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Astana, 010000 Republic of Kazakhstan*e-mail: aimanazmukhanova@gmail.com**«STATUTORY MULLAHS» IN THE TURKO-MUSLIM SOCIETY
AS A MECHANISM FOR IMPLEMENTING THE COLONIAL STRATEGY OF
TSARIST RUSSIA****Abstract**

The gradual colonization of the Kazakh steppes and Turkestan by the Russian Empire was accompanied by complex military-political and spiritual-cultural transformations, with the Islamic factor emerging as a systemic element. Despite the principle of non-interference in the religious institutions of Turkic-Muslim peoples declared under Catherine II, subsequent decades saw an active policy of Russification and Christianization of the local population. One of the tools of systematic spiritual integration was the institutionalized appointment of «statutory mullahs» i.e., representatives of the Muslim clergy selected based on regulated criteria to disseminate the administrative and normative directives of imperial authority through religious practices. The activities of «statutory mullahs» can be divided into two phases: the first, spanning the late 18th to late 19th centuries, focused on competing with the Kadimists; the second, associated with the rise of the Jadidist movement in the early 20th century, was characterized by antagonism between reformist initiatives and traditionalist approaches. Key actors in this process included representatives of the Tatar and Bashkir intelligentsia, as well as local mullahs, whose activities encompassed the construction of mektebs, madrasas, mosques, and the implementation of imperial regulations among the Turkic-Muslim population. The purpose of this article is to reveal the close integration of Turkey into Central Asia, the development of economic relations and the strengthening of its political influence in the region. The study is grounded in a methodological synthesis of content analysis of archival documents, historiographical review, and comparative analysis. The analysis of interactions between «statutory mullahs» and traditionalist and reformist currents provides insights into the mechanisms of adaptation of Turkic-Muslim society to sociocultural transformations amidst intensifying colonial expansion. Identifying the specifics of this adaptation contributes to a deeper understanding of the processes of spiritual-cultural integration and confrontation within the framework of the colonial policies of the Russian Empire.

Keywords: Turkic-Muslim peoples, statutory mullahs, Turkestan, Kazakh steppe, tsarist Russia, Islam.

Introduction

Understanding the religious consciousness of the Turkic-Muslim community during the colonial period of the Russian Empire requires an in-depth examination of the sociocultural, political, and institutional changes that occurred in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This analysis must highlight the interaction between Islamic traditions and the empire's strategies for governance and assimilation [1]. Islam, as a foundational element of the social and cultural identity of Turkic-speaking peoples, became a central target of colonial policies aimed at spiritual domination and cultural assimilation. The initial principle of non-interference in religious institutions, introduced during Catherine II's reign, gradually gave way to an assertive agenda of Russification and Christianization. This transition was marked by the introduction of "statutory mullahs," religious leaders appointed under strict administrative oversight to act as agents of imperial policy and regulators of public sentiment within local communities. These figures became instrumental in executing the empire's strategies for cultural control and integration [2].

The colonial expansion of the Russian Empire, carried out amidst global competition for influence in Eastern regions, resulted in the eradication of the autonomy of the Kazakh steppes and Turkestan. The introduction of a new administrative structure, including the Orenburg, West Siberian, and Turkestan Governor-Generalships, was accompanied by active mechanisms of

spiritual integration. The theoretical basis of this policy was rooted in the concept of Nikolai Ilminsky, which advocated adapting religious education to the objectives of Russification through the establishment of local schools and the dissemination of Orthodox values [3]. Simultaneously, the activities of «statutory mullahs», oriented towards creating competition with Qadimists and countering the reformist movements of Jadidists, reveal the complex nature of sociocultural interactions that included elements of resistance and adaptation. Analyzing these processes not only elucidates the mechanisms of spiritual colonization but also reconstructs the dynamics of religious consciousness adaptation among Turkic-Muslim peoples to the realities of colonial domination [4].

Imperial Russia, in its pursuit of consolidating authority over the colonized Kazakh steppes and Turkestan, recognized the strategic importance of the Islamic factor as a tool for socio-political governance. During the integration of these regions into the empire, the administration of religious affairs remained under the jurisdiction of the Muslim high clergy, ensuring a degree of autonomy for Islamic institutions while simultaneously allowing for the intensification of administrative oversight by Russian authorities [5]. However, this power was significantly limited and brought into alignment with the political interests of tsarism. One of the mechanisms of control over the spiritual sphere was the institutionalized appointment of religious officials, such as «statutory mullahs» selected according to strict criteria, who served as channels for transmitting imperial policy through religious practices and rituals. Unlike the decentralized regulation of religious life among Muslims in the steppe areas of Central Asia, in Turkestan, the creation of an official structure for managing Islam was planned, but in practice, mullahs continued to maintain their autonomy and an important role in the region's religious life [6].

Tsarist colonial policy regarding the Turkic-Muslim peoples, particularly in Turkestan, was aimed at utilizing local religious authorities to secure loyalty to the Russian Empire. The mullahs of the Volga Tatars and Bashkirs were considered key figures in this context, strengthening the ties between the empire and the Muslim population of the region. Their activities, including the promotion of pan-Islamic and pan-Turkic ideas, influenced the political consciousness of local peoples. However, as noted by Senator Count K.K. Palen, there was a real threat of increasing the influence of the Tatars on the local population, which could lead to resistance against colonial rule [7]. For this reason, the tsarist administration actively intervened in the religious sphere through supporting Russification and missionary activities, using mullahs, ishans, and akhunds as instruments of its policy.

This study aims to analyze the activities of «statutory mullahs», who, in the context of colonization and the spread of Russification, functioned as conduits of tsarist administration policy within the Muslim community. An essential aspect of the research is the identification of the mechanisms of interaction between local Muslim religious leaders and the state, as well as their role in promoting colonial ideology and managing religious life among the Turkic-Muslim peoples. The research focuses on a comparative analysis of the role of religious leaders in implementing the political and cultural directives of tsarism in Turkestan and the Kazakh steppes, thus providing a deeper understanding of the methods of spiritual integration and governance used by the Russian Empire to strengthen its influence in the East.

Materials and methods of research

Analyzing the principles and methods of imperial expansion, as well as the problems of the national policy of the Russian Empire, researchers at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries provided various interpretations of its content and ultimate outcomes. Supporters of state policy and apologists for Russia's civilizing mission in the East emphasized the significant leveling potential of Russian culture and considered Russification a justified and expedient process. In contrast, representatives of the democratic school sharply criticized the national policy of the Russian Empire. In the context of discussions on the «Jewish question», they proposed granting equal rights to members of this ethnic group with the rest of the empire's population.

Researchers examining the Turkic-Muslim issue emphasize that the central aspects of imperial policy toward Turkic-Muslim peoples were shaped by mercantile interests, with the state aiming to monopolize the exploitation of the region's natural and demographic resources. The conscious preservation of archaic forms of social organization and subsistence systems among these peoples was seen as a negative development, reflecting the state's desire to deprive them of opportunities for socio-economic progress.

One of the most thoroughly developed aspects of Russia's national policy was its religious policy, particularly in relation to the Turkic-Muslim peoples. Some scholars positively assessed the Russian Empire's policy based on the principle of religious tolerance and aimed at integrating the Islamic world within the empire, while others were skeptical of the possibility of Islamic revival, viewing Muslim peoples as inherently conservative and incapable of embracing progressive ideas. In this context, the works of pre-revolutionary authors such as Ilminsky, Ostroumov, Palen, and Dobrosmyslov are essential for a deeper understanding of the state's religious policy. Additionally, for a more detailed analysis of the role of «statutory mullahs» in the Kazakh steppes and Turkestan, the studies of Bartold, Bendirikov, Utembaev, and the contemporary research of Abashin are invaluable.

In addition to the historiographical review and the use of archival sources from the Central State Archives of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Republic of Kazakhstan, and the West Kazakhstan Region Archives, the present materials demonstrate the complexity and multifaceted nature of the institutionalization of Muslim education within the framework of the colonial policy of the Russian Empire. The archives of the Department of Educational Institutions of the Turkestan region, stored in the Central State Archive of the Republic of Uzbekistan, contain a significant body of documents that shed light on the relationship between state power and Muslim educational institutions from the late 19th to the early 20th century. These materials provide a detailed understanding of the regulation of Muslim education between 1890 and 1917, offering an opportunity to explore how state policies were implemented in the sphere of religious education and academic activities among the Turkic-Muslim population. Notably, documents from the files titled «Correspondence on Local Schools of the Turkestan Region» and fond 455, concerning the activities of the 3rd Inspector of Public Schools in Turkestan between 1890 and 1895, offer valuable insights into the interaction between state structures and local educational institutions, including Islamic schools [8].

An analysis of archival sources reveals that the policy of «ignoring» Islam, as proclaimed by K.P. fon Kaufman, was significantly distorted in practice. While the imperial administration maintained the appearance of religious autonomy, it actively intervened in the religious and educational life of Muslims. From the very beginning of the conquest of the region, the tsarist government used religious structures to legitimize its power, exemplified by the creation of the «statutory mullahs» institution, who were tasked with enforcing imperial policy and facilitating the spread of Russification through educational and religious practices. In this context, it is important to note that from the late 19th century, the regional administration began actively interfering in Muslim education, becoming a crucial tool in consolidating control over the population. Archival documents relating to the regulation of local education emphasize the gradual limitation of the independence of Muslim educational institutions and their alignment with state mandates, which were integral to imperial policy.

From a historical-philosophical perspective, the significance of these processes cannot be underestimated in understanding the overall picture of colonial integration. The education system, as a key tool of state policy, became the arena for broader processes of cultural and political assimilation. On the other hand, the use of Muslim religious figures as agents of colonial policy undermines the very concept of the «civilizing mission» espoused by Tsarism. This shows that, in practice, the tsarist administration created an illusion of religious and cultural autonomy while actively controlling all aspects of Muslim life, including education. This, in

turn, confirms the thesis of a carefully designed and multifaceted policy of cultural and social integration of the Turkic-Muslim population within the framework of Russian imperial expansion.

In the course of the study, we will adhere to the inductive research strategy, which allows us to obtain the necessary results through careful, objective observation and deep analysis of the collected materials. The study of Russia's national policy, including religious policy, especially in relation to the Turkic Muslim peoples, is based mainly on the principles and methods of interdisciplinary synthesis, objectivity, empiricism, and evidence. To study the multifaceted policy of cultural and social integration of the Turkic Muslim population, it is important to use the diachronic method, the laws of social dialectics, and historicism. When considering individual aspects of the problem, methodological pluralism is used, which determines the multidimensionality of differences that increase the possibilities of generalization, and therefore synthesis in understanding and explaining historical events. Of fundamental importance is the systems approach, which consists in considering the objects of knowledge as integral sets, taking into account the connections of the components.

Results and its discussion

The religious policy of the Russian Empire towards Turkic-Muslim peoples involved attempts at centralized control over the spiritual sphere, but it encountered numerous contradictions. Unlike Russia, where Muslim spiritual administrations were established, no single body was created in Turkestan to coordinate the religious life of Muslims. Attempts to establish such an institution in 1884 were blocked by high state authorities, reflecting a tension between the center and the periphery, as well as the challenges of implementing centralized religious governance in a Muslim region [9]. Thus, throughout the 19th century, state policy towards religious institutions in Turkestan remained inconsistent and incomplete.

An important stage in the formation of religious policy was the process of establishing specialized bodies, such as the Department of Spiritual Affairs of Foreign Confessions in 1832, as well as attempts to form Muslim spiritual bodies at the local level [10]. Nevertheless, despite these initiatives, real power and influence over Muslim communities remained with local religious leaders and traditional institutions, demonstrating the lack of full integration of religious life into state structures [11]. The introduction of the «Statute of Spiritual Affairs of Foreign Confessions» in 1857 also did not lead to significant improvements in governance, as this act did not provide adequate control over the religious life of Muslims and failed to systematize religious education and institutions in the colonized territories. Thus, the tsarist administration's policy was primarily aimed at limiting the influence of Islam rather than integrating it into the official power structure [12].

A critical assessment of tsarist religious policy, expressed in numerous reports and circulars, such as the report «Islam in Turkestan» in 1899, indicates a profound misunderstanding of the fundamentals of Islamic culture and religion by Russian authorities [13]. The circular issued after the Andijan Uprising of 1898 highlights that the authorities governing Turkestan lacked sufficient understanding of Muslim religious life, leading to «misunderstandings» and «errors» in their interactions with the local population [14]. The anti-Islamic orientation of these documents suggests that the Russian administration viewed Islam not as an important cultural and religious factor, but as a threat to its authority. This leads to the conclusion that, despite attempts at legitimization through the creation of governing bodies, the empire's religious policy was aimed at excluding Islam from the state agenda, which contributed to the religious isolation and political instability in the colonized regions [15].

The elite of Turkestan and local authorities largely disregarded Islam and related matters. The efforts of Dukhovskiy's commission to establish the Spiritual Administration of Muslims in Turkestan did not yield significant results. Proposals from the Turkestan Governor-General's Office regarding «anti-Muslim» policies were viewed unfavorably in St. Petersburg. Following discussions among the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the

Military Ministry of the Russian Empire, it was decided not to alter the existing regulations on Islam in Turkestan. The authorities in the capital concluded that a policy of religious tolerance and caution towards Islam should prevail, a position further supported by archival evidence [16].

Thus, throughout the 20th century, religious affairs of the Turkic-Muslim peoples of Turkestan remained regionally controlled, and the tsarist administration's policy toward Islam was, in general, cautious and moderately liberal. This was reflected in the existing religious tolerance policy, which applied not only to Muslims but also to all other confessions. The question of organizing Orthodox missionary work in Kazakhstan and Turkestan was not raised, even though the Russian Orthodox Church by that time had accumulated significant experience in missionary activities among Turkestan's Muslim population. For example, according to the 1804 regulations, the priests of the Orenburg region were not allowed to baptize the Kazakhs of the Younger Juz without special permission from the Orenburg border commission, and the process of obtaining such permission was bureaucratically complicated. This regulation highlights the level of control and caution exercised in interactions with the local Muslim population, as further supported by research findings [17].

Despite the political liberalism shown toward the Muslim population, the reforms aimed at more effective governance of Islam in the Kazakh steppes and Turkestan did not result in significant shifts in the worldview of the local peoples. Traditional Islamic principles continued to play a central role in the religious consciousness of Muslims, while state efforts to introduce changes to this process remained largely constrained. In the second half of the 19th century, new challenges emerged due to the empire's territorial expansion and the incorporation of significant Muslim regions. As a result, conceptual changes in state policy toward Islam were developed, focusing on reinforcing the defense of Orthodox identity within the empire. This was reflected in the formulation of strategies to spread Orthodox missionary activity and strengthen the positions of the Russian language and culture among Turkestan's Muslims, as also theoretically justified in Lysenko's works [18].

The outcomes of these policies were a progressive limitation of the religious rights of the Turkic-Muslim population, accompanied by an intensification of missionary efforts. While the state formally upheld religious tolerance and recognized Islamic institutions to maintain stability in Muslim-majority regions, a distinct shift towards greater surveillance and control over these institutions became evident. This reflected a broader trend of increasing direct interference by the tsarist authorities in the religious life of Muslims, signaling a departure from earlier, more passive forms of governance. The measures taken testify to the growing interest of the state in religious institutions and their active involvement in administrative and socio-political processes aimed at stabilizing and consolidating colonial rule [19].

One of the most notable examples of this process was the introduction of a system of state exams in the 1880s for candidates for clerical positions, indicating the state's attempt to standardize spiritual activities in Muslim communities and create a system of control over the educational level of the clergy. The 1888 decree on the establishment of educational qualifications for Muslim clergymen in the Orenburg Muslim Spiritual Assembly became an important step in this direction. It is noteworthy that the exam system was aimed not only at testing theological knowledge but also knowledge of Russian culture, which served as a tool for ensuring control over Muslim communities through education and the formation of «loyal» personnel [20]. This demonstrates how the tsarist administration sought to integrate Muslims into the broader state structure while preventing the emergence of independent spiritual centers capable of influencing the local political situation.

At the same time, the activities of «statutory mullahs» in the Kazakh steppes and their involvement in local religious, judicial, and educational processes became a crucial element of tsarist colonial policy. Mullahs performed functions not only as religious leaders but also as agents of colonial power, playing a key role in supporting official policy by taking oaths,

assisting in civil cases, and promoting the spread of state ideologies. Interestingly, in some areas, such as the Kokchetav district, mullahs were required not only to conduct religious education but also to actively participate in public affairs by opening mosques and schools for Kyrgyz children. This highlights the role of mullahs as intermediaries between the local population and the colonial administration [21]. Thus, the tsarist regime instrumentalized mullahs not merely as spiritual leaders but as key agents in advancing its strategic objectives in the region. This included consolidating social and political order in areas where colonial ambitions intersected with deeply rooted cultural and religious norms.

In 1865, according to the report of the Kokchetav external district order, there were 8 mosques in the district, including one cathedral mosque in Kokchetav, built with the funds of the Tatar and Kyrgyz societies, one in the Kulansukoylinsky volost, built by the Kyrgyz society of that volost, and 4 mosques in the Andagulorazbegimbetovskaya volost [22]. Of these four mosques, one was built with the funds of senior sultan Colonel Valikhanov, another by Lieutenant Jalgarin, one by official Chohanov, and one by the Kyrgyz society of that volost. In the Babasanbagyshevskaya volost, there were 2 mosques, built by Kyrgyz Akisebay Tlepov and Maimaik Pshikantiev with their relatives. There were 7 mullahs in the district, one of whom, in the Kulansukoylinsky volost, also performed the duties of a mullah at the Kokchetav cathedral mosque, one in the Babasanbagyshevskaya volost, three in the Andagulorazbegimbetovskaya volost, one in the Zhavakarolskaya volost, and one in the Sivinkereevskaya volost. At each of the 15 aforementioned mosques, schools were established for teaching Kyrgyz children [23].

This report emphasizes the role of mosques not only as religious centers but also as key educational institutions that contributed to the dissemination of knowledge among the Kyrgyz population. Local mullahs, beyond their religious responsibilities, were integral to the organization of educational initiatives, highlighting the significant role of the Muslim spiritual elite within the colonial framework. Their involvement facilitated the reinforcement of cultural connections with the administrative apparatus of the Russian Empire, illustrating how religious and educational institutions were leveraged as instruments of social integration and control within the broader context of imperial governance.

The activities of Tatar mullahs-mughalim in the Akmola outer district in the first half of the 19th century were associated with several key aspects of the administrative, religious, and educational policies of the Russian Empire towards the Turkic-Muslim population. In 1835, the Akmola administration reported a lack of a permanent ordained mullah, pointing not only to a deficiency in personnel for performing religious duties but also revealing structural and organizational shortcomings in the delivery of religious services, which reflected broader gaps in the implementation of imperial religious policies. Instead of creating new positions, the administration chose to appoint the Tatar Asfendiyar Chanyshiev, who, in addition to his administrative duties, performed the functions of a mullah. This reflects the flexibility and selectivity of the imperial authorities in forming the clergy among Muslims [24].

This case also illustrates an important aspect of Russian colonial policy towards Muslim communities: the multifunctionality of local mullahs, who became intermediaries between the authorities and the local population. The understanding of the mullah's position not only as a religious but also as an administrative figure reflects the imperial government's desire to increase control over Muslim communities and their involvement in legal and social processes. The well-known researcher A. Krasovsky, describing the activities of mullahs among the Kyrgyz, noted that the mullah, as a representative of the clergy, was not always viewed as an authoritative figure, since his social status was significantly lower than that of a merchant. This evaluation highlights how low the social prestige of religious figures was, which posed both a social problem and a challenge for the authorities, who sought to strengthen the position of the clergy through various administrative measures [25].

Furthermore, the available documents reveal how the socio-political relations within local Muslim communities changed in the context of the growing involvement of the imperial

administration in their internal affairs. For example, in 1846, the Orenburg muhgalim Kireyev wrote about Muslim clerics in Akmola, noting their role not only in religious practice but also in the educational process. This shows that mullahs, in addition to performing religious duties, were actively involved in teaching children and youth, as evidenced by the existence of Muslim schools at mosques [26]. The verdict or request from the district regarding the appointment of a statutory mullah was signed by numerous sultans, clan leaders, biys, and elders. The document indicated that Amirov was a murza from the village of Novaya, Chelyabinsk district, and had successfully passed the necessary exams at the Orenburg Muslim Spiritual Assembly. In 1851, the headquarters of the separate Siberian Corps demanded action due to a violation of settlement procedures: «Mullah Sagit Usmanov, a resident of Akmola, was removed from his post on the grounds of being deemed a subversive and disruptive figure. Authorities ordered his arrest, shackling, and transfer to Omsk for further action» [27].

Another piece of evidence concerning the organization of education in Akmola district has been preserved. The senior sultan of the district, Ibrahim Dzhaikpaev, personally initiated the establishment of a settlement, a mosque, and a school. The 1864 report from the military governor of the Siberian Kazakhs provides documentation of a request made by Major Ibrahim Dzhaikpaev, the Senior Sultan of the Akmola district, for authorization to establish a settlement comprising 15 houses, a mosque, and a school, accompanied by a servant population. The data gathered from this request reveals several key aspects: The territory along the Ishim River, extending from the Karamendinsky to the Kolutonsky picket, was designated by the authorities for winter camps of the Kirghiz from the Kulan-Katakovsky volost, where Dzhaikpaev plans to establish a settlement. Communities from three neighboring volosts approved the construction of a settlement, mosque, and school in the Akpan area, which is part of Dzhaikpaev's land, and issued a resolution supporting the initiative. Dzhaikpaev and his family assumed responsibility for funding the maintenance of the mosque and providing for the clergy. The Orenburg Spiritual Assembly raised no objections to the mosque's construction, provided all requirements outlined in Articles 261, 264, and 265 of Chapter XII of the Construction Statute were met. The mosque was expected to comply with the stipulated number of parishioners as required under Article 261 of the same statute. A report from 1865 on the number of schools and mosques in the Akmola district has also been preserved [28].

It was not uncommon for retired soldiers to become mullahs. For example, Khuz Akhmet Khamzin, a Cossack of the Tobolsk Tatar regiment, held the rank of imam and mukhtasib. In 1840, after his retirement, he was sent to the Uch-Bulak district as a mullah. According to other sources, the Tobolsk Tatar Khatyn Akhmet Khamzin was appointed mullah in 1835. The Polish official Kublitsky-Piottuch, who temporarily assumed the role of assessor, reported that A. Khamzin had formally requested written authorization to visit the Orenburg mufti for approval and to secure a certificate from the Orenburg Spiritual Assembly [29].

Thus, data from various district reports of the Kazakhs indicate that the development of education and the strengthening of Islam in this region during the 1820s–1860s occurred with the active participation of Tatar figures. Performing religious rites and educating children were not merely necessary but integral components of Kazakh society. In this context, representatives of the Tatar people worked deeply within the Kazakh steppes and among the Kazakh population, and this extensive educational work was recognized by sultans, elders, and biys. It was highly valued by ordinary Kazakhs of various clans. The Tsarist administration, despite its restrictions, was compelled to allow the activity of Tatar mullahs and mughalims, in contrast to the activities of the Kokand and Khiva clergy. This is a crucial point in the political assessment of the activities of Tatar mullahs and mughalims.

Discussions within governmental circles regarding the future fate of the Turkic-Muslim peoples of the empire concluded with the victory of more conservatively minded social and political figures. The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw the consolidation of a protective policy rooted in «Orthodox conservatism», which aimed at preserving the status quo and

reinforcing established traditional structures. The doctrine of «official nationalism» emerged as a central tenet of state ideology, leading to greater oversight of national minorities and religious institutions aligned with their interests. This shift resulted in a gradual curtailing of the religious freedoms of the «foreign» population, accompanied by a marked increase in missionary efforts aimed at consolidating the empire's cultural and political dominance.

To preserve stability in regions with significant Turkic-Muslim populations, the imperial policy emphasized religious tolerance and the recognition of Islamic institutions at the national level. However, alongside this tolerance, there was a discernible trend toward intensifying control over the activities of these institutions and the Muslim clergy. This phenomenon reflects a shift toward more active state intervention in religious and cultural processes related to the Muslim population, aimed at consolidating state power and reinforcing centralization.

A central aspect of the Russian policy towards «Kazakh Islam» was the widespread perception that Kazakhs were «poor Muslims». The administrative efforts to spread «Kazakh Islam» during the late 18th and early 19th centuries yielded limited results, as Kazakhs were seen as insufficiently devout. This perception underscored the need for further religious integration efforts. The specifics of the government's approach to «Kazakh Islam» were shaped by the varying socio-religious conditions across different regions of the Kazakh steppes and Turkestan, with local administrations evaluating the extent of Islamization in each area.

Following the Andijan Uprising of 1898, regional authorities initiated an inquiry into the «Muslim question», resulting in the establishment of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims in Turkestan. S.M. Dukhovskoy, associated with the publication and dissemination of official works on Islam, was largely uninformed on the topic, as noted in the memoirs of G. Fyodorov, and was frail due to old age and illness. The real administrative work concerning the Muslim question was primarily carried out by N. Ivanov and his advisor, V.P. Nalivkin [30].

Islam in Turkestan was not only a religion but a fundamental aspect of daily life, which explains why the actions of the tsarist administration were often seen as interference in the religious sphere of the local Muslim population. In this context, the governors-general of Turkestan played a central role in the reforms. To fully grasp the extent of the Russian Empire's regulation of Islam in Central Asia, it is essential to explore less-known aspects that historians have often overlooked.

During the summer months, religious figures such as mudarris from Kazan, Ufa, Orenburg, and mullahs from the Ural-Volga region would travel to regions like Syr-Darya. They recruited students at markets and fairs, establishing mobile schools where they taught literacy, particularly in the Tatar language. This practice led K.P. von Kaufman, the Governor-General of Turkestan, to view the Tatar clergy negatively, perceiving them as missionaries rather than religious authorities [31]. A.N. Kharuzin, the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, expressed strong opposition to the appointment of Tatars to Kyrgyz schools, fearing the influence of Turkic peoples on one another. His concerns stemmed from growing anti-government movements in Turkestan, where the influence of the Tatars was seen as a threat. The spread of «Tatarism» and Islamic ideology was viewed as problematic, particularly since, under the guise of religious education, Muslims had been establishing a network of national educational institutions beyond state control [32].

In 1907, a bill for universal primary education was presented to the State Duma, with the key issue being the language of instruction in national schools. There was significant public concern that this bill would lead to the secularization of Muslim schools, prohibiting religious and native language education. This issue sparked debates in Tatar press outlets. To gauge public opinion, State Duma deputy Sadri Maksudov traveled to the Volga region, the Uralsk, Turkestan, and the Caucasus in the summer of 1910. His findings were published in Tatar newspapers, including «Vakyt», which featured a series of articles and interviews about Maksudov's trip [33].

By the end of 1910, reports of the closure of Muslim educational institutions in Turkestan raised significant concerns in the Tatar press. For instance, a January issue of the newspaper

Vakyt recounted an event in which, on December 28, 1911, the bailiff of Kokand informed the teachers of new-method schools that, by order of the regional inspector, their schools would close as of January 1. This news provoked a strong reaction from the local population. The city's progressive elite, including figures such as Salimzyan Bai, Gabdelzyan Makhmudov, Mirgabit Bai, and other influential individuals, gathered at the exchange committee hall. There, committee members, including six Germans, expressed surprise at the decision and offered their assistance. They suggested hiring lawyer Levinson to address the matter, a proposal that was accepted, and Levinson was dispatched to Tashkent [34].

In 1912, the Turkestan administration introduced a decree regulating the appointment of teachers in Muslim schools, which intensified existing tensions. The decree stipulated that teachers in both modern and traditional mektebs could only be selected from among the clan or tribe of the students, prohibiting, for example, a Sart from teaching Kirghiz students or a Tatar from instructing Sart children [35]. The new regulations, effective from July 1, mandated the closure of mektebs that did not comply, effectively excluding Tatar teachers from the educational process. As a result, Tatar educators, already under close surveillance, faced intensified scrutiny by the gendarmerie. In Kokand, inspectors determined that the presence of Tatar mughallim in Sart schools was illegal and unauthorized [36].

Despite the stringent measures imposed by the Russian authorities on Tatar teachers, their presence in Turkestan remained relatively stable. In January 1913, the Governor-General of Turkestan received reports indicating that, during the summer of that year, young Tatars, mudarris from the «Galiya» madrasah in Kazan, continued their travels to the Syr Darya and other regions, establishing mobile schools for the local Kyrgyz. Authorities were particularly concerned that such education undermined the interests of Russian statehood. Documents from the State Archive of the West Kazakhstan Region reveal that among these teachers were Mavlyut Latypov, a graduate of the Kasymov madrasah, who taught in Sergiopol; Hasan Uzbekov, also a Kasymov graduate from Khvalynsky; and Gataulla Akhmarov from Novouzensky, who was preparing for public school teaching exams in Kazan [1. – 167-169].

Despite numerous administrative restrictions on Tatar teachers, the Tatar community remained confident that the regulations aimed at prohibiting their educational activities would be largely unenforced. This confidence stemmed from the limited presence of inspectors in Turkestan, who were often unfamiliar with local languages and Muslim scripts, hindering their ability to monitor schools effectively. Despite the efforts to shut down Tatar schools, new educational institutions continued to emerge, though at a slow pace. According to N. Bobrovnikov, this persistence was due to the fact that Sart teachers, while less prepared and often replicating Tatar teaching methods without understanding, were still able to sustain the spread of new educational practices, even if administrative measures only delayed their full implementation [37].

The draft provisions proposed by the Ministry of Public Education of the Russian Empire were generally approved, though they did not specifically address Muslim educational institutions in Turkestan. Nevertheless, it is evident from the content of the draft that the overarching goal of the educational policy in the region was to gradually diminish the role of Islamic education in the local society. This strategy included efforts to integrate Muslim children into Russian secular schools. Over time, the Turkestan educational authorities recognized several deficiencies in the educational system for Muslim children. For example, although the «Law of God» course was incorporated into the curriculum of Russian-Turkestan schools, it failed to significantly increase the appeal of public education among the local Muslim population.

Despite efforts by the government to limit the spread of Islam among Turkic Muslim populations, the outcomes were contrary to expectations. Since the 1880s, there was a significant increase in appeals from Turkic Muslim communities to the Department of Spiritual Affairs of Foreign Confessions, requesting the appointment of a mufti, the establishment of a Spiritual Assembly, and the construction of new mosques and educational institutions. These actions were

viewed by the authorities as signs of "Muslim propaganda," aimed at undermining the administration's influence over religious, family, and marriage matters among the Kirghiz, which was seen as a threat. Consequently, many of these requests were ignored, and repressive measures were sometimes taken against the leaders of these movements. However, the growing concerns about the spiritual development of Turkic Muslims, especially after the 1905-1907 revolutionary events, made it increasingly difficult to ignore these issues. For instance, the establishment of special spiritual administrations for the Kirghiz in several regions was discussed in depth during the Special Meeting convened in 1909 under the Committee of Ministers to draft new legislation on religious tolerance.

In the second half of the 19th century, Orthodox missionary activities among the indigenous peoples of the Russian Empire followed the methodology developed by Professor Ilminsky of Kazan University. The primary objective of this approach was to instill the state's official ideology of «autocracy, Orthodoxy and the people» among the diverse populations of Asian Russia. Russification was viewed as a key tool for achieving this aim, focusing on converting non-Russian peoples to Orthodoxy and teaching them the Russian language. A central element of this strategy was the active involvement of the local Orthodox Christian community in mission work, alongside the establishment of mixed settlements where Russian settlers and newly baptized Turkic peoples would live together. This was designed to foster integration into Russian agricultural life, moral values, and social norms. As stated by the Kyrgyz mission staff, «The Russian, for a baptized foreigner, is primarily a living example of Christian life. He is also, for both baptized and unbaptized foreigners, a living model of patriotic love for their sovereign and homeland, as well as an example of Russian cultural life». The ideal model for this process was, thus, the true Russian Orthodox Christian.

To achieve their objectives, missionaries were assigned specific roles, with «statutory mullahs» playing a key part as agents of colonial policy. However, Christianization and Russification were prioritized over administrative duties. Missionaries were tasked with focusing exclusively on proselytizing, traveling to remote regions, engaging in religious debates, and ensuring the moral and spiritual development of newly baptized converts. This involved settling converts in mission camps, organizing their daily routines, teaching agricultural practices, overseeing adherence to Orthodox rituals and fasting, and assisting with economic integration.

The establishment of missionary schools at Kyrgyz mission stations, envisioned as tools for advancing Russification, largely failed. Ilminsky's approach emphasized education grounded in Christian values, requiring instruction in both native languages and Russian. These schools aimed to prepare local individuals to serve as personnel for Orthodox missions. However, they were deeply unpopular among Turkic Muslim communities due to widespread fears of forced conversion. Moreover, the nomadic lifestyle and economic systems of these communities did not align with formal education, diminishing motivation to attend. Even state-funded boarding schools for children failed to attract sufficient enrollment, as families remained distrustful of the missionaries' intentions.

Conclusion

In general, it should be noted that during the 18th to early 20th century, the religious policy of the Russian Empire in the territories of Kazakhstan and Central Asia went through several stages, each of which was largely determined by both internal state trends and the geopolitical realities of the time. These stages are characterized by the evolution of state policy towards Muslims, reflecting changing views on Islam as either an integrative or disintegrative factor, as well as the shifting perspectives of Russian authorities on the religious and cultural identity of the local peoples.

The first stage (the 1780s to the first half of the 19th century) was primarily focused on integrating ethnoregions into the Russian political-legal and cultural space. This integration not only facilitated the expansion of Russian influence but also laid the foundations for the long-term russification of the Muslim population in Central Asia and Kazakhstan. Islamization, carried out

through administrative methods such as the construction of mosques and the opening of Islamic educational institutions, served as an important tool for stabilizing and strengthening the state's control over regions that were ethnically and religiously diverse at the time. A key element of this process was also missionary activity, aimed at spreading Islam and shaping the religious identity of Turkic peoples, which in turn supported the goals of integration into the Russian cultural and political sphere.

In the second stage, during the mid-19th to early 20th century, a shift in the religious policy of the Russian Empire occurred in response to changing geopolitical circumstances. The annexation of new territories with a predominantly Muslim population led to the realization of the potential threat posed by Islam and Muslim movements to the territorial integrity and political stability of the Russian Empire. As a result, Islam began to be seen as a factor of potential disintegration, which was reflected in a change of state policy. Instead of religious tolerance and integration, characteristic of the previous stage, the government began to more actively seek control over Islam, viewing it as a political threat. This also meant a departure from pragmatism regarding religious tolerance in favor of policies aimed at strengthening Russian identity and reducing the influence of Muslim religious structures.

Thus, the shift in state religious policy, along with changes in the perception of Islam as an ideological force, reflected deeper processes within Russian policy toward non-Russian peoples. These changes also defined the directions for further cultural and religious russification, which included the education system, religious practices, and social structures at large. Ultimately, efforts aimed at assimilation and russification led to significant changes in the social and cultural landscape of the region, with long-term consequences for the relationship between the Russian state and the Muslim peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan.

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ТҮРКІ-МҰСЫЛМАН ҚОҒАМЫНДАҒЫ «ЖАРҒЫ МОЛДАЛАР» РЕСЕЙ ИМПЕРИЯСЫНЫҢ ОТАРШЫЛДЫҚ СТРАТЕГИЯСЫН ІСКЕ АСЫРУ МЕХАНИЗМІ РЕТІНДЕ

Аңдатпа. Қазақ даласы мен Түркістанның Ресей империясы тарапынан біртіндеп отарлануы күрделі әскери-саяси және рухани-мәдени өзгерістермен қатар жүрді, олардың ішінде ислам факторы жүйе қалыптастырушы элементке айналды. II Екатерина тұсында жарияланған түркі-мұсылман халықтарының діни институттарына араласпау принципіне қарамастан, кейінгі онжылдықтарда жергілікті халықты орыстандыру мен шоқындыру саясаты белсенді түрде жүзеге асырылды. Рухани интеграцияның жүйелі құралдарының бірі ретінде «Жарғы молдаларын» тағайындау қалыптасты. Бұл мұсылман дінбасылары империялық биліктің әкімшілік және нормативтік нұсқауларын діни тәжірибелер арқылы жеткізу үшін арнайы бекітілген критерийлер негізінде таңдалған тұлғалар еді. «Жарғы молдалардың» қызметін екі кезеңге бөлуге болады: XVIII ғасырдың соңы мен XIX ғасырдың соңын қамтыған алғашқы кезең кәдімшілер бәсекелестікке бағытталған болса, XX ғасырдың басындағы жәдидтік қозғалысының күшеюімен байланысты екінші кезең реформаторлық бастамалар мен дәстүршіл тәсілдер арасындағы қарама-қайшылықтармен ерекшеленді. Бұл үдерісте татар және башқұрт зиялыларының, сондай-ақ жергілікті молдалардың рөлі ерекше болды. Олардың қызметі мектептер, медреселер мен мешіттер салуды, сондай-ақ түркі-мұсылман халықтары арасында империялық нормативтік актілерді енгізуді қамтыды. Мақаланың мақсаты - Ресей империясының отарлық саясаты жағдайында түркі-мұсылман қоғамындағы «жарғылық молдалардың» қызметін зерттеу. Зерттеу мұрағат құжаттарды контент-талдау, тарихнамалық шолу және

салыстырмалы талдаудан тұратын әдіснамалық синтезге негізделген. «Жарғы молдалардың» дәстүршіл және реформаторлық ағымдармен өзара әрекетін талдау түркі-мұсылман қоғамының күшейіп келе жатқан отарлық жағдайындағы әлеуметтік-мәдени өзгерістерге бейімделу механизмдерін қалпына келтіруге мүмкіндік береді. Бұл бейімделудің ерекшеліктерін анықтау Ресей империясының отарлық саясаты аясындағы рухани-мәдени интеграция мен карама-қайшылық үдерістерін тереңірек түсінуге ықпал етеді.

Негізгі сөздер: Түркі-мұсылман халықтары, жарғы молдалар, Түркістан, қазақ даласы, патшалық Ресей, ислам.

«УСТАВНЫЕ МУЛЛЫ» В ТЮРКО-МУСУЛЬМАНСКОМ ОБЩЕСТВЕ КАК МЕХАНИЗМ ИМПЛЕМЕНТАЦИИ КОЛОНИАЛЬНОЙ СТРАТЕГИИ ЦАРСКОЙ РОССИИ

Аннотация

Постепенная колонизация казахских степей и Туркестана Российской империей сопровождалась сложными военно-политическими и духовно-культурными преобразованиями, среди которых исламский фактор стал системообразующим элементом. Несмотря на декларируемый при Екатерине II принцип невмешательства в религиозные институты тюрко-мусульманских народов, в последующие десятилетия активно реализовывалась политика русификации и христианизации местного населения. Одним из инструментов системной духовной интеграции стало институционализированное назначение «уставных мулл», т.е. представителей мусульманского духовенства, отобранных на основе регламентированных критериев для трансляции административных и нормативных установлений имперской власти через религиозные практики. Деятельность «уставных мулл» условно подразделяется на два этапа: первый, охватывающий конец XVIII – конец XIX веков, был направлен на конкуренцию с кадимистами; второй, связанный с усилением джадидистского движения в начале XX века, отмечен антагонизмом между реформаторскими инициативами и традиционалистскими подходами. Важную роль в этом процессе играли представители татарской и башкирской интеллигенции, а также местные муллы, чья активность включала строительство школ, медресе, мечетей и внедрение имперских нормативных актов среди тюрко-мусульманского населения. Цель статьи – исследование деятельности «уставных мулл» в тюрко-мусульманском обществе в условиях колониальной политики Российской империи. Исследование базируется на методологическом синтезе контент-анализа архивных документов, историографического обзора и сравнительного анализа. Анализ взаимодействия «уставных мулл» с традиционалистскими и реформаторскими течениями позволяет реконструировать механизмы адаптации тюрко-мусульманского общества к социокультурным трансформациям в условиях усиливающейся колониальной экспансии. Выявление особенностей этой адаптации способствует более глубокому пониманию процессов духовно-культурной интеграции и конфронтации в рамках колониальной политики Российской империи.

Ключевые слова: тюрко-мусульманские народы, уставные муллы, Туркестан, казахская степь, царская Россия, ислам.

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