.128-9.
During the same period, the Soviet Government had effectively banned the publication or import of religious books, journals or newspapers. The latinisation of the Uzbek and other Central Asian languages had already made religious literature written in the Uzbek language incomprehensible to the new generation of the natives.

The main thrust until 1927, however, remained on the programme of socialisation (vospitanie). In accordance with the dynamic-functional approach outlined in the Twelfth Party Congress, the Communists in Soviet Central Asia stepped up the political socialisation programme. Besides the expansion of the general educational system, the Bolsheviks also devoted their attention to the re-socialisation of adults, particularly the native women. In 1923, women's clubs for the dissemination of Marxism-Leninism were opened. These clubs were run under the supervision of the Communist Party organisations. 38 By 1924 the participation of native women in women's clubs and other public and social institutions had taken a regular form in urban areas. In January-February 1924, about 350 native women attended the political education programme in these institutions. Their number rose to 679 in June 1924. 39

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38. Partyarkhiv, no. 7, F. 60, op. 1, d. 3706, pp. 40-52.
39. Ibid., d. 3822, p. 73 'a'. 
In the spring of 1924, a meeting of women workers delegates was organised in Tashkent. Of the 1325 women delegates, 927 were Uzbeks, 47 Kirghis, 25 Turkmens, 15 Persians (Tajiks) and the rest belonged to other nationalities. About 90 per cent of the delegates from Syr-Darya oblast were involved in practical ideological propaganda and 30 per cent of them were working in the city soviets. In the meeting it was decided to create shock-brigades in rural areas to pursue ideological propaganda. In April a big building was allotted in the old city of Tashkent to the women's club to coordinate the activities of the trained cadres involved in propaganda work among the natives. Within a short period of six months, a large number of native women became its members. By the end of 1924, 410 Uzbek women, 60 Tatar women and 20 women belonging to other native nationalities and groups had become its members. Besides ideological propaganda the club arranged many excursions and provided facilities for acquiring educational and professional skills to the native women free of cost.

These developments in Tashkent were not the result of an isolated attempt. By 1924, Bolsheviks had gained a

40. Ibid., pp.189-93.
41. Shukurova, no.1, p.125.
42. Party-arkhiv. no.7, F.60, op.1, d.3822, p.73 'a'.
43. Shukurova, no.1, p.127.
significant break-through in legitimising Soviet political power. Concurrently, they were penetrating all areas of social and cultural life by opening women's clubs, schools, theatres and other cultural institutions in various cities of Uzbekistan. Despite these successes, however, the Communists found it very difficult to carry out ideological propaganda work among the native women in rural areas and in the regions of Bukhara and Khiva and Ferghana valley. Commenting on the resistance put up by the traditionalists, Soviet authors generally admit that in the struggle for the emancipation of women the Bolsheviks faced extreme resistance from the remnants of traditional and religious elite, including the Bais, the higher Muslim priesthood and a large section of rural population which was under religious influence.44 Old traditions and religious values continued to keep the native women away from Soviet institutions and work.45

The VIII Congress of the Communist Party of Turkestan held in May 1924 adopted a resolution in which it was stated that a rapid uprooting of the traditional remnants was a pre-requisite for the cultural and economic development.

44. See B. Puretsky, "Islam v bytu" in Sbornik Islam, Moscow, 1931, p.126; See also K. Vasilevsky, Islam na sluzhbe kontr-revolutii (Islam in the service of counter-revolution), Moscow, 1930, p.64.

45. Shukurova, no.1, p.129.
of Turkestan. It was emphasised that the Party should give "first priority to the task of socialisation of the native communists and Komsomols and this work is essential for widening and deepening the process of socialisation and propagandistic work." Further, emphasis was laid on total mobilisation of institutional resources for the socialisation of adults and women. The resolution also called upon the Soviet press and publicity media to mobilise public opinion against kalym (bride-money), for discouraging the practice of child marriage and for popularising the idea of female education.

By the mid-twenties at least, the activities of Uzbek women in the socio-cultural spheres of life had considerably increased in Tashkent district (Uezd). Gradually they had adopted to the new socio-political environment. In the rural areas of Tashkent region too the Uzbek women participated in the activities of Koshchi. In 1924, there were about 1500 women activists in Koshchi. Uzbek language newspaper "Iangu Yol" fervently took up the cause of re-socialisation of native women. Published by the Department of Women Workers and peasants of the Central Committee of the

46. Resoliutsii i postanovleniia sezdov kommunisticheskoi Partii Turkestan (Resolutions and declarations of the Congresses of the Communist Party of Turkestan), Tashkent, 1958, p.193.

47. Ibid.

Communist Party of Turkestan, its policy was to disseminate socialist-communist values among the native women. It achieved moderate success in its programme. Soon, its publication was stopped and in its place a journal of the same name was started which continued the work of propagation of new cultural and political values. There were a number of other Soviet newspapers also which were devoted mainly to the dissemination of Marxism-Leninism. Published in Turkic languages, they were mainly meant for the re-socialisation of the natives. In 1925 there were about 19 such newspapers and journals in Uzbek language alone. Their aggregate circulation was about 48,325 copies. The prominent journals were Zerfshon (3,750 copies), Eshheninchichi (3,000 copies), Iangu-Yol (2,500 copies), Azad Bukhara (2,900 copies) and Kishlok Ukiturise (1,000 copies). The following Uzbek newspapers also played a significant role in popularising the new cultural values and Marxism-Leninism: Mashrap - 4,000 copies; Mushtum - 9,000 copies; Maorif v Ukiturich and Mo'litia Akhboroti - 1000 copies.49

All these journals and newspapers published materials highlighting and denouncing the reactionary role of religion and traditionalism. The newly emerging native Marxist-Leninist intellectuals and journalists exhorted the

49. See Torzhhestvo Leninskikh idei kulturnoi revoliutsii v Uzbekistane (Solemn Lenin's ideas of cultural revolution in Uzbekistan), Tashkent, 1970, p.105 (Hereafter TLIKRU); See also Shukurova, no.1, p.159.
readers to follow the teachings of Marxism–Leninism. One of
the main pre-occupations of these newspapers was the task of
inculcation of communist international political values so as
to generate comradely attitudes between Russians and the
native nationalities.

Another engaging problem contributing to the slow
progress of the programme of liquidation of traditional
pattern of socialisation until 1926 was the existence of an
opposition group inside the Turkestan Communist Party.
Strongly opposed to the Soviet policy of secularisation of
political culture, it was a nationalist group in the Turkestan
Communist Party, known as Chighatai group. Its aim was to
unite all Turkic Muslims in a separate independent State.50
An institute of Turkic culture was opened by this group to
propagate its ideas. Their idea was to develop their own
culture without any influence of the Russian Soviet literature
and art.51 In 1920, several books were published by them
attacking the Soviet economic and cultural policies.52

Moreover, there was yet another more conservative
group of the natives that was actively involved in the
mobilisation of public opinion in rural areas against the
Soviet cultural policy in Uzbekistan. Led by Ishan-ula Khan

50· TLIKRU, no.49, pp.77-8.
51· Ibid., p.76.
52· Ibid., p.77.
Mukarankhan, the group made all efforts to oppose Soviet policy of politicisation of native women and the Soviet programme of socialisation of native children.\(^53\) The group operated a study centre in which the traditionalists gave lectures on the tenets of Shariat and Islamic theology. They stressed the validity of Shariat in the then existing socio-cultural environment and pleaded for an all-out struggle against the Soviet Russian institutions. In certain areas the group achieved phenomenal success in its programme of opposition of the Soviet system of education. Many natives stopped sending their children to the Soviet schools. As a result of Ishan’s influence, attendance in Soviet schools absolutely declined.\(^54\) Ishan-ula Khan and his followers were later charged with anti-Soviet counter-revolutionary activities and were executed.\(^55\) Thus came to an end the active opposition to the Soviet system of education and its policy of cultural change.

However, as the influence of religion and traditionalism was deep rooted, the Thirteenth Party Congress held in 1924 warned the communists not to hasten in carrying out anti-religious propaganda openly in the Eastern republics.\(^56\)

\(^53\). See Shukurova, no.1, p.146.

\(^54\). Ibid.

\(^55\). Ibid.

\(^56\). KPSS, no.18, Part 2, p.53.
But the programme of political education of the natives continued to receive top priority, now with involved attention. In January 1925, the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) adopted a resolution on the ideological work among the women workers and peasants of the East. The Plenum gave particular attention to the active involvement of the women of the East in Soviet socio-political institutions. Accordingly, the first Congress of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan gave its immediate attention to the programme of the emancipation of women and the party organisations all over the republic were directed to step up their ideological work among women.

In February 1925, the question of re-socialisation of women in the Eastern republics and their participation in Soviet socio-political system received the attention of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. It issued an address entitled "On the rights of working women of the Soviet East." The address alleged that in the Soviet republics of Central Asia the Soviet policy of granting equal rights to both the sexes was not being implemented because of the strong influence of tradition and religion on the masses of the East. It directed that in all republics Soviet laws must steadfastly be followed.

57. Ibid., p.115.
It also stressed the need to wage struggle with the reactionary forces which were against the policy of deliverance of women from the traditional yoke. The whole exercise was directed against the dual judicial system and the traditional educational system which still operated in Soviet Central Asia.

Because of lack of strong support and a solid political base, the Bolsheviks could do little to destroy the traditional institutions of socialisation and adjudication. The task of creating a strong socio-political base was slow and complex because the response from the society to the new values and openings was not always favourable, particularly when the agents of change were controlled by others than the natives. The Soviet government took certain steps in this direction too. It started crash programmes of training the natives for propaganda work in rural areas and undertook the training of two hundred native women to propagate political education among native women in July-August 1925. Moreover, by 1925, the Party began to tighten its control over implementation and execution of its policies.

The regional press was scrutinised and some Uzbek newspapers and journals were closed down in November 1925.

59. Sobranie Uzakonenii i rasporiazhenii raboche-krestianskogo pravitelstva SSSR (A collection of laws and decrees of the workers and peasants government of the USSR), Moscow, 1929, p. 134.

60. Izvestia Tsk RKP (B), 22 June, 1925, p. 8.
While the newspaper Ferghana and the journals Mushtum and Mashrap were put under strict surveillance, the newspaper Azad Bukhara was closed down.61 (In fact, some other native journals and newspapers propagating native culture and traditional values had been closed down as early as March 1918. Prominent among these were Turkestan Courier, Turkestan-skoi Slavo, Ulug Turkestan, Al-Ozoh, etc.).62 The Central Party now advised the Uzbekistan Communist Party to keep a strict supervision on native art and literature, including text-books in Uzbek language, as these were accused of showing ideological deviations.63 Likewise, the work of native correspondents in rural areas and the programme of political education began to be strictly scrutinised.64

The atmosphere of suspicion and unreliability also prevailed in other institutions of socialisation which the Party sought to overcome by a vigorous process of socialisation of Party activists and propagandists and young children, particularly native girls. Pointing out the unsatisfactory work of the native communists among native women, the

61. Ibid., 16 November, 1925; See also Pravda Vostoka, 18 November, 1925.


63. Pravda Vostoka, 18 November, 1925.

64. Ibid.
Secretariat of the Central Committee of All-Union Communist Party (B) suggested the following measures for hastening the process of liquidation of traditional pattern of socialisation:

1. Strengthening of internal party socialisation work in connection with the struggle against traditional hangovers in relation to women;
2. Strengthening of the party socialisation work of the native communists; and
3. The enrolment of native girls in the cadres of pioneers to fight out the influence of traditionalism.65

Accordingly, the Uzbek Communist Party introduced certain rigorous measures "to cleanse the ideological deviations. These ranged from purges of some native communists in 1926 to the strict selection of trusted native cadres to carry out socialisation programme among native women.66 In fact, from the steady flow of orders, resolutions and directives of the Central Communist Party and from their contents it becomes crystal clear that during the second half of 1920s the Soviets gave considerable importance to the programme of socialisation of native women. From 1925 onwards the Party took serious view of any slackness shown by native communists in this field.

65. Izvestia Tsk VKP (B), 1926, No.24-25, p.5.
66. I.K. Kadyrov, no.58, p.155. An influential and strong group of the native communists known as 'the group of eighteen' was opposed to the operation aspect of the programme of cultural change. Most of the members of this group were purged and executed during the period 1925-28.
Time and again, the regional Communist Party organisations were warned about the unsatisfactory ideological work and political education of native women. In 1926, the Central Party directed to launch a movement to prevent native women from wearing veils on their faces. In a resolution entitled "On the immediate tasks of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan", the fourth plenum of the Central Committee of the All Union Communist Party (B) expressed serious concern for not implementing the directives of the Party among native women. Following this, the Uzbekistan Communist Party decided to mobilise all political resources at its disposal to emancipate women from traditionalism. To begin with, the Party asked its members and activists to present an ideal before the masses by involving their wives, sisters and mothers in active socio-political life of the Republic. They were threatened with punishment in case they failed to follow the Party directives in this regard.

In accordance with the directives of the Central Asian Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (B), the Communist Party of Uzbekistan launched a massive movement for the removal of veil in May 1927. Moreover, the All-Union Communist Party issued a ten

67. Izvestiia, Tsk VKP(B), No.52, p.6.
68. Shukurova, no.1, p.184.
point directive to all the organisations of the Party in Central Asia. It laid down:

i. that there is no place in the Party and Komsomol for those who are against the Party policy of emancipation of women;

ii. without active participation of women themselves, the struggle for their emancipation would remain slow;

iii. there is no place in the country of Soviets for those who want to keep their women in slavery;

iv. persons not struggling for internalisation of new values and traditions are preventing the growth of their country;

v. a man, who has an under-aged wife, cripples a woman and degenerates his nation;

vi. he who buys a wife for kalym (bride-money) breaks the law of Soviet powers;

vii. on the basis of mutual agreement alone marriage provides an ideal, healthy family. Purchase and sale have no place in the institutions of marriage;

viii. to draw an emancipated woman into the Soviet socio-political life, to help her in (her) work is the duty of all working men;

ix. in the organs of Soviet political system there is no place for those who put obstacles in the way of the Soviet programme of emancipation of women; and

x. boldly fight with the enemy of the Soviet power, with the opponents of emancipation of women, the bais, the mullahs, and the Ishans.69

This open struggle policy launched vigorously by the Communist Party towards the close of 1927 gave a new

69. Pravda Vostoka, 23 April, 1927.
orientation to the Soviet programmes of cultural change and liquidation of the traditional pattern of socialisation. This change was very much reflected in the contents of Soviet journals and daily press, and the mass media, radio programmes, etc. Until mid-1927, the programme was, to a significant extent, pursued without making open use of coercion. The emphasis so far was on persuasion and political socialisation. Now the ten-point programme of the Party left no one in doubt about the change in the Party's strategy. It led to a tumultuous movement called 'Hujum' in Uzbek language. Officially it was meant to emancipate the native women. The objective, however, was to prevent them from socialising their children into traditional religious values. Besides, the old-method maktabs and the new-method schools which had been started by the Jadidists were ordered to be closed down in 1928. In this way, both the primary agents of socialisation - the traditional schools and the native family - were prevented from transmitting traditional cultural and religious values. As the anti-religious movement in Uzbekistan was still very weak, the only effective way that the Bolsheviks could devise was to push through the emancipation programme of women. However, the communists in carrying this programme forward faced internal opposition. Some native communists did not look at this programme with equanimity. The first point of the ten-

70. TLIKRU., no.49, pp.155-56; See also Shukurova, no.1, pp.186-7.
point programme was basically a warning to them that "there is no place in the Party and the Komsomol for those who are against the party policy of emancipation of women." On June 5, 1927, the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, Akmal Ikramov, and the Chairman of Central Asian Bureau, M.F. Muratova, presented their reports on the work of emancipation of women in Central Asia. Among other things, they pointed out the difficulties in implementing the programme and declared that the Central Committee of the Communist Party (B) was of the view that despite the objective difficulties the struggle against the traditionalists should be deepened and taken to the rural areas. It was stressed that the communists should use full force at their disposal to liquidate the opponents.\(^7\)

To make these rapid socio-cultural changes acceptable, the Party was, however, simultaneously advocating rapid nativisation of the apparatus of Soviet institutions and trade union organisations of Central Asia. A detailed account of the promotion of social mobility and nativisation of Soviet apparatus would be given in the next chapter. Suffice it to state here that by 1927-28 a solid socio-political base with a sizeable committed native intelligentsia had been created in Uzbekistan.

Banking on the solid support of the native Soviet intelligentsia and a large native base created during the

\(^7\) Pravda Vostoka, 2 June, 1929.
first decade of the Soviet power, the Communists, by mid-1927, openly advocated the adoption of the liquidationist approach towards religion and traditionalism and their anti-religious work was strengthened. Not only the atheist organisations and the journals propagating anti-religious values stepped up their activities and published articles attacking the religion of Islam, the Communist Party now advised its members to boldly fight the remnants of feudal-patriarchal values and ideology, including religion. In December 1928, the All-Union Communist Party (B) organised a special conference on anti-religious propaganda in the East.72 The views expressed in the conference were by leading party members in the East and they threw considerable light on the prevailing mood of the party vis-à-vis the socialisation programme.

The conference in which representatives from Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and other Eastern Soviet republics participated lasted five days from 21 to 25 December. Three papers on the problems of anti-religious propaganda were presented in the conference. In the first paper entitled "On the steps to strengthen the anti-religious propaganda in the Soviet East" Iaroslavsky observed that the influence of Islam on workers and members of the Komsomol was still very strong. This he ascribed to the attitude of a large number of teachers who, according to him, were not

73. Ibid.
very favourable to the dissemination of anti-religious values because of their social origin. He stated that among them a large percentage belonged to the former officers and missionaries. Secondly, he maintained that a large number of native communists did not wish to fight out the influence of religion. Lastly, Iaroslavsky pointed out the hostility of some native communists to the communist policy of emancipation of native women. He advocated strict action against these elements to make the programme of anti-religious agitation and propaganda a success.\(^74\)

In the second paper entitled "on the state of anti-religious propaganda in the East", Kobetsky stated that the national question in the Soviet Central Asian republics was being used to perpetuate religion and its influence on legal and cultural institutions. He charged that among the intelligentsia and employees there were persons who belonged to former priestly strata of the native population. Because of these factors, Kobetsky observed, the Society of Militant Godless in the East had not been successful in becoming a mass organisation.\(^75\)

In the last paper entitled "On the anti-religious press", T. Egorashivile lashed out against the national Soviet literature for perpetuating religious ideology and traditionalism.

\(^74\) Ibid.

\(^75\) Ibid.
He also brought to the notice of the participants the activities of some religious organisations which were publishing their own journals in which they advocated struggle against the evils of atheism. Unless these constraints were removed, the participants of the conference were informed, anti-religious propaganda could not be carried out successfully.76

Such an open struggle policy of liquidation of religion and traditional pattern of socialisation had now full backing of the top leadership of the Party. Stalin, elaborating Lenin's argument that the Party cannot be neutral towards religion, stated in 1927:

"The Party cannot be neutral towards religion, and it conducts anti-religious propaganda against all religious prejudices because it stands for science, whereas religious prejudices run counter to science, because all religion is the anti-thesis of science. The Party cannot be neutral towards dissemination of religious prejudices, towards reactionary clergy who poison the minds of the labouring masses. Anti-religious propaganda is the means by which the elimination of reactionary clergy will be completely carried through. Cases occur sometimes when certain members of the Party hinder the full development of anti-religious propaganda. If such members are expelled it is a very good thing, because there is no room for such communists in the ranks of our Party."77

The impact of this abrupt change in Soviet policy towards religion and traditionalism manifested itself in the

76. Ibid.
form of three massive movements which swept through the Uzbek society during the following decade. These were (i) Hujum movement directed for the so-called emancipation of native women; (ii) anti-religious movement and (iii) the Soviet cultural revolution.

Hujum Movement

The decision for launching the Hujum movement (Offensive campaign) was taken up by the Vth Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan held in March 1927. All the Komsomol members and the members of various trade unions in the Soviet Socialist Republic of Uzbekistan were directed to be mobilised for freeing the native women from traditional yokes. Removal of the traditional veil, imparting of political education and their enrolment in various subsidiary organisations of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan were the main points of the programme. After the decision of the Plenum, the Women's Department of the Party organised numerous conferences to discuss the strategy for the success of the programme. The year 1927 was celebrated as the year of emancipation of native women. On March 8 and May 1, which are celebrated in the USSR as revolutionary festivals, the Party organised women's demonstration and meetings. 81

78. Ocherki Istorii Kommunisticheskoi Partii Uzbekistana (Outlines of the history of Communist Party of Uzbekistan), Tashkent, 1974, p.236 (Hereafter OIKPU).
79. Ibid.
80. Ibid.
81. Ibid., pp.236-37.
The native women were forced to throw away their veil. The implementation began with the wives of the communists and native women workers employed in Soviet institutions. According to an official source, during the first five months of 1927 about 100 thousand women threw off their veils. The number, however, appears to be highly exaggerated as the movement was still confined to Tashkent region and a few other towns. Later many resolutions of the Party complained about the unsatisfactory progress in the work. The movement, however, continued. Around 200 native women who participated in the campaign for removal of veil were killed by the opponents during the year 1927. By 1929 the number of women party members in the Uzbekistan Communist Party had increased to 1900 from 812 in 1926. The problem of chadra/paranaju (veils), however, still persisted, and in a resolution the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (B) adopted on 27 May, 1929, directed the regional Soviets and Party institutions not to slacken the tempo of the movement.

In December 1928, Em. Iaroslavsky, one of the leading spirits of the anti-religious movement in Soviet Russia, suggested legislative measures to prevent the women of the Soviet East from putting on veils. His proposal was

82. Ibid., p. 237.
83. Ibid.
84. Ibid.
85. Pravda Vostoka, No. 124, June 2, 1929.
strongly opposed by the native communists on the plea that the time was not opportune for this. In February 1929, K. Kobetsky suggested that anti-religious propaganda among women must be strongly linked with the struggle for their emancipation. He pleaded that the atheists in Soviet East must strive for such conditions when their wives, sisters, daughters, all must throw off their veil and become agitators for the emancipation of women. Writing in Anti-religioznik, Kobetsky observed in 1929 that the majority of women still put on veil. However, in the early thirties the native women in UzSSR had adopted the modern way of life. In 1936 the journal Bezbozhnik expressed satisfaction on the success in the field of emancipation of women in Central Asia.

Anti-religioznoe dvizhenie (The anti-religious movement) in Soviet Central Asia.

Until 1926, there had been virtually no open anti-religious propaganda, although discretely the Soviets were disseminating the Marxist-Leninist ideology in their political

87. Ibid.
88. N. Kobetsky, "Ochrednye zadachi anti-religioznoi propagandy sredi zhenshchin vostoka" (Immediate task of anti-religious propaganda among the women of the East), Antireligioznik No. 2 (1929), pp. 14-21.
89. Ibid.
and general educational programmes. But so far as the work of the Society of Militant Atheist was concerned, it began only during the year 1928 when its branches were formed all over the republic of Uzbekistan. Known as Khudosizlar (in Uzbek language the Society of the Atheists), it mobilised its members to carry out anti-religious propaganda. A reliable native source which participated in the anti-religious movement claimed that the protagonists of the Society of the Atheists during the period 1930-36 forced the closure of thousands of mosques in the republic and in doing so they often used force for which the Party and the government gave full support to the Society.

In August 1928, the Soviet Government of Uzbekistan resolved to change the Uzbek language script from Arabic to Latin. The Communists had been advocating change for quite sometimes but there was strong opposition to the idea. Now that anti-religious movement had gained momentum, the change of script was defended as a step against religious reactionaries. It took about two and a half years to implement the

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91. M. Kobetsky, no.88; See also Robert Conquest, Religion in the USSR, New York, p.70.

92. Personal interview with an old Uzbek Dotsent (Assistant Professor) in the State University of Tashkent in April 1977.


94. Ibid.

*(Later, in 1939-40) The script of native languages was again changed from Latin to Cyrilic).
change. To start with, the communists started publication of newspapers and journals in the new script.\textsuperscript{95} A modern Uzbek author observes that the change of alphabet proved to be functional in the development of public education and put an end to the religious schools which were still operating clandestinely.\textsuperscript{96}

The atheists demanded the dissemination of anti-religious values in Soviet schools and among native women. N. Krupskaia, Lenin's widow, argued that when anti-religious propaganda began its method was unscientific and primitive. She, on the authority of Lenin, demanded anti-religious propaganda to be conducted in schools and among all sections of the people.\textsuperscript{97} In 1828, F. Oleshchuk, while emphasising the importance of anti-religious socialisation in schools in Soviet Central Asian republics, noted that "about 42 per cent of the pupils finishing Soviet schools remained infectious of religious stupefaction." He pleaded for intensive socialisation of children in the spirit of atheism.\textsuperscript{98} Arsharuni, a Tatar Muslim historian, revealed that the programme of socialisation

\textsuperscript{95} TLIKRU, no.49, pp162.

\textsuperscript{96} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{97} N. Krupskaia, "Ob anti-religioznom vospitanii", (On anti-religious socialisation), Revoliutsiia i Kultura, No.10, (1928), pp.21-5.

\textsuperscript{98} F. Oleshchuk, "Za anti-religioznoe vospitanie v shkole (For anti-religious socialisation in schools), Revoliutsiia i Kultura, No.10 (1928), pp.21-25.
of pupils in Uzbekistan was not in a good condition. He
demanded a unified system of socialisation in all schools for
the development of international spirit among Soviet youth. 99
Writing on the Islamic influence on the Central Asian society,
Kobetsky noted in 1929 that, although a decree for nationalisation
of waqf's land was issued in August 1928, some religious
schools still existed. 100 Accusing that some traditional
Muslims were trying to consolidate their power in the Kishlaks
(rural areas in Uzbekistan), he encouraged the atheists to
liquidate the fanatic Muslims, who, he observed, would prove a
dangerous enemy of Soviet regime, if allowed to exist. He
even narrated a story of how a Muslim Imam had incited thousands
of natives during the colonial days against the Tsarist
empire. 101

The atheists in 1929 argued that anti-religious
propaganda concentrated in the party circles and schools was
not enough. They pleaded that it should be carried to every
house and parents should also be brought under the influence
of anti-religious propaganda. It was felt that in the absence
of such a move the anti-religious socialisation of children was

99. A. Arsharuni, "Shkol na vostoke", (Schools in the East),
Revoliutsiia i Kultura, No.1 (1928), pp.21-25.
100. M. Kobetsky, "Islam v Srednej Azii", (Islam in Central
Asia), Revoliutsiia i Kultura, No.9-10, (1929), pp.71-77;
73.
101. Ibid., p.71.
proving ineffective. Non-observance of religious festivals was demanded because it was claimed that "religious festivals attract children."\textsuperscript{103} The journals Bezbozhnik and Antireligioznik published many articles against prophets Christ and Mohammed and the Christianity and Islam.\textsuperscript{104} It was alleged that the religion of Islam prohibits education of girls, particularly in secular schools.\textsuperscript{105}

By 1932, the Society of Militant Atheist had become a strong organisation in Uzbekistan. In 1930, the members of the Society numbered 13,115. It shot up to about 90,000 in 1932.\textsuperscript{106}

By 1936, the situation had completely changed in favour of the atheists. All resistance had been crushed. Though a large number of natives continued to be religious, politically they had been made ineffective. All over the republic their activities were put under strict surveillance. The Bezbozhnik and other Soviet journals propagating atheism

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{102} See "Antireligioznaja propaganda shkoly sredi roditelii", (Anti-religious propaganda among parents), Antireligioznik, No.1, (1929), pp.78-79.
  \item \textsuperscript{103} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{104} See "Protif Khrista i Mahometa" (Against Christ and Mohammed), Bezbozhnik, No.4 (1927), pp.8-9; Alssso see "Chto takoe Muslimanstvo" (What is Islam), Bezbozhnik, No. (1938).
  \item \textsuperscript{105} Iak Shur "Na borbe za osvobozhdenie zhenshchin vostochnicy" (On the struggle for emancipation of women of the East), Bezbozhnik, No.4 (1929), p.2.
  \item \textsuperscript{106} Altai, "Anti-religioznaja rabota sredi-natsionalnosti", (Anti-religious work among the nationalities), Revoliutsiia i Natsionalnosti, No.9, (1932), pp.89-92.
\end{itemize}
boasted that the struggle against religion had always and still remained one of the most important tasks of class struggle. It maintained that the Society of the Militant Atheists "work under the direct leadership of the Party."\textsuperscript{107} The journal Bezbozhnik claimed that "no other country in the world saw such a large number of scientific Marxists anti-religious journals, anti-religious journals for children, and anti-religious newspapers."\textsuperscript{108}

Text-books containing anti-religious materials were supplied to school children. The Society of Militant Atheists organised frequent courses for anti-religious socialisation in schools.\textsuperscript{109} The XVII Congress of the Party entrusted the task of changing the consciousness of the people to the Society of Militant Atheists during the Second Five Year Plan period.\textsuperscript{110}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{106} Altai, "\textit{Anti-religioznai rabota sredi-natsionalnosti}, (Anti-religious work among the nationalities), \textit{Revoliutsiia i Natsionalnosti}, No.9, (1932), pp.89-92.
\bibitem{107} See \textit{Bezbozhnik}, No.1, (1936), p.6.
\bibitem{108} Ibid.
\bibitem{109} Ibid.
\bibitem{110} As cited in \textit{Bezbozhnik}, No.1 (1936), p.6; See also K. Fazylkhojaev, \textit{Profsoyoz Uzbekistana v borbe za vypolnenie plana vtoroi piatletki (1933-1937 gg)} (The Trade Unions of Uzbekistan in the struggle for the implementation of the Second Five Year Plan, 1933-37) Tashkent, 1960, pp.96-97.
\end{thebibliography}
Emboldened by the support of the Party and the Soviet Government, the protagonists of the new culture made consistent efforts to disuade the natives from following religious practices, values and traditional customs. Even the continuance of animal sacrifice on the festival of Idul' Zuha (Kurban-bairam) was criticised. The journal Bezbozhnik attacked the Quranic teachings in respect of relations between wife and husband.

By 1938, the anti-religious movement had gained a mass character, thanks to the support from the Party and the Soviet Government. All opponents had been effectively silenced. To further demoralise them, the atheists alleged that throughout the Soviet Union underground religious organisations and institutions were engaged in sabotage at the behest of the enemies of the Soviet Union. Complete "liquidation of these agents of fascists" in the Soviet Union was demanded.

Despite these massive efforts of the Communists for spreading a secular political culture in Uzbekistan, a large segment of the native population living in aulakh and Kishlak remained beyond the reach of Soviet influence by 1935. Moreover, the communists were confronted with stiff opposition in their

111. L. Klimovich, "proti Kurban-bairama" (Against Idul' Zuha), Bezbozhnik, No.2 (1938), p.9.
socio-economic transformation programme, from what the Communist party described, the leftists and the rightists elements in the Communist Party of Uzbekistan and from a large number of rich peasants in rural areas. In fact, whosoever did not agree with the official policy was given the label of 'leftists' or 'rightists'.

Moreover, the pace of economic development during all these years was very slow. Poverty was widespread. Certain top communist leaders, like Akmal Ikramov and Faizulla Khojaev, demanded that more attention should be paid to the development of the economy than to the programme of cultural transformation. On one occasion, Akmal Ikramov in fact went to the extent of charging that the present Soviet system had brought no change from that of the Tsarist colonial system. In the rural areas the communists were facing difficulties in implementing the programme of land water reforms adopted in 1928. 115


115. According to Professor Jabbarov the land-water reform played a significant role in liberating the peasants from the influence of existing feudal-patriarchal and ancestral tribal traditions which were putting great obstacles in the social transformation of the native culture and the way of life of the rural population; it objectively opened the way for its secularisation. Professor Jabbarov, however, feels that these reforms only partially freed rural population from the hold of tradition and religion. The complete liberation of the rural population required the destruction of all forms of private property in land, cattle, etc. True, Continued....
To overcome these difficulties the communist mobilized thousands of native youth, the Komsomols, university students and members of workers' unions to go to the villages. They were entrusted with the task of helping the farm labourers against the rich peasants, of educating them about the new values and exposing the alleged reactionary character of the inner party opponents; they were also required to be prepared to wage a relentless struggle against the nationalistic ideologues and the Great Russian chauvinism. For carrying out this complex task, the training work of lower party cadres was intensified in such institutions as the communist university of workers of the East (Komunisticheskii universitet trdiakhchi-khsia vostoka), communist university of national minorities of the West (Komunisticheskii universitet natsionalnykh menoshinstv zapad), and the Central Asian Communist University (Srednej Azii Kommunisticheskii Universitet). In 1932, an Evening University of Marxism-Leninism was opened in Tashkent to spread the atheistic culture in Soviet Central Asia. In November 1932,

115. (from pre-page), the communists desired complete dependence of the population on the Soviet institutions. They believed that until the people could survive and make a living independently of the communist help the threat to the Soviet system would remain. Hence they demanded complete submission in all the spheres of socio-cultural life. It was because of this demand of total submission that even those down-trodden who owned a few cattle or a few poultry birds were declared the enemies of socialism. See, Isa Jabbarov, no. 33, p.66.

the Central Party issued instructions to strengthen and streamline the training programme of Party activists in villages of Uzbekistan as well as regional party cadres and propagandists. In January 1933, trained experts from Moscow were despatched to supervise the practical work and the training programme of party activists for the programme of cultural transformation. Some fifteen thousand ideologues were sent in 1930 for strengthening the Soviet programme of cultural transformation.

Liquidation of traditional patterns of socialisation and anti-religious propaganda constituted important aspects of the Bolshevik strategy of secularisation of political culture in Uzbekistan. After creating a widespread network of new bases of political power in the form of various subordinate party organisations, such as Koshchi, Komsomol, trade unions and Soviet institutions for imparting general political education, the Bolsheviks launched the programme of liquidation of traditional patterns of socialisation. It consisted of emancipation of women, anti-religious campaigns and cultural transformation programmes. The Communist Party and the Soviet Government gave full support to the militant atheists and other party activists engaged in the programme of liquidation of religion and traditionalism. The native communists who were against the programme were purged from the Party. The Hujum movement, meant to emancipate native women from traditional customs and practices and khudosizlar movement meant to liquidate religion often led to
violent clashes. By 1938, the Bolsheviks had achieved considerable success in bringing about changes in the mode of life of native women. However, as the resistance against anti-religious movement (Khudosizlar) was very strong and widespread, the communist leadership thought it wise to call it off on the eve of the Second World War.