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## TURKESTAN EPARCHY AS A MEDIATOR IN SPIRITUAL COLONIZATION OF THE TURKESTAN REGION MUSLIMS IN THE EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

The article analyzes the activities of the Turkestan eparchy on the spiritual colonization of Muslims in the Turkestan region at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the course of the study, the process of implementing the main directions of the anti-Muslim mission of the diocese was reconstructed, the fundamental aspects of the large-scale project of the Turkestan eparchy in matters related to the cultural and religious «re-education» of the Muslim population, educational policy and missionary activities were studied. The methodological basis of the article is the principles of historicism and objectivity of scientific knowledge. In the work with the sources, logical, problem-chronological, comparative and systemic research methods were used. Their use made it possible to substantiate the important role of the Turkestan eparchy in the implementation of the all-imperial state-confessional course, to identify the factors that had a significant impact on the implementation of anti-Islamic propaganda in the period under study. The authors lead to the conclusion that the Turkestan eparchy actively implemented the policy of Christianization and Russification approved at the official level, the policy of Christian enlightenment of the Muslim population. Anti-Islamic propagandas was considered as one of the main tools for solving this problem, which was carried out by the missionaries of the diocese. The Turkestan eparchy made efforts to establish control over the activities of spiritual and educational institutions in the region, contributing to the unification of the poly-confessional population of Kazakhstan on the basis of the spiritual values of the Orthodox Church. The ultimate goal of the anti-Muslim mission was to consolidate the authority of the Russian Empire among the local population of the region.

**Key words:** religion, Islam, Christianity, anti-Muslim mission, Russian Empire.

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### Түркістан епархиясы – ХХ ғасырдың басында Түркістан өлкесінің мұсылмандарын рухани отарлау саясатының жетекшісі

Мақалада ХХ ғасырдың басында Түркістан өлкесі мұсылмандарының рухани отарлауы бойынша Түркістан епархиясының қызметі талданады. Зерттеу барысында епархияның мұсылмандыққа қарсы миссиясының негізгі бағыттарын жүзеге асыру процесі қайта құрылды, мұсылман халқын мәдени-діни қайта тәрбиелеуге, білім беру саясаты мен миссионерлік қызметке байланысты мәселелерде Түркістан епархиясының ауқымды жобасының негізгі аспектілері зерттелді. Мақаланың әдіснамасы тарихи және ғылыми танымның объективті принциптері негізінде жазылған. Дереккөздермен жұмыс жасауда логикалық, проблемалық-хронологиялық, салыстырмалы және жүйелі зерттеу әдістері қолданылды. Оларды пайдалану Түркістан епархиясының жалпы империялық мемлекеттік-конфессиялық бағытты жүзеге асырудағы маңызды рөлін негіздеуге, зерттеу кезеңінде исламға қарсы насихаттың жүзеге асырылуына айтарлықтай әсер еткен факторларды анықтауға мүмкіндік берді. Авторлар Түркістан епархиясы ресми деңгейде бекітілген христиан діні мен орыстандыру саясатын, мұсылман халқын христиан ағарту саясатын белсенді жүргізді деген қорытындыға келді. Бұл мәселені шешудің негізгі құралдарының бірі епархияның миссионерлері жүргізген исламға қарсы насихат болды. Түркістан епархиясы өлкедегі рухани-білім беру мекемелерінің қызметіне бақылау орнатуға күш салып, православие шіркеуінің рухани құндылықтары негізінде Қазақстанның көпконфессиялы халқының бірігуіне ықпал етті. Мұсылманға қарсы миссияның түпкі мақсаты Ресей империясының жергілікті тұрғындар арасында беделін нығайту болды.

**Түйін сөздер:** дін, ислам, христиан, мұсылманға қарсы миссия, Ресей империясы.

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### **Туркестанская епархия – проводник политики духовной колонизации мусульман Туркестанского края в начале XX века**

В статье анализируется деятельность Туркестанской епархии по духовной колонизации мусульман Туркестанского края в начале XX века. В процессе исследования реконструирован процесс реализации основных направлений противомусульманской миссии епархии, изучены основополагающие аспекты масштабного проекта Туркестанской епархии в вопросах, связанных с культурно-религиозным «перевоспитанием» мусульманского населения, образовательной политикой и миссионерской деятельностью. Методологической основой статьи являются принципы историзма и объективности научного познания. В работе с источниками применялись логический, проблемно-хронологический, сравнительный и системный методы исследования. Их использование позволило обосновать важную роль Туркестанской епархии в реализации общеимперского государственно-конфессионального курса, выявить факторы, оказавшие существенное влияние на реализацию антиисламской пропаганды в исследуемый период. Авторы приходят к выводу, что Туркестанская епархия активно проводила в жизнь одобряемую на официальном уровне политику христианизации и русификации, политику христианского просвещения мусульманского населения. Одним из главных инструментов решения этой задачи рассматривалась антиисламская пропаганда, которая велась миссионерами епархии. Туркестанская епархия прилагала усилия к установлению контроля над деятельностью духовно-образовательных учреждений в крае, способствуя унификации поликонфессионального населения Казахстана на основе духовных ценностей православной церкви. Конечной целью противомусульманской миссии являлось закрепление авторитета Российской империи среди местного населения края.

**Ключевые слова:** религия, ислам, христианство, противомусульманская миссия, Российская империя.

#### **Introduction**

The beginning of the twentieth century was marked by major socio-political and socio-cultural changes in the Russian empire, which also affected the spiritual and educational sphere. The key moment of these changes was the intensification of missionary and educational measures in relation to the Muslim peoples of the East. The intensified integration of the Kazakh population into the general imperial cultural and educational space was accompanied not only by the implementation of the policy of Christianization and Russification, but also by the implementation of the strategy of Christian enlightenment of the Muslim population by strengthening anti-Islamic propaganda. Missionaries-preachers, who were called to conduct active religious propaganda aimed at protecting and spreading Orthodoxy among Muslims, played an important role in the implementation of the policy.

The object of the research is the anti-Muslim activity of the Turkestan eparchy, which played a special role in the implementation of the main directions of the spiritual colonization of Muslims of the Turkestan region at the beginning of the twentieth century. The purpose of the study is to study the fundamental aspects of the implementation of a large-scale project of the anti-Muslim mission of the

Turkestan eparchy. The objectives of the study are aimed at studying the main directions of the anti-Islamic activity of the diocese, defining its main stages, analyzing measures in the field of cultural and religious «re-education» of the Muslim population and protecting the Orthodox population from the «harmful» impact of Islam.

#### **Justification of the choice of articles and goals and objectives**

The appeal to the scientific study of the policy of spiritual colonization of Muslims of the Turkestan region by the missionaries of the Turkestan eparchy at the beginning of the 20th century is due to the relevance of the topic. Scientific discourse of the problems makes it possible to identify the most relevant and poorly studied aspects of the problem. First, to characterize completely the religious policy of the autocracy on the outskirts of the Russian empire. Secondly, to show the features of the autocratic policy of the Russian empire towards the Muslims. Third, to substantiate the goals and mechanisms of the anti-Muslim mission in Kazakhstan.

The choice of the problem is also due to the possibilities of applying the institutional approach, which allows us to understand the role and place of religious institutions in the life of society, to study

the history of state-religious relations at the beginning of the 20th century in the context of analyzing the system of building relationships between the imperial state and national outskirts.

### **Scientific research methodology**

The methodological basis of the research is the principles of historicism and the objectivity of scientific knowledge. In the analysis and presentation of the material, logical and problem-chronological methods providing a logical presentation of the material in a chronological sequence were used. Comparative and systematic methods of working with sources, materials and texts of the authors provided an opportunity for a deep analysis of the content of the anti-Muslim mission of the Turkestan eparchy. The use of historiographic sources led to the use of methods for identifying and describing the discursive practices of modern authors, in which value judgments and conclusions of researchers on the problems of state-confessional policy towards Muslims of Turkestan were recorded.

### **Main part**

The source study base of the study was made up of materials from the Turkestan Eparchial Gazette – the official publication of the Turkestan and Tashkent eparchies from 1906 to 1918. The magazine consisted of two sections: official and unofficial. The first section contains a significant amount of information about government orders for the spiritual department, decrees of the Holy Synod, resolutions of the Diocesan Bishop, resolutions of the Turkestan Spiritual Consistory, materials about church clergy. The unofficial section is for the attention of the target audience, which is, as a rule, local clergy, pastors, ministers of parish and military churches, presents analytical materials, informational reports, historical and statistical descriptions of churches, texts of sermons, speeches, analytical articles of clergymen, publications on church history, archeology and ethnography, reviews of the beliefs of local infidels (Kyrgyz, Dungsans, Karakalpaks, Sarts, Tatars), factual information about the most striking events of eparchial life on the territory of Turkestan.

In the reviews of the Syrdarya region materials are presented that characterize the initial stage of the ideological struggle of tsarist officials against the activities of schools (mektebs) and madrassas, a historical overview of the opening of the first Russian educational institutions in the Turkestan Territory is given.

The works of pre-revolutionary authors are also interesting and informative as sources, which highlight the issues of missionary work and Christianization of foreigners. These include the work of the Russian missionary M.A. Miropiev, in his opinion the main instruments for the implementation of the policy of Russification must certainly be the Russian school and the Russian language (Miropiev, 1901: 74). In the work of the Russian historian, specialist in the history of the Orthodox Church V.P. Znamensky it is examined the issues related to the activities of N.I. Ilminsky on the development of foreign education in the Turkestan Territory (Znamensky, 1900: 84). The author analyzes the activities of missionary schools, on which the success of the implementation of the main priorities of the anti-Muslim mission depended. Material on the activities of mixed schools is contained in the works of A. Ivanov and in the travel notes of N.A. Bobrovnikov. A. Ivanov focused on the unsuccessful mission of the Governor-General K.P. Kaufman in teaching the Russian language to the Muslim population (Ivanov, 1890: 231). N.A. Bobrovnikov reveals the essence of the organization of Russian-native schools, analyzes the program and methods of teaching the Muslim population (Bobrovnikov, 1913: 90).

The study found application of historiographic sources presented by the works of modern authors on the given problem. Theoretical and methodological problems of the development of schools and pedagogical thought in pre-revolutionary Kazakhstan are considered by the authors G.M. Khrapchenkov and V.G. Khrapchenkov (Khrapchenkov, Khrapchenkov 1998: 168). M.V. Sturova reveals the essence of the Russification policy of tsarism, implemented through the education system in her investigation (Sturova, 2018: 94).

Austrian scientist A. Kappeler analyzes the issues related to the policy of Russification and discrimination of the non-Orthodox population, paying special attention to the issues of missionary activity and the characteristics of educational reforms in relation to the non-Russian peoples of Asia (Kappeler, 2000: 344). Researcher R. Crews sees the anti-Islamic nature of the confessional policy of the autocracy in the government's unwillingness to create a muftiat in the region, following the example of those already existing in the Russian Empire (Crews, 2006: 480). Critically approaches the assessment of the religious policy of the autocracy in the Turkestan Territory at the beginning of the 20th century. E. Campbell, emphasizing the incompatibility of Islam with the values of the Orthodox state (Campbell, 2015: 217). In the works of foreign authors

G. Demko, A. Morrison, the problems of Christianization and Russification are considered in the context of the colonial policy of the empire in relation to the national outskirts and its «civilizational» role (Demko, 1969: 110-116; Morrison, 2015: 387-417).

### Results and Discussion

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Islamic religion retained its dominant position in the Turkestan region of the Russian empire. In the region, there was an intensification of Muslim religious propaganda, which was carried out by ishans (teachers of the faith), as well as preachers who came out of madrasahs in Bukhara, Tashkent, Samarkand. The steady growth of traditional religious educational institutions, later declared anti-government, did not leave the tsarist administration alone. For example, in the Turkestan Territory, there were up to 6,500 educational institutions with 100,000 students; about 12,000 mosques with 12,000 imams, while there were no more than 250 Russian educational institutions with 13,000 students, as well as about 100 churches and houses of prayer (Andreev, 1907: 5).

The strengthening of the position of Islam in the region at the beginning of the twentieth century was also worried about the Orthodox Church, which considered one of the reasons for this state of the weakness and ineffectiveness of missionary and educational work among the non-Russian population. The organization of the anti-Islamic mission in the region was headed by the Turkestan eparchy, whose power extended to the Semirechye, Syrdarya, Fergana, Trans-Caspian regions, as well as the vassal possessions of Khiva and Bukhara, inhabited by millions of Muslim foreigners.

The eparchy was a kind of conductor of the imperial policy in the spiritual colonization of the region. The priests understood the practical significance of their participation in such an important project as the cultural and religious «re-education» of the Muslim population. The project aimed at organizing anti-Islamic propaganda to protect the Orthodox population from Islam as «a terrible force, but still sleeping, and it can inflict a mortal and irreparable wound on Russia when it wakes up ... This force, somehow awakened and fantasized ...» (Turkestan Eparchial Gazette, 1909: 4). In alliance with the Russian settlers, the diocese hoped to create from the local «Muslim mass, true citizens of Russia and the faithful sons of the Orthodox Church» (Andreev, 1907: 6).

The Turkestan eparchy led a purposeful struggle against Islam in several directions at once. One of the directions involved the opening of schools of a church missionary character with main schools, since the issue of training missionary personnel was urgent. The achievement of this task, in view of the exceptional position of the Orthodox Church in the vast Turkestan eparchy, was of particular importance, both for the clergy itself and for the entire Orthodox population. The first Orthodox parishes in the Turkestan Territory were established in the initial period of colonization of the South Kazakhstan regions in 1840-1860. They were located in an extended line; the parish clergy could not cope with numerous duties and experienced financial difficulties. For 35 years of existence of the independent Turkestan episcopal see in the city of Verny, there was not a single clergyman from the local population in its personnel. With the formation of the Turkestan eparchy, candidates for the priesthood and persons who already wore the priestly dignity were discharged by bishops and came to Turkestan from the inner and outskirts of the Russian Empire (Bryzgalov, 1908: 587).

It was planned to involve foreigners in teaching children, to start teaching in their native language, and then to carry out a gradual transition to the study of the Russian language. In 1908, the question of opening a religious school in the diocese was raised, and subsequently a seminary, in which it was supposed to train candidates for spiritual service in the parishes of Russian immigrants and local Muslims. The stake on the fact that training at the seminary would be free was made, and therefore orphans and children of poor Muslims who were unable to study in mektebs (schools) and madrassas could be supported by state funds.

The educational activity of the seminary was missionary. A course on the history and essence of Islam was introduced into the curriculum, although the use of Mohammedan theological literature was hampered by the lack of translations. The training program included courses in the theoretical study of the languages of the Muslims of the region. The compulsory study of the Turkic language, Sart and Kirghiz by choice, as well as the Arabic language, without which the study of the Koran was difficult, was introduced as well. As the Turkestan eparchial observer of church schools, I.L. Bryzgalov «it is necessary to be able to use the enemy's weapon – his language» (Bryzgalov, 1908a: 612). The introduction of all the above language disciplines into the course of the theological seminary would make it possible to prepare not only candidates for priest-

hood, but also specialists most suitable for state and public service in the Turkestan Territory.

In November 1909, it was decided to initiate a petition before the Holy Synod for the establishment of a theological seminary in the city of Verny in the diocese, since there was only one secondary educational institution – a men's gymnasium. However, the aspirations of the Turkestan bishops were not destined to be fulfilled, since the supreme body of church-state administration of the Russian Orthodox Church at that time did not have financial resources.

In 1912, it was decided to establish the post of a diocesan anti-Muslim missionary preacher in the Turkestan eparchy. The first and only Turkestan missionary-preacher was the Tobolsk Archpriest E. Eliseev. Its activities extended to five regions of the Turkestan Territory with a total area of 1,479,298 sq. km, where 6.5 million Muslims lived, there were a huge number of mektebs and higher Muslim theological schools – madrasahs (Turkestan Eparchial Gazette, 1913: 356). The Church understood that for the successful implementation of the anti-Muslim mission, not one missionary-preacher is needed, but several camps and financial resources. Back in the 1860s, the first Turkestan Governor-General K.P. Kaufman attached great importance to the activities of the Turkestan flock on a national scale. «The opening of the bishop's chair in the border region inhabited by Muslims and pagans will undoubtedly have a beneficial effect not only on the Russian population, but also on the natives» – the official believed (Turkestan Eparchial Gazette, 1913: 358).

The success of the mission also depended on the number of missionary schools. Therefore, in the late 60s – early 70s of the XIX century, the missionary movement in the region developed quite successfully. A missionary brotherhood was established in the city of Verny, and two missionary schools functioned in the city of Sarkan, a male and a female. However, by the end of the 1870s, the situation had changed not for the better. The missionary movement weakened, and the Sarkan schools fell into decay (Znamensky 1900: 23). At the beginning of the twentieth century, there were only two missionary schools in the Turkestan eparchy: Sarkan and Issyk-Kul, where children of foreigners studied. A hundred and six people studied at the Sarkan missionary school, of which 47 were Russians and 59 were children of Kalmyks and Kirghiz. Teaching was conducted in Russian; children took part in the divine services by singing and reading in the kliros. The material and technical base of both schools was weak, nevertheless, the foreign students were provided with linen and warm clothes at the expense

of the monastery. Interethnic relations were characterized as «the most benevolent, and the behavior of the students is impeccable» (Turkestan Eparchial Gazette, 1915: 51-54).

According to the missionaries' reports, the activities of the anti-Muslim mission were complicated by the lack of capable assistants and, given the territorial scale of the Turkestan eparchy, could not proceed properly. In this regard, attempts to invite baptized Tatars from Kazan to various church positions to carry out anti-Muslim propaganda in the province were made.

Another area of activity of the Turkestan eparchy was to limit the distribution of Muslim literature among the local population, to distribute Russian letters and to conduct divine services and sermons in the native language of foreigners. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the authorities were seriously concerned about the desire of foreigners for self-education and political self-determination. The activation of social and political life, as well as the spread of new ideological concepts in the region, in the opinion of the tsarist administration, were directly related to the activities of the new method or Jadid schools. The local colonial authorities believed that they were the main centers of the growth of the national self-awareness of the Kazakh people. The Russian government was faced with the task of ensuring the protection of state interests from such negative phenomena in social and political life as pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism as soon as possible. The tsarist administration expressed concerns about free interpretation and numerous discussions around such concepts as autonomy, freedom, guarantee, equality. That is why it began the systematic closure of Muslim educational institutions and mosques that functioned on wakuf funds. So, in the city of Aulie-Ata, there were 27 vakfs, who financed schools at mosques. Subsequently, the activities of these waqfs were suspended and declared illegal (CSA RK. F. 146. Op. 1. D. 67. L. 16).

The official authorities in every possible way prevented the distribution of Muslim newspapers and magazines in Tatar and Arabic, published in Orenburg. According to officials, the dissemination of the Arab-Tatar literacy gave «a wide scope for enlightenment in the Muslim spirit of foreigners who were subjects of Russia» (Elistoev, 1913: 206) and at the same time contradicted the state interests of the empire, hindering the implementation of the national task of spiritual colonization of the national outskirts. In this context, the task of the anti-Muslim mission was to spread the Russian literacy among Muslims. On behalf of the Turkestan Eparchial

Committee of the Missionary Society, textbooks for the study of the «Russian-Tatar alphabet» and the «Russian-Tatar phrasebook» began to be sent free of charge.

At the same time, the idea of the anti-Muslim mission was not only in the Christianization of the Muslim population, but also in the training of civil servants from among the Muslims. Personnel training was carried out both because of Russian literacy and in the languages of foreigners according to the principle: «A foreigner who knows Russian literacy will have access to both the Gospel and Christianity». The project was based on the training system of the scientist-orientalist, teacher and missionary N.I. Ilminsky, which the Austrian historian A. Kappeler characterized by the formula «national in form, Orthodox in content» (Kappeler, 2000: 195). Ilminsky was one of the initiators of the involvement of non-Russian peoples in the general imperial cultural and educational space; he was the author of a new methodology for teaching foreigners in their native language. Despite the fact that at the end of the 19th century, the training system of N.I. Ilminsky was increasingly criticized, nevertheless, at the beginning of the twentieth century, measures were taken to further its practical implementation.

Implementation of the educational system of N.I. Ilminsky in the Turkestan Territory passed slowly and with problems, as evidenced by the materials of the commissions of the Ministry of Public Education, the Holy Synod, as well as materials of missionary congresses in Kazan and Irkutsk. One of the main reasons for this circumstance, officials saw in the absence of a sufficient number of books in the languages of foreigners. In this regard, the clergy, folk teachers, priests, as well as literate parishioners who know the native language, were encouraged to spread the Russian literacy. Particular attention was paid to the dissemination of the Russian alphabet among those Muslims who were preparing for baptism.

The success of the business largely depended on what methods and techniques will be used in the process of implementing this direction. The main task was a gradual, smooth transition from the native language to Russian. Therefore, recommendations were made to use exclusively «painstaking and careful» methods of propaganda. Proceeding from these considerations, the missionaries in the process of teaching used conversations of a moral character: about worship of God, morality, respect for parents and elders, about the benefits of teaching, lessons of piety and examples of moral correction through need, orphan hood, patience, life among kind people (Elistoev, 1913 : 208).

One of the representatives of the intelligentsia of Verny city N.P. Peterson actively contributed to the development of spiritual education in the Turkestan region. Investigating the problems of the spiritual mission of Russia in Asia, he repeatedly appealed to the spiritual administration with an appeal «to take care of the education of foreigners in their native languages and to introduce impeccable worship in the same languages in foreign parishes» (Turkestan Eparchial Gazette, 1910: 213). For mission purposes, the main subject of instruction should be the Law of God. The missionary of the Turkestan eparchy, Archpriest E. Eliseev, was active in spreading Christian enlightenment among the Muslims of the Turkestan Territory. The missionary's attention was drawn, first of all, to the publication of anti-Muslim works in local languages and their active distribution among Muslims.

Another direction of the anti-Muslim mission was the training of cadres of priests and teachers from among local Muslims, completely devoted to Russia, as well as among Russians who speak foreign languages. As N.I. Ilminsky «the best figures on the basis of enlightenment of each nation will be representatives of the same people, and they alone, with their perfect knowledge of a given foreign language, knowledge of the whole life and outlook of foreigners, with their general proximity to these latter, of course, with the appropriate education» (Zelenin 1902: 8). A supporter of active Orthodox missionary work among Muslims N.P. Ostroumov, the follower of N.I. Ilminsky, repeatedly called on officials to master indigenous languages in order to pursue more successfully a policy of Christianization.

In the rules on primary schools for foreigners, approved by the Ministry of Public Education in November 1907, it was stated that «male teachers and female teachers in schools for foreigners must be persons who have the appropriate teaching rank, who know the native language of the students» (Foreign school, 1916: 71). However, all these rules remained for the most part only on paper. In fact, the native language was suppressed, and the school continued to pursue Russification or missionary tasks.

As an effective means of ideological struggle against Islam and the training of cadres of priests, the opening of Russian-native schools and colleges, the replacement of mektebs and madrassas with Russian educational institutions, which were supposed to teach religious in addition to secular subjects in order to assimilate students of Christian truths. These educational institutions were considered to be as an effective means of ideological struggle against Islam (Turkestan Eparchial Gazette, 1909a: 590).

By establishing mixed schools, «it was supposed to bring the nomadic population out of the care of the fanatical Muslim sedentary population, which, with the help of mull-missionaries who traveled around the nomads, converted to Islam» hitherto indifferent or Islamic Kyrgyz population»(Review of the Syrdarya region, 1887: 271).

In the Turkestan Territory, under the Governor-General K.P. Kaufman in the 1860s, there were 28 Russian schools, including two gymnasiums and one teacher's seminary. All these educational institutions, arranged like city and parish schools, were targeted for the Russian immigrant population. The local population also had the right to enter and study in them. However, there were practically no local Muslims willing to study in such schools, since there were more than 4,000 mektebs and madrasahs in the region. In the late 1860s, at the request of the educational authorities, 20 primary schools were opened in order to attract natives to study the Russian language (Ivanov, 1890: 231).

According to the «Rules on elementary schools for foreigners living in eastern and southeastern Russia» introduced in 1906, a tough course towards Russification through in-depth study of the Russian language has been preserved. A Special Meeting on the Education of Oriental Foreigners carried out the drafting of these documents in 1905. In addition to the Rules, exemplary programs for some academic disciplines were attached. So, for example, «in the original foreign schools for the study of the Russian language and Church Slavonic reading, 8 lessons were allocated, and 4 for literacy in the native language, in schools with a four-year course, 12 lessons were provided for the Russian language, and only 2 were allocated for the native language» (Sturova, 2018: 94).

Missionary M.A. Miropiev, an active supporter of the policy of Christianization and Russification of foreigners through education, proposed to pursue a policy of Russification of the majority of Muslims «exclusively in mental and moral terms», ignoring the religious side of the matter until better times. According to M.A. Miropiev, there should be «the Russian school, and in it the Russian language» (Miropiev, 1901: 74).

The main attention in the primary and secondary educational institutions of the region was paid to teaching the church discipline «Divine Law». Primary school students memorized prayers in advance, assimilated the basic concepts of the Orthodox faith. The students' knowledge of the Divine Law was unsatisfactory; the students did not know the prayers well, distorted the words when pronouncing

them, memorizing prayers was not distinguished by awareness. The reason for the weak success in the assimilation of the Divine Law in schools was that many teachers of the law were not actually prepared, either theoretically or practically.

In August 1910, the first congress of teachers of elementary schools of the Ministry of Public Education of the Syrdarya region was held in Tashkent, at which the question of the correct organization of classes according to the Divine Law was discussed (Turkestan Eparchial Gazette, 1911: 566). The question was raised in connection with the increasing incidence of religious assimilation of Orthodox Christians with Muslims. According to the current laws of the Russian Empire, foreigners and Orthodox Christians from the age of 14 had the right to change their religion at their own request without the consent of their parents or guardians. In the new edition, the subject curriculum presupposed the assimilation of the foundations of the Divine Law in full by the pupils of the senior classes. The second most important subject after the Divine Law was the Church Slavonic language. Church singing was also taught in schools as a compulsory course in church schools.

The issue of protecting the Orthodox from the influence of Muslim propaganda was elaborated in detail at the Kazan All-Russian anti-Muslim missionary congress in 1910. The point of view of the official authorities was expressed in the report made by the director of Tashkent Teachers' Seminary, missionary N. Ostroumov: «It is necessary to acquaint students of Russian schools in detail with the peculiarities of the teachings of the Orthodox Church and the difference between this teaching and Islam so that Russians who have to face Muslims at every step in the East could fight back Muslim propaganda» (Turkestan Eparchial Gazette, 1912: 192). As a result of the work of the congress, a resolution on the compilation of a short textbook on the Divine Law, containing an apology for Christianity and a refutation of Islam was adopted, for foreign and Russian schools located within the boundaries of the foreign population.

Numerous articles on the activities of Russian-native schools were published on the pages of the religious press. Most of the authors were in solidarity on issues related to the need for the widespread opening of Russian-native schools. At the same time, facts were cited indicating the unwillingness of the Kazakhs to send their children to Russian-native schools, preferring native ones to them. It should be noted that Russian-native schools did not receive much distribution in the Kazakh steppe, as

they did not enjoy the authority and trust of the local population. According to the researchers, in 1903 in the regions of Kazakhstan there were only 63 Russian-native schools, in which 2066 students studied (Khrapchenkov, Khrapchenkov, 1998: 71). There was a significant quantitative gap between spiritual Orthodox and Muslim educational institutions. According to the report of the Ministry of Public Education in January 1911 only in one Syrdarya region, there were registered 835 religious educational institutions; 804 mektebs and 31 madrassas, while there were only 85 parish schools within the entire Turkestan eparchy (Turkestan Eparchial Gazette, 1915: 8).

The Eparchial School Council, together with the school inspectorate, took steps to improve the teaching staff in church schools. When replacing vacant teaching positions, they always had in mind the educational qualification of teaching persons, especially; they paid attention to the presence of a teaching title and teaching experience. They tried to attract the best teachers from European Russia. Teachers who did not meet all the requirements were removed from their posts. Meanwhile, the quality of teachers in church schools of the Turkestan eparchy in terms of educational qualifications and pedagogical experience left much to be desired; 10-15% of teachers did not have a teaching title at all (Turkestan Eparchial Gazette, 1915: 25). Education in all schools of the eparchy was conducted according to textbooks sent by the publishing commission of the School Council under the Holy Synod.

### Conclusions

Thus, at the beginning of the twentieth century, a large state project was implemented on the territory of the Turkestan Territory to organize the activities

of the anti-Muslim mission, the purpose of which was the spiritual colonization of the population of the region. The Turkestan eparchy, which stood at the head of this mission, was a kind of conductor of the spiritual expansion of the Russian Empire on the territory of Kazakhstan. The policy of Christianization and Russification was followed by the strategy of Christian enlightenment of the Muslim population, implemented within the framework of the anti-Muslim mission. It was on education that the main emphasis was made, since it was the main foundation through which the Turkestan eparchy saw the guarantee of a successful perception by Muslims of the foundations of the Christian religion. Through Russian education and the Russian language, it was possible to prepare Muslims for the perception of Christianity. One of the main tools for solving mission tasks was missionary propaganda of the values of the Christian religion. Christian enlightenment was also implemented through the translation of Christian literature and the introduction of the practice of worship in foreign languages.

The Turkestan eparchy made every effort to establish control over the activities of spiritual and educational institutions in the region, to implement a large-scale unification of the poly-confessional population of Kazakhstan because of the spiritual values of the Orthodox Church. The ultimate goal of such a policy was to consolidate the authority of the Russian Empire among the local population of the region.

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