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SOCIAL POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE IN TURKESTAN (ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE CITIES OF FERGANA REGION)

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Abstract: This article illuminates the social policy of the Russian Empire in the cities and districts (ueyds) of the Fergana Region based on a comparative analysis of available sources. Specifically, it covers the construction of churches and houses of worship aimed primarily at satisfying the social needs of the resettled population, their state funding, operational aspects, and the policies pursued in the religious sphere.
Keywords: Skobelev, verst, German-Mennonites, Molokan, Old Believer (Starover), Baptist, Protestant, Catholic, Arian, Khlyst, “Turkestan Department of the Holy Synod”, church, eparchy, district (ueyd), “Holy Father”, monastery, Orthodox, empire, Turkestan Archbishopric.

ROSSIYA IMPERIYASINING TURKISTONDAGI IJTIMOIY SIYOSATI (FARG‘ONA VILOYATI UYEZD VA SHAHARLARI MISOLIDA)

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Annotatsiya: Mazkur maqolada Rossiya imperiyasining Farg‘ona viloyati shahar va uyezdlaridagi ijtimoiy siyosati, jumladan, asosan ko‘chib kelgan aholining ijtimoiy ehtiyojlarini qondirish maqsadida cherkovlar, ibodat uylari qurilishi, ularning davlat tomonidan moliyalanishi, faoliyati masalalari, diniy sohada olib borgan siyosati mavjud manbalarning qiyosiy tahlili asosida yoritilgan.
Kalit so‘zlar: Skobelev, verst, nemis-mennonit, molokan, starover, baptist, protestant. katolik, arrian, xlist, “Muqaddas Sinodning Turkiston bo‘limi”, cherkov, eparxiya, uyezd, “Muqaddas ota”, monastir, pravoslav, imperiya, Turkiston arxiyepiskopligi.

While liquidating the Kokand Khanate and establishing the Fergana Region, the Russian Empire implemented measures to address the social needs of the resettled population. Although the city of Kokand was initially chosen as the administrative center of the Fergana Region, it was deemed unsuitable due to dusty and windy conditions, a peripheral location, and poor-quality water and air. Consequently, New Margelan (later renamed Skobelev, and subsequently Fergana) was built 7 versts away from the city of Margelan (1 verst = 1.06 km). New Margelan featured a post office, telegraph, military governor’s residence, officers' club, public parks, residential housing, military barracks, and a church building. Naturally, a church was considered one of the essential public buildings that needed to be erected according to urban infrastructure standards.

The city's population grew rapidly, reaching 16,029 residents by 1916, with the majority being ethnic Russians [1]. The population predominantly adhered to the Orthodox branch of

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Christianity, alongside small numbers of other religious confessions such as German-Mennonites, Molokans, Old Believers (Starovers), Baptists, Protestants, Catholics, Arians, and Khlysts.

The city had a large military presence, and both military personnel and Russian citizens of various occupations performed religious rituals and worship in the same church. The church served as an important public institution for satisfying the spiritual needs of the resettled population (naming children, conducting marriage ceremonies, baptisms, celebrating Christmas, bidding farewell to the deceased, etc.). Organizations established by the Russian imperial government, such as the "Turkestan Eparchy" and the "Turkestan Department of the Holy Synod," operated in organizing the construction of churches and houses of worship (prayer houses and other religious institutions), funneling large funds toward these efforts. Archival sources preserve numerous letters sent by the "Turkestan Department of the Holy Synod" to the Governor-General of Turkestan. These letters emphasized that building and opening churches for the resettled Russian-speaking population was vital for fulfilling their spiritual needs [2]. Specific letters and reports highlighted matters such as allocating 1 to 1.5 desiatinas of land for building churches or prayer houses in villages and settlements inhabited by Russian peasants, and engaging civil engineers and designers for the construction work.

A review of the funds allocated by the empire's eparchies in 1910 reveals that the Turkestan Eparchy received the second-largest share of distributed funds, trailing only the Tobolsk Eparchy. Out of 7 eparchies across the empire, the allocations were as follows: Tobolsk Eparchy received 228,100 rubles; Turkestan Eparchy, 176,312 rubles; Tomsk Eparchy, 145,220 rubles; Omsk Eparchy, 111,000 rubles; Orenburg Eparchy, 89,300 rubles; Irkutsk Eparchy, 65,400 rubles; and the Transbaikal Eparchy, 6,000 rubles-totaling 821,332 rubles. The 176,312 rubles allocated to the Turkestan Eparchy aimed to satisfy the religious needs of the resettled population through the construction of churches and prayer houses, thereby cementing their permanent settlement in the region. Sources confirm that special attention was given to building religious institutions specifically within the Fergana Region. During an expanded meeting convened by the Turkestan Governor-General in Tashkent on August 15, 1910, the issue of church construction in the Fergana Region was discussed separately.

While emphasizing the immense importance of churches for the spiritual and psychological needs of the Russian-speaking population, the meeting criticized the slow and unsatisfactory progress of these efforts [3]. In a letter dated July 24, 1910, addressed to Likoshin, the head of the Khujand Uyezd in the Samarkand Region, the Turkestan Governor-General stated: "Instructions have been given to construct a church based on the demands and spiritual needs of the population [4]. "This special directive was also distributed to uyezd chiefs in other provinces. The directive was prompted by an appeal from the Turkestan Department of the Holy Synod to the Turkestan Governor-General on July 13, 1910, requesting assistance in building churches [5].

Construction and Financing of Religious Institutions.Church construction began as early as the 1890s - during the initial stage of population resettlement to the Fergana Region - starting in the Pokrovskoye settlement. Initially, a prayer house was built in the settlement where religious ceremonies were performed. However, by 1901, the church building was fully operational. Built from fired brick based on standard architectural designs from the central governorates of the Russian Empire, the church featured a metal-sheet roof, an iron-grated gate, dual-side entry doors, and glazed, barred windows designed to let in ample light. Emphasis was placed on ensuring the church had a solid wooden floor and a majestic appearance [6].Between 1907 and 1910, church construction accelerated in villages and settlements populated by Russian peasants in the Fergana Region. By 1907, there were 3 churches; by 1909, 5; and in 1910, with the construction of 2 new churches in Jigitol and Karadekhkan, the total reached 7. In villages and settlements with smaller

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populations, prayer houses were built, numbering over 10. Considering that prior to 1907 there were 18 settlement uyezds and 1 Russian village in the Skobelev Uyezd (making 19 Russian rural communities in total), nearly all of them possessed a church or a prayer house. Given that Pokrovskoye settlement and the Russian village each housed over 200 households, they maintained 2 churches each [5].In 1907, settlements slated for church construction in the uyezds of the Fergana Region included Jigitol, Karatikan, Mirzaki, Kok-Yangak, Jilandi, and Toshboshat. However, building a church, adequately decorating its interior, and carrying out construction and repair work involved major expenditures by the standards of the period.For instance, the church in Alekseyevka settlement (Ketmantepa) cost the state treasury 25,000 rubles, with an additional 5,000 rubles required for the parish school attached to the church, and 225 rubles for miscellaneous expenses [2]. In the Andijan Uyezd, building prayer houses and churches for 50 households in Russian settlements expropriated from the Kyrgyz required 136,000 rubles.

Similarly, 250,000 rubles were spent on constructing a women's monastery in the Russian settlements of the Namangan Uyezd, a church and an attached parish school in the Zhulene settlement, and churches in the Uzgen and Yassi volosts. Church construction was financed through three primary sources:

1. The State Treasury
2. Zemstvo Funds
3. Private Donations from Philanthropists

Historical evidence indicates that churches for voluntary settlers in the Fergana Region were funded primarily by the state treasury. Historical data on this matter sometimes appears contradictory; while some sources note the existence of 7 churches in Russian settlements and villages in 1911, archival documents contain data pointing to the construction of 15 churches and dozens of prayer houses [2].

The Russian imperial government paid close attention to establishing churches and women's monastic communities (monasteries). Particular care was taken to staff churches with clergy ("Holy Father", assistant clergy, deacons, bell-ringing monks, and nuns). Parish schools, as well as male and female educational institutions, were established alongside churches. In some of these schools, clergy taught religious subjects, and favorable material conditions were secured for priests and religious servants.Teachers in schools attached to religious institutions received an annual salary of 1,500 rubles between 1910 and 1912, along with 500 rubles for food allowances, 250 rubles for clothing, and rental subsidies ranging from 100 to 150 rubles. Assistant priests received salaries of 750–850 rubles, and deacons received 650 rubles. They also benefited from charitable donations brought to the church by peasants.Annually, the state treasury allocated 100 rubles for textbooks, study aids, and school supplies for parish schools and educational institutions, 800 rubles for specialized handicraft inventory, and 300 rubles for church maintenance. If a teacher lived in separate or rented quarters, they received an additional annual rental subsidy of 500 rubles [5].Educational institutions attached to churches taught "God's Prayers" (religious education) alongside moral upbringing, arithmetic, geography, and the Russian language. Focused primarily on basic literacy, these educational institutions were housed within the church building or in separate structures nearby. Students studied there for 2 to 3 years in classes that were either co-educational or segregated. In densely populated settlements, the number of boys and girls attending reached 120–150 (and sometimes 190–200), whereas smaller villages had anywhere from 10–35, up to a maximum of 40–50 students [3]. In short, historical evidence demonstrates that churches and prayer houses were vital for meeting the spiritual, psychological, and everyday domestic needs of the resettled Russian population.

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A notification sent to the Turkestan Archbishopric (Archpastor) on September 5, 1901, provides precise figures regarding churches built and planned in uyezds and villages of the Fergana Region at the expense of the state treasury, the number of pious Christians attending them, and estimated expense sheets. Specifically, a church designed for 400 people in the city of Kokand was allocated 75,000 rubles for construction. In the city of Osh, a church accommodating the same number of worshippers cost 39,333 rubles [6].

Additionally, military churches operated in the cities of the Fergana Region to serve military personnel: Alexandro-Nevskaya in Kokand, Sergeyevsky in Andijan, Michailo-Archangelskaya in Osh, a church of the same name in Namangan, and Constantino-Eleninskaya in Kokand [7]. These churches served military personnel and their families, with capacities ranging from 250 to 300 people. Russian-speaking Orthodox urban residents also frequented these military churches to fulfill their religious needs [8].

Conclusion. In conclusion, the "Turkestan Eparchy" acted as the primary organizer in building churches, prayer houses, and religious-educational institutions to satisfy the spiritual and religious needs of the resettled population across the cities and uyezds of the Fergana Region. Constructing church buildings and staffing them with "abbots" (priests), deacons, and religious attendants was a paramount task. Churches were raised through three main avenues: state funds, zemstvo administration funds, and private funds. Frequent petitions from the inhabitants of Russian settlements requesting church construction were sometimes left unaddressed, primarily due to government funding shortages and state treasury deficits. Residents of settlements lacking a church fulfilled their religious obligations by attending prayer houses and traveling to churches located in distant villages.

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