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**TITLE: NOT BY WORD ALONE: MISSIONARY POLICIES AND RELIGIOUS  
CONVERSION IN RUSSIA, 1550-1780s**

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Michael Khodarkovsky

NOT BY WORD ALONE: MISSIONARY POLICIES AND RELIGIOUS  
CONVERSION IN RUSSIA, 1550-1780s

"Ye compass sea and land to make one  
proselyte; and when he is made, ye  
make him two-fold more the child of  
hell than yourselves."

Matthew 23:15

In 1821 a newly appointed director and rector of the Imperial Kazan University received the following instructions from the government in St. Petersburg: "It is of utmost importance for the government that the education of its people be based on a firm foundation of the Christian religion, that the evil spirit of our time, the all-destructive spirit of free thinking, does not penetrate the sacred temples, where the happiness of the future generations must be secured by teaching the contemporary youths."<sup>1</sup> The fact that Orthodox Christianity was at the heart of Russian imperial identity is not surprising. But that such identity was to be uncompromisingly forged in the Kazan region, where most of the residents were non-Russians of different faiths, is noteworthy.

This article concerns the religious conversion policies of the Russian Orthodox church and government toward non-Christians in the newly acquired territories between the sixteenth and late eighteenth centuries. In contrast to the abundant literature on conversion and missions of the Catholic and Protestant churches in the New World and elsewhere, it is remarkable how little has been written about religious conversion in Russia. The elusiveness of the subject, the paucity of sources, and the

ideological preferences of Soviet historiography-- all conspired in making historians abandon the subject to the dilettantish exercises of nineteenth-century church-writers and leaving it in relative obscurity in the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> The present attempt to put together the available printed sources and discuss the implications of religious conversion in Russia is intended to pave the road for a more systematic and thorough study of the issue in the future.

Before the sixteenth century conversion to Christianity resulted from the work of the most zealous missionaries and took place only sporadically. Thereafter, however, the process was an integral part of the government policies toward the empire's new subjects. The intensity of state and church efforts to convert non-Christians varied from brutal campaigns under Ivan IV to benign neglect in the seventeenth century, from unambiguous discrimination under Peter I to systematic coercion during the middle of the eighteenth century, and finally, to toleration under Catherine II. At all times, however, religious conversion remained one of the most important tools of Russia's imperial policies.

The available evidence lends no credence to the Pauline model of conversion, which suggests that in the face of modernization the natives feel the need for a more coherent doctrine and more rational beliefs.<sup>3</sup> In Russia, conversion did not take place because of non-Christians' interest in the Christian teachings. Instead, those natives who converted did so either under the pressure of force and discrimination, or because of the attraction of the numerous benefits offered by the government upon their conversion.

Conversion in Russia was least of all spiritual; it generally involved only a nominal transfer of religious identity. For non-Christians of the Russian empire, conversion promised tangible economic benefits and a

hope of social and economic mobility. As in other pre-modern societies, where religion defined not only a religious life, but cultural, social and political norms of the society, conversion in Russia was first and foremost a process of cultural transformation and assimilation of the "other."

Religious conversion was also a process of exchange, as a Russian Orthodox sense of identity was itself further crystallized in the encounter with non-Christians. Yet it was an exchange with different expectations on both sides. As such, conversion in Russia implied an area of confrontation, for the goals and expectations of those who did the converting and of those who chose to convert were different. If the former sought to bring salvation and enlightenment to the natives and expected their complete acculturation, non-Christians expected to receive the benefits and privileges entailed in conversion without assimilation. The Russian government pursued policies which encouraged non-Christians' conversion to Orthodox Christianity as a way of homogenizing the society into a single political and religious identity under one tsar and one God. We shall see below whether the government and the church were successful in achieving this goal.

### Classifying "the Other"

By the late eighteenth century, nearly two hundred and fifty years after Moscow established its presence in the Volga River region, Russia emerged as one of the largest empires in the world. The numerous vanquished peoples included Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant Christians in the west and Muslims, Buddhists and pagans in the south and in the

east. All the non-Christian peoples were referred to by the generic term "inorodtsy," i.e., the non-Russian or the non-Christian subjects of the empire.<sup>4</sup> As the number and the significance of non-Russians within the Russian empire grew, it became increasingly important to describe and classify them, to ensure their loyalty, and to develop a set of uniform policies in order to incorporate the new territories and peoples into the empire.

The first attempt of a comprehensive classification of Russia's subjects was made by the late-eighteenth-century Russian writer and historian, Prince Mikhail Shcherbatov. In his 1776 treatise Prince Shcherbatov suggested that the peoples of the empire should be divided into six categories in accordance with their lifestyle, taxation, military service, and religious affiliation:

1. Russians and all non-Christians ("inovertsy") who pay the soul tax and provide recruits,
2. Russians and non-Christians who pay taxes but do not provide recruits,
3. Christians other than Russian Orthodox,
4. All kinds of Cossacks and other military settlers,
5. Bashkirs and other savage peoples who practice Islam, and
6. Kalmyks and other nomadic idol-worshippers."<sup>5</sup>

It is not surprising that Prince Shcherbatov drew no clear distinction between religious, ethnic, and social identities. The overlapping of the categories that was typical of pre-modern societies, was also quite common in Russia. For example, the word "krest'ianin" in Russian parlance meant not just any peasant, but specifically a peasant of the Russian Orthodox faith. Likewise, the non-Russian pagan peoples considered Christianity a Russian faith and Islam a Tatar one.<sup>6</sup> In Russian official correspondence non-Christian peoples were referred to by their specific names, such as Chuvash, Bashkir, or Tatar. Chuvash implied not only

ethnicity, but the fact that a person was a tax-paying subject and a pagan. Tatar meant that a person was a tax-paying peasant and a Muslim. Those Tatars who performed a military service were known as "military service ('sluzhilye') Tatars."

There were also more general terms which were used to refer to the non-Christians in the south and east of the empire. Among the original terms "inozemets" (literally, a person of a different land), "inorodets" (of a different kin) and "inoverets" (of a different faith), the latter two were applied more systematically in the eighteenth century. Redefining the status of the non-Christians clearly reflected a change in the self-perception of the Russian state and its evolution into an empire. The newly vanquished peoples were first attributed an extra-territorial identity ("inozemets") and considered foreigners (cf. the German "Ausländer" or the English "foreigner"). As the non-Christians became further integrated into the Russian empire, they were referred to as "inorodets" or "inoverets," that is, they became the non-Christian subjects of the Russian empire.

### The First Missions

Little is known about the efforts of the Orthodox church to win converts among pagans before the sixteenth century. Most likely, few such efforts were made, as the priority of the church was to unite Russian lands under one religion and one ruler and to solidify its hold on the Russian population. The story of St. Stefan's life in the Perm' region of the 1380s is the best known case of early attempts to proselytize non-Christians. The



story is of significant interest not only because it is one of the few available accounts of early missionary activity by the Russian Orthodox church, but also because St. Stefan's approach stands in sharp contrast to the missionary work of the church after the 1550s.

A didactic story of St. Stefan's life in Perm' is related by Epifanii the Wise, a Russian monk of the late fifteenth century. According to Epifanii, St. Stefan arrived in the Perm' region by his own will in order to spread Christianity.<sup>7</sup> The local inhabitants came to admire the beauty of the church built by St. Stefan and converted to Christianity. Soon thereafter, the people of Perm' divided into two rival groups: the converts ("novokreshchennye") and the infidel idol-worshippers ("kumirosluzhiteli nevernye").<sup>8</sup> St. Stefan destroyed pagan temples and burned idols, but remained unaffected by the vengeance of the local gods. He burned fur treasures which adorned the temples without taking any for himself. He refused to punish a shaman who was captured and handed over to him by converts, saying he was sent to save souls, not punish them. Impressed by his devotion and generosity, the natives flocked to St. Stefan to be baptized.<sup>9</sup>

In 1383, St. Stefan arrived in Moscow to convince the authorities that it was time to "harvest the planted crop;" Perm', in other words, was in need of a bishop. The metropolitan of Moscow and the Grand Prince agreed to appoint St. Stefan the first bishop of Perm'. Until his death, St. Stefan continued his efforts to convert the natives of the region, where he created a native alphabet, translated the Scriptures from the Russian language and conducted services in the vernacular.<sup>10</sup>

Such an approach to winning converts was quite common. After all, the Russians themselves received an alphabet from the Greek monk, St. Cyril, in the ninth century and adopted Christianity shortly thereafter. As

long as the pagan peoples were outside of Moscow's direct control, missionaries continued to be the true pioneers, residing among the pagans without government protection and winning converts by accommodating their needs. This changed, however, with Moscow's acquisition of Kazan and Astrakhan and the numerous non-Christian peoples who resided there. After the mid-sixteenth century, the missionaries took a backseat to the interests of the government, as they were to preach in lands already conquered and governed by Moscow.

### The Conquest of Kazan and the World of Islam

Before Moscow's spectacular expansion in the 1550s, a religious conversion of non-Christians took place only occasionally. Renegade Tatar princes from the south and Lithuanian and Polish nobles from the west came to offer their services to the Russian ruler and, in time, became Orthodox Christians. In the north and northeast, the numerous Finnic peoples, after having come into contact with the advancing Russian merchants and monks were attracted by the benefits and favors entailed in becoming a Christian and chose to convert.<sup>11</sup>

Yet it was not until the middle of the sixteenth century that the idea of religious conversion began to enjoy the all-embracing support of the government imbued with an overpowering sense of manifest religious destiny, Moscow's own version of non plus ultra. Thus, Moscow's conquests of Kazan in 1552 and Astrakhan in 1556 were not mere military victories. First and foremost these conquests were a manifestation of the political and ideological supremacy of the increasingly self-conscious

Orthodox Muscovy over its former Muslim overlords. A new missionary spirit was forcefully expressed by the triumphant Russian tsar, Ivan IV. In his 1556 letter to the Archbishop Gurii of the newly-founded Kazan diocese, Ivan IV suggested that converting pagans was a divine duty, adding that missionaries "should teach the pagans ["mladentsy," lit. "children"] not only to read and write, but to make them understand truly what they read, and [they], then, will be able to teach others, including the Muslims."<sup>12</sup>

Upon the conquest of Kazan in 1552, Russia acquired large numbers of new subjects, who were neither Christian nor Russian-speaking. Indeed, the peoples of the Kazan region spoke six different languages: Tatar, Bashkir, Mordva, Chuvash, Cheremis, and Votiak.<sup>13</sup> While the Tatars and Bashkirs practised Islam, other peoples were predominantly pagan. The Tatars constituted a ruling elite, and their language was the lingua franca of the region. Now the Russian language and Russian administration had to replace their Tatar predecessors and Christianity had to replace Islam. Ivan IV banned the construction of new mosques, and ordered the mosques of Kazan demolished and churches built in their stead.<sup>14</sup>

Moscow's rapid expansion along the Volga, its conquest of Astrakhan in 1556, and construction of the Tersk fortress in the north Caucasus in 1567 were both a surprise and a matter of great concern for the Crimea and the Ottoman Porte. Ivan IV's explanation of his actions was that he meant no harm to Muslims and the Islamic faith, and he had conquered the Volga cities merely to ensure their loyalty, failed to satisfy the Ottoman sultan, Selim II. Considered the protector of all Muslims, the sultan charged that the regions of Astrakhan and Kabarda in the Caucasus

were traditional Ottoman domains with Muslim residents, and demanded that the pilgrims and merchants from Bukhara and elsewhere be allowed to proceed through Astrakhan en route to Mecca. In 1571 Ivan IV informed the sultan that the Tersk fortress was being demolished and the Astrakhan route reopened.<sup>15</sup> Propelled almost instantly into the forefront of a struggle with Islam, Moscow was not yet fully prepared for such a confrontation. For the time being, the government refrained from missionary or any other activity which could provoke the Ottomans.

### Conversion in the Seventeenth Century

In the last half of the sixteenth century the policy of conversion was spelled out in the tsar's instructions to the Kazan archbishop Guri. He was directed to baptize those who came of their own will or fled justice. Regarding the latter, Guri was advised to threaten them with capital punishment--even if they had committed a minor crime--then forgive them and thus bring them to Christ through love.<sup>16</sup> Yet few conversions occurred during this period, as the Ottoman threat, a series of uprisings in the Kazan region, and the corruption of local military governors ("voevodas") served to restrain the zeal of the Russian government and church to spread the gospel among the natives.<sup>17</sup>

The issue was raised again in earnest in the early 1590s by Kazan metropolitan Germogen, who complained in a letter to the tsar that, due to the neglect of the local governors, new-converts did not observe Christian laws and continued to live among their non-Christian kin, while the Tatars flouted earlier prohibitions and built new mosques. Addressing

Germogen's concerns, the tsar's decree of 1593 stipulated that converts should be resettled in a separate compound near Kazan, given farmland, and live among the Russians. The Russian officials were to ensure that converts observed Christian law and did not intermarry with Tatars or foreign prisoners of war. Furthermore, children of mixed marriages and slaves of the converts were to be baptized. Those converts who did not follow Christian ways were to be put in chains and thrown in jail to make them forget the Tatar faith and become firm believers in Christ. All mosques were to be destroyed.<sup>18</sup>

The combined threat of intimidation, force, and the revoking of traditional privileges was only part of the government's missionary policy. Coercion could be applied only in the territories already under the firm control of the Russian military and bureaucracy, such as the middle Volga region. In addition to a stick, a carrot was no less important in Russia's initial appeal to the non-Christians. This was particularly true in the frontier areas, where the government's hold over the new territory remained tenuous and the need for the cooperation of the natives was acute. Here, church officials were instructed to win the converts not by force, but by love. Each convert was rewarded with woolen clothing, a shirt, a pair of boots, and cash. Converts were also enlisted as musketeers, assigned to one of the frontier garrisons, and given cash and flour compensation.<sup>19</sup>

More generous rewards awaited non-Christian nobles who from the sixteenth century onward came to the Russian court in increasing numbers to seek protection and privileges. Most of these nobles came from the south and southeast, where the expanding Russian state offered new opportunities to local elites. Upon the conquest of Kazan in 1552, various members from the Astrakhan, Crimean, Kazan, Siberian and Kasimov

branches of the Chinggisid dynasty converted to Christianity.<sup>20</sup> One of the more celebrated examples was the conversion of the Kasimov khan, Sayin-Bulat, in 1573. Better known as Simeon Bekbulatovich, he was put on the Muscovite throne by Ivan IV to rule Russia for almost a year.<sup>21</sup>

Chinggisid princes from Siberia to the Crimea, non-Chinggisid Tatar nobles of the Kazan region, Kabardinian nobles and the Imeretian ruling dynasty from the Caucasus, Nogay and Kalmyk chiefs from the Volga steppes--all at different times and for different reasons chose to convert to Christianity. Some hoped to obtain Moscow's support against their rivals, others sought refuge from their enemies. Yet most found themselves increasingly attracted to the benefits which conversion offered. Upon their baptism, non-Christian nobles were bestowed with an equivalent Russian title of a "prince," and in exchange for military service, they were given generous annual compensation in land and cash.<sup>22</sup>

Ultimately, conversion was the only means by which the government could ensure the non-Christians' loyalty and their acceptance into the Russian society. Apparently, their racial characteristics mattered less than their religious affiliation. For non-Christian nobles, conversion meant a fast-track to assimilation. The converted nobles intermarried with the Russian nobility, held high military positions, and often served in the frontier regions as Russia's trusted intermediaries.<sup>23</sup> Within two generations their names often no longer betrayed their non-Russian and non-Christian origin.<sup>24</sup> Assimilation was complete when a dynasty entered the Genealogical Book of the Russian nobility.<sup>25</sup>

The plight of those non-Christians who did not belong to noble families often differed from their more noble brethren; ordinary converts were designated "new converts" and considered a separate social group.<sup>26</sup>

In fact, they remained "new converts" for many generations and continued to be alienated from both their previous pagan, Muslim, or Buddhist kin and from the present Russian Orthodox co-religionists. Their privileges, such as exemptions from taxes or military service, were only temporary, and after three or five years they had to resume their onerous obligations.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, they found themselves victims of frequent abuse by local Russian officials, who took advantage of the converts' ignorance of the Russian language, laws, and customs.<sup>28</sup>

While certain Russian governors refused to baptize those who requested conversion, others simply ordered natives to convert and used force to ensure that they did. When reports of the use of excessive force by the Russian officials reached Moscow, the government instructed the overzealous provincial governors to desist, to convert only those who came of their own free will, and to attract others by promises of compensation and presents.<sup>29</sup>

Moscow's main concern remained, however, not the use of force per se, but its ability to control officials in the provinces and ensure that excessive force did not result in social unrest. When deemed necessary, government orders directed these officials to ignore complaints of non-Christians or authorized their forceful resettlement.<sup>30</sup>

Throughout the seventeenth century government policies directed toward winning more converts became more systematic and penal. As Russia continued to consolidate its control over the Kazan region, non-Christians increasingly found themselves subjected to Russian laws, some of which were clearly intended to encourage conversion. Moscow could no longer tolerate the fact that some Orthodox Christians remained slaves of Muslim Tatars; Russia's first comprehensive legal code of 1649 barred

Russians from serving Tatars and decreed punishment for those Russians who attempted to sell themselves into slavery to non-Christians.

Furthermore, the government assumed responsibility for those contract slaves in the service of the non-Christians who wanted to convert and was prepared to redeem them from slavery by paying slave owners fifteen rubles per slave. But for many in Russia, slavery was a preferred way of life, and a government was forced to resort to penal measures to forbid converts from seeking new slave owners and to prevent Russians from serving non-Christians.<sup>31</sup>

In the latter part of the seventeenth century numerous government decrees continued to address the issue of the converts' landed estates. Non-Christian military service people were provided with a clear incentive to convert, as the government used every opportunity to confiscate the lands of the non-Christians and redistribute them among Russians and converts. Those who converted before such a confiscation were allowed to retain their service or hereditary estates, while those who converted after confiscation were allotted new ones. Over time, however, the government tended to limit the initial privileges of converts.<sup>32</sup>

Some converts elected to re-join their non-Christian kin, but for most the road back was closed, and they were punished in accordance with the Russian law for "taking off the cross." The most severe punishment was reserved for Muslims who attempted to convert Christians to Islam: such a Muslim was to be burned.<sup>33</sup> Later the law was expanded to include Jews as well. When in 1738 in the city of Smolensk, a retired Russian captain, named Voznitsyn confessed under torture that he had been circumcised and converted to Judaism by a Jew named Barukh, the same 1649 law was applied and both were burned at the stake.<sup>34</sup>



## Conversion under Peter I

There is no reliable data allowing for a precise estimate of converts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Enactment of laws favoring those who converted to Christianity, complaints from Russian priests about "new-Christians" who were Christian in name alone, and scattered available records of converts' names may serve as indication, however, that the number of proselytes grew slowly.<sup>35</sup>

The importance and duty of converting non-Christians was reiterated by Ivan Pososhkov, contemporary of Peter the Great and often referred to as "the Russian Adam Smith." In his treatise written in 1719 Pososhkov contrasted the feeble missionary efforts of the Russians with that of the Roman Catholic Church and chastised the Russian government and the Orthodox church for their inability to attract non-Christians to Christianity:

"And these peoples have been the subjects of the Russian empire for two hundred years, but they did not become Christians and their souls perish because of our negligence. The Catholics are sending their missionaries to China, India, and America. [Despite] the fact that our faith is a right one--and what could be easier than converting the Mordva, the Cheremis, and the Chuvash--yet we cannot do this. And our pagans ("inovertsy," lit. non-Christians) are like children, without a written language, without a law, and they do not live far away, but within the Russian empire, along the Volga and the Kama rivers; and they are not sovereign, but the subjects of Russia."<sup>36</sup>

Inspired by the missionary work of the Catholic church and particularly the Jesuit order, Ivan Pososhkov was primarily concerned with saving the souls of non-Christians and making them good Christians.

His crusading spirit was shared by the government, albeit for different reasons. Increasingly defined by Russia's new missionary sense of struggle with Islam, government policies on religious conversion acquired further importance as a policy tool aimed at securing the political loyalty of Moscow's non-Christian subjects.

Russia's identity has long been defined as a crusading state and a depository of the only true religion. By the late seventeenth century, the idea of Russia's destiny as a Christian state at the forefront of the struggle with Islamic world had further crystallized, as the government prepared to confront the Ottoman empire. In 1697 Peter I conquered the Ottoman fortress of Azov and was nurturing plans of a broad anti-Ottoman coalition of the European states. Such plans had to be shelved, however, as European powers had other priorities. In 1699, at Carlowitz, Russia became a reluctant signatory to a peace treaty with the Ottoman Porte.

Moscow's militant stance against the Ottoman empire was accompanied by more aggressive policies toward Muslims inside Russia. In 1654, these Russian policies compelled the Crimean khan, Mehmet Giray IV, to complain of Moscow's treatment of its Muslim subjects. He noted that many Christians lived under the protection of the Ottoman sultan and were free to worship, whereas the Muscovite tsar burned the Quran, destroyed mosques, tortured Muslims, and forced them to convert.<sup>37</sup>

Under Peter I, Russia's conversion policies in the east became more vigorous and comprehensive than in the past. The major means of winning neophytes remained a combination of fiscal incentives and draconian laws; the latter discriminated against non-Christians and were rigorously applied. A relentless attitude of the government toward

Muslims was particularly striking when compared with its diminishing hostility toward non-Orthodox Christians.<sup>38</sup>

New efforts to convert non-Christians were prompted in part by Russia's strategic interests; the government feared the emergence of an Islamic axis--a united front of the various Muslim peoples under the Ottoman umbrella--against Russia. At various times the Ottomans and the Crimeans attempted to unite the Muslim Kazakhs, Karakalpaks, Bashkirs, and Nogays in a broad anti-Russian coalition. Being a Muslim, however, was not a requirement for joining this motley alliance, and the renegade cossacks and the Buddhist Kalmyks were often invited to participate in the common campaigns against Russia.<sup>39</sup>

No less important, however, were disturbing reports of a growing number of non-Russian converts to Islam. The news that some non-Christians were lured by the "disgusting faith of Muhammad," prompted Peter I to order that missionaries be taught native languages and sent to preach among non-Christians.<sup>40</sup> Not relying on preaching alone, the Russian government also resorted to discriminatory legislation to induce conversion of its Muslim subjects. Thus, in 1681, under the pretext that some Tatars had tried to convert Russian peasants to Islam, the government decreed that the service and hereditary lands of those Tatars who failed to convert were to be confiscated by the tsar's treasury. Instead, they were to be compensated with lands in districts of non-Christians' residence. On one occasion, in 1713, when impatient authorities tried to expedite the conversions, the Muslim land owners of the Kazan and Azov provinces had been presented with an ultimatum to convert within six months or face confiscation of their estates.<sup>41</sup> In contrast, converts were allowed to retain their lands, were also promised the lands confiscated

from those who chose to remain Muslim and a remuneration upon conversion: 10 rubles per Tatar noble, 5 rubles for his wife, and 1.25 ruble for his child. <sup>42</sup>

The government legislation clearly discriminated against the Muslim landowners, who either lost their property outright or were compensated with inadequate lands in other districts. Moreover, these anti-Muslim laws also allowed the government to redistribute the confiscated lands among the Russian nobles. Such policies continued a process of Russian colonization of the middle Volga region by changing its both economic and ethnic landscape.

The issue of conversion emerged as one of the most important concerns of the imperial government not only in the regions well within its control, but also along Russia's expanding frontiers. Since the 1670s, numerous treaties with the Kalmyk nomads in the south included a clause concerning those Kalmyks who fled to the Russian towns and converted from Tibetan Buddhism to Christianity. While some fled to avoid prosecution, others left to escape poverty and in search of military service with the Cossacks or jobs at the Russian fisheries. The Kalmyk chiefs, concerned with the loss of their people, demanded that fugitives be returned unbaptized. The government initially rejected such demands, but often, in exchange for the Kalmyks' cooperation, placated the chiefs and instructed the governors in the Volga towns to return Kalmyk fugitives or pay the Kalmyk chiefs a 30-ruble fine per each Kalmyk converted by force. By the 1720s, however, with Russia's security along the southern frontier improved dramatically, the government's attitude became less compromising and it launched the first missions among its nomadic neighbors.<sup>43</sup>

During the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the reformed and modernized Russian empire was in firmer control of its non-Christian subjects and efforts to convert non-Christians intensified. In part, modernization of the Russian state was subsidized by the increased taxation, obligatory hard labor and military service, which were now extended to include non-Christians. As the Muslim and pagan subjects of the Russian empire found themselves carrying these rapidly increasing burdens, the converts were offered exemption from hard labor, military service, and three- to six-year tax breaks.<sup>44</sup>

The intensification of conversion efforts were made all the more important by the Russian emperor's personal interest in the issue. In 1724, when the Kalmyk chief Baksaday-Dorji was baptized, Peter I ordered sending a mobile church, specifically built for the occasion, and a priest to the new convert. Baksaday-Dorji later became known by his Christian name of Petr Taishin, given to him in honor of his godfather, the Russian Emperor Peter I.<sup>45</sup>

### The New Dimension of the Mission

In the 1720s the missionary effort of the Russian state began to take on another dimension. Although the numbers of converts had continued to grow on paper, reports from the field lamented the fact that the conversions were only nominal and converts remained ignorant of Christianity and did not observe any of its precepts. It was becoming more apparent that reliance on sheer force or legislative discrimination to effect conversions was not sufficient.<sup>46</sup>

The government and the church responded by focusing missionary activity less on reporting large numbers of converts and more on spreading the Gospel among them and ensuring their understanding and attachment to Christianity. The language of the church officials clearly reflected a change of attitude, as they increasingly began to refer to non-Christian converts as the "newly-enlightened" ("novoprosveshchennyi"). The new approach was further spelled out in 1721 in the Synod's instructions to the bishop of the Viatka region. The bishop was cautioned to teach potential converts the Gospel before their baptism and to find out whether they wanted to become Christian out of good will or simply to avoid heavy taxation.<sup>47</sup>

Although the government and the church had worked hand-in-hand in the past, the cooperation between the two improved further when the Synod officially became a part of the government in 1721. The Senate decrees instructed that non-Christians be baptized only with the permission of the Synod, and the latter did not hesitate to ask the Senate to dispatch the military to search for converts who had fled and hid among their non-Christian kin.<sup>48</sup>

However, the interests of the Synod did not always coincide with the concerns of other branches of the government. When in 1724 the Navy Department ordered a baptism of all Tatar teenagers recruited as sailors, the priest refused and asked the Holy Synod for instructions. Unwilling to bow to Navy Department demands, the Synod instructed the priest to withhold baptism until these Tatars were taught Christian precepts.<sup>49</sup>

Peter I was the first tsar to realize that non-Christians had to be introduced to Christianity beyond the mere ritual of baptism, and he ordered the Synod to find missionaries who could learn the local languages,

translate the Bible, and live among and teach the natives. Some natives were sent to be educated in St. Petersburg, and schools were set up at local monasteries to teach Christian laws and the Russian language to young non-Christians.<sup>50</sup>

In a further effort to secure converts as Christians and to protect them from their kins' revenge, the converts were moved from their villages and settled in towns founded especially for this purpose. On government orders, the fortress of Nagaibak in the Ufa province was built for the Bashkir converts in 1736. There, at a safe distance from their relatives, converts could be watched by the authorities and had little chance to flee back to their homes. Three years later, the town of Stavropol was founded near the Volga River north of the city of Samara to settle Kalmyk converts.<sup>51</sup>

Despite the new efforts and a more focused approach, conversion of non-Christians proceeded slowly. The burdens of everyday missionary life tended to restrain the zeal of many missionaries. After several years, they complained of the hardships involved in living among the natives and the difficulty of learning their languages, often requesting to be transferred back to their monasteries in St. Petersburg, Moscow, or Kazan. The support of the government also fell short of missionaries' expectations, and they reported that they had insufficient funds to build new churches and reward converts.<sup>52</sup>

Non-Christians continued to be deterred from converting out of fear of opening themselves to more abuses from the local authorities and retaliation from their kin. The hopes of many non-Christians, who converted expecting to improve their lot, remained unfulfilled, and they chose to return to their original faiths. The government's numerous orders failed to prevent the growing enserfment of non-Christians by local

officials; in 1737, the Senate conceded and ruled that converts could be purchased and enserfed.<sup>53</sup>

Widespread corruption in the Russian frontier towns and fortresses was subverting efforts to convert the natives. Local officials abused the rights of the converts, often withholding their due rewards or continuing to collect taxes instead of offering the promised exemptions. Corruption worked both ways, however: non-Christians often bribed officials and priests so that the pagans could continue their traditional practices and Muslims could build new mosques and religious schools.<sup>54</sup> Aware of this corruption and unsatisfied with the progress of its proselytizing efforts, the government once again resorted to more coercive measures and centralized missionary policies under a newly-created umbrella organization, the Agency of Convert Affairs.

#### The Agency of Convert Affairs, 1740-1764

In September 1740 the Russian government created a new mission which was supposed to operate in four provinces: Kazan, Astrakhan, Nizhnii Novgorod, and Voronezh. This new mission formed the backbone of the organization which became known as the Agency of Convert Affairs. The mission consisted of three priests, five translators, several staff members, and couriers, with a budget of 10,000 rubles and 5,000 chetvert' (a measure of grain equalled about eight poods) of flour allowance. Instructions to the Agency consisted of twenty-three detailed articles explaining how to proceed with conversion. About one-fourth of their budget was to be used to pay the salaries of Agency employees, while the



rest was allocated toward founding four schools for non-Christians in addition to the rewards bestowed upon conversion.<sup>55</sup>

The period 1740-1764 marked one of the most violent assaults against non-Christians' religious beliefs. The government put new emphasis on the use of force and legislative decrees, rather than the teaching of Christian doctrine. The focus of the missionary activity became the Kazan province which was, in the words of the Father Dmitrii Sechenov, the first head the Agency of Convert Affairs, "a center in the middle of all the non-Christians residing in south-eastern Russia."<sup>56</sup>

Orders to destroy mosques and forcefully resettle non-Christians indicated a beginning of the renewed efforts to expedite conversions of the natives to Christianity. These policies were implemented with particular enthusiasm by the Kazan bishop Luka Konashevich, whose name for the Russians became synonymous with righteousness and missionary zeal, and for non-Christians with intolerance and oppression. In 1743, 418 out of 536 mosques in the Kazan region were demolished on government orders. The remaining 118 mosques were left untouched because they had been built prior to the Kazan conquest and the government feared their destruction would cause a popular uprising. In other Volga provinces only one mosque was allowed per each village with an exclusively Muslim population no fewer than 200-300 males.<sup>57</sup>

A series of legislative decrees were once again aimed at enhancing conversion of non-Christians, and the government used Russian criminal and military systems for the purpose. Thus, conversion continued to serve as a pardon for petty crimes, but as of 1741 it was extended to include capital punishment as well. At the same time, non-Christians who converted to Islam and the Muslims who converted them were to be punished. Non-

Christian recruits who converted to Christianity received an exemption from military service and other non-Christians were drafted in their stead. But the pressure did not stop there, as Russian army priests were urged to convert non-Christians serving in the military.<sup>58</sup>

The overenthusiastic proselytizing of Dmitrii Sechenov and Luka Konashevich led to a series of violent clashes and revolts by the local population. One episode in 1743 exemplified Russia's policies in the region. Eight Mordva villages complained that they could not accept Christianity, explaining that they had no mosques, and they continued to worship in the fields and forests. They further warned that if forced to convert, they would follow the example of their ancestors and would burn everything and flee, or even set themselves afire, as some did in Arzamas district. Their complaints, however, failed to move the authorities, and when it was discovered that the Mordva continued to practice old customs at their cemetery next to the church, bishop Dmitrii Sechenov ordered the cemetery burned. The ensuing revolt was suppressed when one hundred Russian soldiers arrived to offer the Mordva pardons, if they agreed to be baptized. This was the explanation of the Mordva revolt given by regional Russian authorities.<sup>59</sup>

The Mordva account of this event was different from the official version, however. Upon suppressing the revolt twenty Mordva were arrested, sent to Nizhnii Novgorod, kept in jail for seven weeks, and baptized by force. Meanwhile, Russian soldiers burned the Mordva village cemeteries, cut down the trees and groves around them, beat the Mordva including pregnant women, and then arrested and baptized them. Those who refused to convert were beaten with the knout and had salt rubbed into their wounds. The two Mordva messengers sent with the complaint to

Moscow were captured by Russian soldiers and severely beaten. After a warning to the Mordva villagers that they would be similarly dealt with if they refused to convert, the soldiers were ordered to shoot; several Mordva were killed and eleven were wounded. When a year later, the incident became known in St. Petersburg, the Senate and the Synod ordered local officials to watch carefully that the Mordva did not rebel again and to refrain from converting them by force.<sup>60</sup>

Although fear of revolts in the end compelled the government to issue orders urging local authorities to exercise restraint, gruesome stories of violence similar to the one above were frequent. The government had created an atmosphere of intolerance which allowed the abuses to continue, and no evidence suggests that the perpetrators of abuses had ever suffered the consequences of their actions in the cases of religious conversion.

In the frontier regions, particularly in the south, geopolitical considerations compelled the government to exercise more caution than in the areas already under Russia's firm administrative control. When the issue of sending a mission to the Ossetian people in the north Caucasus came up in 1744, the Senate instructed the Synod to send only Georgian priests, not Russian ones, and to give them no written instructions, and thus avoid any suspicion on the part of the Ottoman or Persian empires.<sup>61</sup>

This desire to avoid diplomatic confrontation with the neighboring Muslim states and convince them of the voluntary conversion of Russia's Muslims was probably behind the government's decision to formalize the conversion procedure.<sup>62</sup> The decree of 1750 stipulated that non-Christians should not be baptized without a voluntary petition in writing. The contents of the petition was prepared in advance and a petitioner only needed to add his name to it. The prescribed form required that a petitioner, if he or she

was a Muslim, first to denounce and reject "the most false Prophet (Muhammed) and his most false and ungodly laws (the Quran)," and then to state one's "sincere desire to be baptized into the Christian faith of salvation." Apparently, it was decided that pagans did not have to denounce their idols or to praise the virtues of Christianity at any great length, and their petitions were much shorter than those required of Muslims.<sup>63</sup>

Reports of the Agency of Convert Affairs boasted of the large numbers of converts. In 1747 there were more than 100,000 converts in the Kazan province.<sup>64</sup> Yet there was a striking contrast between Muslim and pagan populations of the region. In 1763, converted Tatars represented about one-third of the Tatar population of the province (13,615 converts and 35,079 Muslims), while almost 95% of the pagan Mari, Mordva, Chuvash, and Votiaks were registered as converts.<sup>65</sup>

Despite the government's draconian laws favoring neophytes, Muslim Tatars and Bashkirs continued their vigorous resistance to the missionary activity. They revolted numerous times throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and together with other non-Christians were a crucial force in Russia's two largest popular uprisings: those led by Stepan Razin in the early 1670s and a century later by Emel'ian Pugachev.<sup>66</sup>

Preventing the spread of Islam and discouraging its practice remained one of the government's high priorities. In 1756 the government added its own bleak statistics to the Agency's reports on the Muslim converts. In addition to the mosques destroyed in Kazan province, the authorities destroyed 98 out of 133 mosques in the Siberian provinces of Tobol'sk and Tara and 29 out of 40 mosques in the Astrakhan province.<sup>67</sup>

It is not surprising that conversions induced either by force or through a promise of rewards were less than earnest. Government officials reported that the converts did not choose to receive baptism voluntarily, but did so in order to avoid punishment for their crimes.<sup>68</sup> Local missionaries complained that in order to receive benefits, non-Christians often came to convert several times and, as the Agency did not keep a register of the converts by name, it was difficult to keep track of them. In response to these complaints the government ordered in 1757 that those who had converted twice should be sent to perform hard labor at the monasteries. The missionaries complained further that the converts did not allow preachers into their villages and houses under the pretext that they had been granted exemptions by the government. Converts even threatened to beat the priests if the latter failed to provide the rewards they considered to be their right.<sup>69</sup> The excessive force used by the Agency of Convert Affairs, the mutual complaints of the church officials and the converts, and the large but nominal character of conversion made clear the flaws of missionary work in Russia in the middle of the eighteenth century.

### Tolerance and Education

In April of 1764, on the instructions of Empress Catherine II, the government issued a decree which inaugurated the most tolerant period in Russia's relations with non-Christians since the middle of the sixteenth century. After twenty-four years of existence, the Agency of Convert Affairs was abolished, leaving converts to be governed by the same civil and religious administration that oversaw all other Russian state peasants.

Missionary activity was to be continued by educating non-Christians, not by force. For this purpose, the decree stipulated that preachers with annual salaries of 150 rubles should be sent to spread the gospel without any coercion, and that schools for the converts should continue to teach their children. The government recognized that the number of converts had grown to such an extent that those who remained unbaptized could no longer carry the burden of paying taxes or supplying military recruits in the converts' stead. The neophytes would continue to receive a three-year tax exemption, but would receive no rewards for their decision to convert. They were to be given an icon and a cross, and instead of any rewards, a voucher which would be taken into account against their future tax upon expiration of their tax exemption.<sup>70</sup>

The cumulative effects of the government's policies of religious conversion became fully apparent in 1766, when delegates from different corners of the Russian empire arrived in the capital with petitions to be considered by the Legislative Commission in charge of compiling the new laws. The delegates from the Penza province, representing local Tatars in Russian military service, complained that Muslims who had committed crimes chose to convert to Christianity in order to escape the punishment. The delegates suggested that such criminals should be punished.<sup>71</sup>

The Tatars from Orenburg explained that although they experienced a severe labor shortage, they were forbidden from hiring converted Mordva, Mari, or Votiak. The delegates requested that they be allowed to hire converts and promised to let them practice Christianity. The Chuvash of the Kazan province who paid yasak (a tax on non-Christians) complained that due to the converts' tax exemption, the Chuvash had to pay additional

taxes, as well as provide recruits and means of transportation in the converts' stead.<sup>72</sup>

The most detailed grievances were submitted by the Tatars of the Kazan province. They complained that they suffered as a result of the privileges granted to converts, such as exemptions from taxes, military service, and existing debts, and because of land speculation by converts, who were selling land to the Russian gentry. The Tatars objected to the discrimination in taxation which required them to pay 1,10 rubles per serf, while Russian landowners paid only 70 kopecks per serf. They asked for permission to cut the forest and to bear sabers and arms at home and on the road. Their most forceful request was one for greater religious freedom: they asked the government for permission to construct mosques, send their elders on pilgrimage to Mecca, and punish those who mock their religion.<sup>73</sup>

Complaints were not limited to non-Christians alone and converts, too, submitted numerous grievances. Converts from Siberia lamented that their ignorance of the Russian language and laws opened them to the abuse of Russian peasants and landlords. In one instance, converts were lured for a one-year contract to work at the iron-smelting factory and then not allowed to return home. Other converts complained that they lost their lands to Russian landlords, that their farming and forest lands were taken away from them for the use of the factories, that the merchants did not allow them to trade, that officers stationed to protect them took food and fodder by force, that the judges kept them in jails for months, and that their well-to-do people were ruined by jealous Russians.<sup>74</sup>

Catherine II showed a personal interest in non-Christian subjects of the Russian empire. Having cast herself in the role of the enlightened monarch, she could not but regard religious persecution unacceptable.

Shortly before the Legislative Commission gathered in St. Petersburg, Catherine undertook a journey along the middle Volga River to see for herself some of the regions of her empire. She later described her impressions of the travel in correspondence with the French philosophes. Catherine II found the city of Kazan, the diversity of its population, and the complexity of the entire region fascinating. She confided in the letters her sudden realization of how much Russia was part of both Europe and Asia, and how difficult it would be to apply general laws throughout the disparate regions of the Russian empire.<sup>75</sup>

Religious tolerance under Catherine II was not only a product of her enlightened ideas, but was also driven by sheer pragmatism. The introduction of reforms, the incorporation of the new territories of the Crimea and Poland, and the importation of German colonists required a manifestation of toleration toward the new non-Christian subjects of the expanding empire. In addition, Russia's military advantage over its Islamic neighbors and a greater sense of security in the south led the government to try and ensure the loyalty of its Muslim subjects through toleration and the collaboration of the Islamic clergy rather than through previous discriminatory and antagonizing laws. Missionary work, however, continued, although less by force and more by the teaching of the Gospel.<sup>76</sup>

Russia's proselytizing of its non-Christian subjects was summarized in 1776 by Prince Mikhail Shcherbatov. He was unsurprised that non-Christians remained attached to their native beliefs, observing that it could not have been otherwise because they were converted by force. He lambasted the Russian Orthodox church, which "neither attempted to teach converts first, nor sent preachers who knew their language, and



instead brought them to baptism in the same way they would have been brought to the bath, and gave them a cross, which, in their ignorance, they consider some kind of a talisman, and an image of Christ, which they regard as an idol, and forbade them from eating meat on fasting days, which they do not follow, and the priests take bribes from them for overlooking this. Likewise, no attempt was made to translate the Holy Scriptures into their language, nor to teach it to the priests, so that they were able to preach."<sup>77</sup>

At the same time Prince Shcherbatov was pointing out the reasons why the church failed to achieve a genuine conversion of non-Christians, Amvrosii Podobedov, the newly appointed archbishop of Kazan, simply observed the facts when he reported to the Synod on the situation in his archdiocese: "I find that the ignorant ("neprosveshchennye") non-Christian peoples, the Chuvash and Cheremis who reside here, have not only insufficient, but not even the slightest notion about the precepts of faith into which they were converted by holy baptism."<sup>78</sup> Such was the state of affairs after two-and-a-half centuries of church and government efforts to convert non-Christians to Christianity.

### Conclusions

Modern nation states require non-natives to be naturalized and attain citizenship before they can enjoy equal opportunities and rights. Religious conversion in pre-nineteenth-century Russia, where the church could not be easily divorced from the state, was just such "naturalization"--a politico-religious act couched in theological terms. In the eyes of the Russian

church and state, conversion was the most important "rite of passage" for non-Christians, whether as the ultimate test of their loyalty to the state as was the case in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, or as a sign of their embrace of civilization and Christianity in the eighteenth century when Russia launched its own "mission civilisatrice."

Conversion policies and their implementation represented only one aspect of the colonial encounter between the expanding Russian empire and the non-Christian peoples who were to be made "Russian," through conversion to Christianity. Government policies based on the preferential treatment of converts had a significant impact on the non-Christian population, driving a wedge between converts and those members of the community who refused conversion. However, the policy of co-optation through religious conversion was never a one-way street. In time, many non-Christians learned to use the terms of encounter to their own advantage. They insisted on exemptions, avoided paying taxes, and resorted to multiple baptisms, developing what may be called, a "take the money and run" strategy. In the end, conversion policies became a costly undertaking for Russia, reducing the number of tax-payers and leading to frequent revolts and uprisings.

Conversion in Russia was not synonymous with assimilation. Shedding one's previous identity and acquiring a new one proved to be a long and difficult process. Conversion, it appears, was most successful not for communities as a whole, but for individuals both at the top and at the bottom of their native societies. The non-Christian elites were able to make a transition relatively quickly. Upon conversion they retained their privileged status, received additional benefits, intermarried with the Russian nobility, and were fully assimilated within two or three

generations. But those who for various reasons found themselves transplanted from their native societies as slaves or serfs in Russian households, were also rapidly assimilated upon conversion.

For other non-Christians, however, conversion meant little beyond receiving temporary benefits. Commoners were attracted to Christianity by promises of exemptions from taxes, hard labor, or military service, while the local gentry converted to avoid having their lands and property confiscated. Non-Christians were designated as "new converts," and remained in this transitional category for generations, alienated from both their former kin and new co-religionists. Even those whose ancestors had converted centuries previously were still referred to as the "old converts."<sup>79</sup>

Despite government efforts to resettle converts and introduce them to the Russian way of life, both the new and old converts had little or no knowledge of the Russian language, law, lifestyle, and most importantly, their new faith. It was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that the growing number of schools, churches, and rising employment opportunities elsewhere allowed for increased geographical and social mobility of the converts and led to their more successful integration.

From the 1550s onward, the Russian government continuously engaged in policies encouraging the conversion of its non-Christian subjects to Orthodox Christianity. Pursued throughout centuries with various degrees of zeal, Russia's missionary activity was spurred at first by its encounter with the vast pagan world which the tsar suddenly found within his domain. It was incumbent upon the increasingly self-conscious Muscovite Orthodox state to make sure that these numerous pagan peoples ended up in the bosom of the Orthodox Church and not that of Islam. Similar considerations and an additional concern over the increasing

influence of Islam among non-Christians, led Peter I to adopt a more confrontational attitude toward the Muslim subjects of his empire and to encourage more active missionary work among non-Christians in the 1690s. Thirty years later the enthusiastic missionary work of the Catholic church compelled the Russian government and church to reinvigorate its own missionary efforts once again. Finally, the idea of civilizing the "savage" and "unenlightened" became a major driving force behind proselytizing throughout the eighteenth century. At all times, however, the preferential policies of the Russian state, which offered tax exemptions, benefits, and payments to converts, were pursued at the expense of fiscal pragmatism, motivated instead by political and theological considerations.

The single most striking feature of Russia's missionary activity remains the unusual degree of government involvement. In a country where the church was firmly wedded to the state, religious conversion was seen and used by the government as a tool of state colonial policies. While offering converts a wide range of economic benefits and even pardons for crimes, the government imposed an extra burden on those who refused to convert. Further integration of non-Christians into the empire's fiscal and administrative system, increased attractiveness of Russian markets and goods, and thus greater importance of benefits offered upon conversion were among the reasons for the growing number of converts in the eighteenth century. Yet conversions resulting from reasons which had little to do with religion were largely nominal, and backsliding remained a recurring problem.

To be sure, the nominal character of conversion and backsliding were not unique to Russia but were also typical in New France, New Spain, and South America. In the New World, however, the missions founded by

the religious orders of the Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jesuits intended to teach, civilize, and provide natives with farming skills. These missions were frontier institutions dependent on Rome, much less on any specific government. In fact, the missions in the Americas were often in conflict with the interests of the local authorities as well as those of the settlers, who were more concerned with the supply of furs, as in New France, or the supply of slaves, as in Brazil.<sup>80</sup>

By contrast, missions in Russia were not frontier institutions. Indeed, the New World type of a mission, as a special settlement of converts guided by the missionaries and guarded by the soldiers, did not exist in Russia. Russian missionaries did not reside with the converts, but stayed in Russian towns, forts and villages. Missions in Russia were part of a concerted colonization process directed by the state, and, as such, they were subservient to government interests. These missions were the third-tier institution always following in the footsteps of the military and the government officials, and they were dispatched to territories already under Russian military and administrative control. To this extent, evangelization in Russia was conducted more in a manner of Charlemagne than that of the contemporary New World.

Few missions had sufficient resources to do their job, and few missionaries approached their task in good conscience. Russian missionaries were churchmen, who were sent to the remote parts of the empire with no training and often against their own will. Their numbers were inadequate and their churches were located far from the converts' villages. Russian missionaries rarely attempted to study the language of the people amongst whom they lived, or to teach the natives the precepts of Christianity. Instead, missionaries were content with the natives'

memorization of a few prayers in Russian. The language of the missionaries and the Bible thus remained a mystery to converts.

Throughout the period under discussion, the Russian state and church were able to attract large numbers of the empire's non-Christian subjects to Christianity. Most converts were pagans, who after conversion continued to worship their old gods and goddesses along with their new religion. Conversion of Muslims proved to be much more difficult and their numbers were fewer; for them conversion meant the abandonment of the world of Islam with its literary culture, abodes of worship, and educated clergy. In regard to both groups, however, the Russian state lacked sufficient resources and dedicated missionaries to implement its missionary policies systematically and was unable to protect converts from maltreatment by Russian officials, teach them Russian language and scriptures, or assure their assimilation into Russian society.

During the nineteenth century, further realization of converts' ignorance of Christianity and their increasing backsliding compelled the church to focus its efforts on turning existing converts into more conscious Christians, rather than winning new ones. It was not until the 1870s and 1880s, however, that a new approach toward religious conversion was developed by a Russian educator, Nikolai Il'minskii. Known as the Il'minskii system, the approach emphasized schools, education in local languages, creating alphabets for those peoples who had no written language, providing reliable translations of the Bible, and saying prayers and conducting the liturgy in native languages. Thus, half a millenium after they began, Russia's proselytization efforts came full circle to return to the ideas and methods used by St. Stefan of Perm' in the 1380s.

The new attitude proved extremely successful and popular among non-Christians. However, undercut by Il'minskii death and a new wave of Russian nationalism in the 1890s, the Il'minskii system was short-lived. An even more dramatic change came in 1917, when the newly born Soviet state undertook a mission of its own, launching a campaign against all faiths of the numerous peoples of the former Russian empire; this time to "convert" the believers into atheists.

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<sup>1</sup>Istoriia Tatarii v materialakh i dokumentakh (Moscow: Gos. sots-ekon. izd., 1937), 352.

<sup>2</sup>Articles published in nineteenth-century Russian church journals, such as "Pravoslavnyi sobesednik," "Pravoslavnyi vestnik," and "Pravoslavnoe obozrenie" had a specific agenda and were intended for the church officials (see a bibliographical essay by Alexandre Bennigsen and Chantal Lemerrier-Quelquejay "Musulmans et missions orthodoxes en Russie orientale avant 1917. Essai de bibliographie critique," Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique 13, pt. 1 (1972): 57-113) (hereafter cited as CMRS). The most comprehensive study of the subject in pre-1917 Russia was done by Apollon Mozharovskii, "Izlozhenie khoda missionerskago dela po prosveshcheniiu inorodtsev s 1552 po 1867 goda" in Chteniia v Imperatorskom obshchestve istorii i drevnostei rossiiskikh pri Moskovskom universitete. Sbornik, 1 (1880): 1-237 (hereafter cited as ChOIDR). A more recent article based on the works of pre-revolutionary Russian writers is by Chantal Lemerrier-Quelquejay "Les missions orthodoxes en pays musulmans de Moyenne et Basse-Volga, 1552-1865," CMRS 8, pt. 3 (1967): 369-403. One of the few typical works of the Soviet era is by A. N. Grigor'ev, "Khristianizatsiia nerusskikh narodnostei, kak odin iz metodov natsional'no-kolonial'noi politiki tsarizma v Tatarii (s poloviny 16 v. do fevralia 1917 g.)," in

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Materialy po istorii Tatarii, vyp. 1 (Kazan': Tatgosizdat, 1948), 226-285. The best work on the subject has been done by the German historians in the 1950s and 1960s: Joseph Glazik, Die russisch-orthodoxe Heidenmission seit Peter dem Grossen (Münster/Westfallen: Aschendorffscher Verlag, 1954) and Die Islammission der russisch-orthodoxen Kirche. Eine missionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung nach russischen Quellen und Darstellungen (Münster/Westfallen: Aschendorffscher Verlag, 1959); Michael Klimenko, Ausbreitung des Christentums in Russland seit Vladimir dem Heiligen bis zum 17. Jahrhundert (Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1969). More recently, the issue of conversion has been discussed by Igor Smolitsch, Geschichte der russischen Kirche, Bd. 2 in Forschungen zur Osteuropäischen Geschichte, Bd. 45, herausgegeben von Gregory L. Freeze (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1991): 246-346 and by Andreas Kappeler, Russlands erste Nationalitäten. Das Zarenreich und die Völker der Mittleren Wolga vom 16. bis 19. Jahrhundert (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 1982), 350-77.

<sup>3</sup>For a brief discussion of the Pauline model see Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff, Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa, vol. 1 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 249.

<sup>4</sup>Usually, both terms are used interchangeably. The term "non-Russian," however, may also include numerous Christians in Russia's western borderlands, who were not Russian Orthodox. I am using the term "non-Christian" in this articles, as it appears to be more precise and embraces only the pagan, Muslim and Buddhist subjects of the Russian empire.

<sup>5</sup>M. M. Shcherbatov, "Statistika v razsuzhdenii Rossii," in ChOIDR, book 3, pt. 11 (1859): 46.



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- <sup>6</sup>S. V. Chicherina, O privolzhskikh inorodtsakh i sovremennom znachenii sistemy N. I. Il'minskogo (St. Petersburg: Elektro-Tip. N. Ia. Stoikovoii, 1906), 4. For a discussion of Russians' and Siberian natives' perceptions of each other see Yuri Slezkine, "Savage Christians or Unorthodox Russians? The Missionary Dilemma in Siberia," in Between Heaven and Hell. The Myth of Siberia in Russian Culture, ed. by Galya Diment and Yuri Slezkine (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 15-31.
- <sup>7</sup>Epifanii, Zhitie Sviatogo Stefana, episkopa Permskogo (St. Petersburg: Tip. Imp. AN, 1897), 24.
- <sup>8</sup>Ibid., 30.
- <sup>9</sup>Ibid., 34-35, 38, 55, 56.
- <sup>10</sup>Ibid., 61, 63, 69, 72, 74.
- <sup>11</sup>One finds converts to Christianity among the Karelians and Lapps in the fifteenth and the early sixteenth centuries. (Ocherki istorii Karelii, vol. 1 [Petrozavodsk: Izd-vo Karel'skoi ASSR, 1957], 76; Prodolzhenie drevnei rossiiskoi vivliofiki. 11 vols. [St. Petersburg: Imper. Akademiia Nauk, 1786-1801]; repr., Slavic printings and reprintings, 251, ed. C. H. van Schooneveld. [The Hague-Paris: Mouton, 1970], 5: 192-95, no. 172 [hereafter cited as PDRV]).
- <sup>12</sup>PDRV 5: 242.
- <sup>13</sup>Andrei Kurbskii, "Istoriia o velikom kniaze Moskovskom," in Ruskaia istoricheskaia biblioteka, 39 vols. [St. Petersburg-Leningrad, 1872-1927], 31: 205-6 (hereafter cited as RIB).
- <sup>14</sup>Efim Malov, "O tatarskikh mechetiakh v Rossii," in Pravoslavnyi sobesednik (December 1867): 288; Mozharovskii, "Izlozhenie," 25.
- <sup>15</sup>Puteshestviia russkikh poslov 16-17 vv. Stateinye spiski (Moscow-Leningrad: AN SSSR, 1954), 76; Kabardino-russkie otnosheniia v 16-18vv.

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Dokumenty i materialy. 2 vols. (Moscow: Izd-vo AN SSSR, 1957), 1: 20, no. 10; 26, no. 13; 27-29, no. 16.

<sup>16</sup>Akty, sobrannye v bibliotekakh i arkhivakh Rossiiskoi Imperii Arkheograficheskoi ekspeditsiei Imp. Akademii Nauk. 4 vols. (St. Petersburg: Tip. II otd. Imp. Kantseliarii, 1836), 1: 259-61, no. 241 ( hereafter cited as AAE).

<sup>17</sup>In the late 1560s, population registers of the city of Kazan listed 24 converts (Materialy po istorii Tatarskoi ASSR. Pistsovye knigi goroda Kazani , 1565-68 gg. i 1646g [Leningrad: Izd-vo AN, 1932], 179). Even fewer converts could be found in the Kazan province (K. I. Nevostruev, Spisok s pistsovykh knig po g. Kazani s uezdom [Kazan: Tip. Imp. Universiteta, 1877], 67, 75). I have found no evidence to support Mozharovskii's claim that initially conversions were numerous and, in contrast to the eighteenth century, the converts were inspired by true belief (Mozharovskii, "Izlozhenie," 22-23). In response to Russian colonization of the Kazan region, powerful anti-Russian uprisings led by local nobles took place in 1556, 1572, and 1582 (V. D. Dmitriev, "Krest'ianskaia voina nachala 17 veka na territorii Chuvashii," in Trudy Nauchno-issledovatel'skogo institututa iazyka, literatury, istorii i ekonomiki Chuvashskoi ASSR 93 [1979]: 46-48).

<sup>18</sup>AAE 1: 436-9, no. 358.

<sup>19</sup>Such were the instructions of Tsar Boris concerning the Vogul converts in Siberia in 1603 (Akty istoricheskie, sobrannye i izdannye Arkheograficheskoi komissiei. 5 vols. [St. Petersburg, 1841-43] 2: 56-57, no. 43). Archbishop Makarii of Siberia and Tobolsk was similarly instructed in 1625 (Opisanie gosudarstvennogo arkhiva starykh del, comp. by P. I. Ivanov [Moscow: Tip. S. Selivanskogo, 1850], 253-66).

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<sup>20</sup>The last khan of Kazan, Ediger, converted in 1553 and took the Christian name of Simeon. Utemish Giray, who came from the Crimea to rule Kazan, assumed the name of Aleksandr upon his conversion (Rodoslovnaia kniga kniazei i dvorian Rossiiskikh i vyezshikh. 2 vols. [Moscow: Universitetskaia tip. Novikova, 1787], 24-27; "Pravlenie tsaria Ivana Vasil'evicha," in Drevniaia rossiiskaia vivliofika. 2 ed. 22 vols. Moscow: [Tip. kompanii tipograficheskoi, 1788-91]. Reprint. Slavic printings and reprintings, 250/1, ed. C. H. van Schooneveld [The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1970] , 17: 173 [hereafter cited as DRV]). In 1591, Abul-Khayir, the son of the Siberian Kuchum Khan, converted and was baptized as Andrei (V. V. Vel'iaminov-Zernov, Izsledovanie o kasimovskikh tsariakh i tsarevichakh. 4 vols. [St. Petersburg: Tip. Imper. AN, 1863-1887], 3: 54-55).

<sup>21</sup>M. G. Khudiakov, Ocherki po istorii Kazanskogo khanstva (Kazan': Gos. izd-vo, 1923; reprinted by Kazan': TIAK, 1990), 174-75. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the descendents of the Kasimov khans were all converted to Christianity and found themselves under Moscow's complete control (Vel'iaminov-Zernov, Izsledovanie, 2: 24; 3: 200-2, 333).

<sup>22</sup>A list of prominent converts and their land grants can be found in RIB 8: 278-84, no. 39 and in ChOIDR 191 (1899): 5-8, no. 4, pt. 5. A long list of valuable items granted to the Kabardinian princes upon their conversion included golden crosses, sable furs and hats, caftans, silks, and numerous other items (Kabardino-russkie, 1: 75, no. 46; 173-75, no. 120).

<sup>23</sup>A daughter of the tsar Aleksei was promised in marriage to the Kasimov prince Seyid-Burkhan upon his conversion (Vel'iaminov-Zernov, Izsledovanie, 3: 200). Cf. the names of the commanders in Tsar Boris' campaign against the Crimea in 1598 (M. M. Shcherbatov, Istoriia Rossiiskaia. 11 vols. [St.

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Petersburg: Imp. AN, 17..] , 7, pt. 1: 23). From the early seventeenth century, the Kabardinian dynasty of Cherkasskii princes was extremely important in implementing Russian policies in the North Caucasus (Kabardino-russkie, 1: 73-75, no. 46).

<sup>24</sup>The Tatar Prince Abul-Khayir of Siberia was the first of his dynasty to convert in 1591. While his son was known as Vasili Abulgairovich, his grandson's name, Roman Vasil'evich, could no longer be distinguished from a native Russian name (Vel'iaminov-Zernov, Izsledovanie, 3: 54-55).

<sup>25</sup>In 1686 the tsar decreed that the dynasties of the ruler of Imeretia in the Caucasus and the princes of Siberia and Kasimov were to be entered into the Geneological Book of the Russian nobility (Vel'iaminov-Zernov, Izsledovanie, 4: 144).

<sup>26</sup>"Vypiski iz razriadnykh arkhivov," in DRV 16: 339-45; Drevnie gosudarstvennye gramoty, nakaznye pamiaty i chelobitnye sobrannye v Permskoi gubernii (St. Petersburg: Tip. N. Grecha, 1821): 79. In her thorough study of the several generations of the new converts in the Novgorod area in the sixteenth century, Janet Martin convincingly showed that the economic profile of their estates remained different from their Russian counterparts and instead resembled the estates of other Muslims ("The Novokshcheny of Novgorod: Assimilation in the 16th Century," Central Asian Survey 9, pt. 2 [1990]: 13-38).

<sup>27</sup>Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii. Sobranie pervoe. 45 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1830), 2: 312-13, no. 867 (hereafter cited as PSZ); Polnoe sobranie postanovlenii i rasporyazhenii po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniia Rossiiskoi imperii 10 vols., (St. Petersburg: Sinodal'naia tip., 1869-1916), vol. 2, 1722 god: 578, no. 888 (hereafter cited as PSPR).

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<sup>28</sup>Opisanie dokumentov i del, khраниashchikhsia v arkhive sviateishogo sinoda (hereafter cited as ODD) (St. Petersburg: Sinodal'naia tipografiia, 1868), 1: 144, no. 157; PSPR vol. 2, 1744-45 g. (St. Petersburg: Sinodal'naia tip., 1907): 83-89, no. 608. I will discuss this issue in detail below.

<sup>29</sup>"Akty, otnosiashchiesia k istorii Sibiri, 1625-30 g." in RIB 8: 469-70, no. 33. In 1647 the governor of the town of Romanov ordered the Muslim Tatars to convert. When they refused he put them in chains and threw them in jail (Dopolnenia k aktam istoricheskim, sobrannye i izdannye Arkheograficheskoi komissiei, 12 vols. [St. Petersburg, 1846-1875], 3: 118-19, no. 35) (hereafter cited as DAI).

<sup>30</sup>Dokumenty i materialy po istorii Mordovskoi ASSR, vol. 1, pt. 2 (Saransk: Mordovskoe go. izd., 1950), 264, no. 10. In 1669, 150 musketeers were sent on the tsar's order to expel the non-Christian Mordva from the village of Bol'shoi Vad and resettle them in the district of Teriushevsk ("Dela Tainogo Prikaza. Zapisnye knigi" in RIB 21: 1482-83).

<sup>31</sup>The Muscovite Law Code (Ulozhenie) of 1649, trans. by Richard Hellie. Part 1 (Irvine, CA: Charles Schlacks Jr. Publisher, 1988): 182, ch. 20, art. 70-71. This law was based on the previous decree of the Tsar Aleksei in 1628 (N. V. Nikol'skii "Khristianizatsiia sredi chivashei srednego Povolzh'ia v 16-18 vv." in Izvestiia Obshchestva Arkheologii i etnografii pri Kazanskom universitete, 28 (1912), nos. 1-3: 43-44. PSZ 2: 644, no. 1099).

<sup>32</sup>The Muscovite Law Code: 112, ch. 16, art. 44; PSZ, 1: 1029, no. 616. In 1681 the Tatars of the Kurmysh district of the Kazan region were confronted with an ultimatum to convert or lose their lands to those who did (DAI 8: 311-12, no. 89); "Novoukaznye stat'i o pomest'iakh" in PSZ 2: 24, 25, no. 633, art. 25; *Ibid.*, 2: 916-

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17, no. 1287. A brief discussion of the issue is in James Cracraft, The Church Reform of Peter the Great (Bristol: Macmillan, 1971, 64-70).

<sup>33</sup>PSZ 2: 521-22, no. 1009; Dokumenty i materialy po istorii Mordovskoi, vol. 1, pt. 2: 293-99, no. 30. Capital punishment for Muslims who proselytized among the Christians is first found in the legal code of 1649 and was later upheld in 1669 criminal law (PSZ 1: 156, ch. 22, art. 24; 774, no. 431).

<sup>34</sup>PSZ 10: 556-60, no. 7612.

<sup>35</sup>In one of the more successful examples of missionary work, 530 men, women, and children were reported to have been baptized between 1675-80 in the entire Kazan region (N. Pisarev, "K istorii pravoslavnoi missii v Rossii v 17 veke," in Pravoslavnyi Sobesednik [September 1902]: 420-21). The number does not seem as impressive, given the fact that the total non-Christian population of the region was over 200,000, according to the 1678 census (Ia. I. Vodarskii, Naselenie Rossii v kontse 17-nachale 18 veka [Moscow: Nauka, 1977] : 109-10). In 1678, among 674 the Mordva households in Temnikov district, 34 households belonged to converts (M. P. Soldatkin, Politika russkogo tsarizma po khristianizatsii mordvy. Aftoreferat kandidatskoi dissertatsii [Moscow, 1974], 15).

<sup>36</sup>I. T. Pososhkov, Zaveshchanie otecheskoe, ed. by E. M. Prilezhaev (St. Petersburg: Sinodal'naia tip., 1893), 323. Pososhkov further urged the government to send missionaries to the Kamchatka peninsula in the Far East, "for if the Catholics find out, they will send their mission" (Ibid., 327).

<sup>37</sup>V. D. Smirnov, Krymskoe khanstvo pod verkhovenstvom Ottomanskoi porty do nachala 18 veka (St. Petersburg, 1887), 565.

<sup>38</sup>By the early eighteenth century, the Russian Orthodox church no longer demanded the baptism of those Catholics and Protestants who turned to

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Orthodoxy and in 1721, permitted Orthodox marriages to non-Orthodox Christians as long as their children became Orthodox (ODD 1 [1542-1721] [St. Petersburg: Sinodal'nai tip., 1868], Appendix, no. 18: CXXXII-CXXXIV; S. M. Solov'ev, Istoriia Rossii s drevneishikh vremen. 29 vols. [Moscow: Izd-vo sots.-ekon. literatury, 1959-1966]: bk. 8, vol. 16: 587).

<sup>39</sup>Michael Khodarkovsky, Where Two Worlds Met: The Russian State and the Kalmyk Nomads, 1600-1771. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 98, 113, 145-46.

<sup>40</sup>Pis'ma i bumagi imperatora Petra Velikogo. 12 vols. (St. Petersburg and Moscow, 1887-1977), 1: 694-95, note to no. 227.

<sup>41</sup>The ultimatum was not made in vain, and two years later one of the Muslim landowners from the Azov region arrived in St. Petersburg to petition that his lands, which had been confiscated for his refusal to become a Christian, be returned to him (Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv drevnikh aktov F. 248, op. 3, kn. 96, Kantseliariia Senata, Dela po Azovskoi gubernii, 1713-18gg, ll. 808-9 (hereafter cited as RGADA).

<sup>42</sup>The ordinary Tatars were to be paid on a similar scale, but only half as much (PSZ 2: 312-13, no. 867); PSZ 5: 66-67, no. 2734; 163, no. 2990; Dokumenty i materialy po istorii Mordovskoi, vol. 1, pt. 2: 398-99, no. 79.

<sup>43</sup>RGADA F. 248, op. 126, no. 90 Dela i prigovory Pravitel'stvaishchego Senata po Astrakhanskoi gubernii, 1716-1722 gg., l. 10; Khodarkovsky, Where, 106, 107, 112, 132, 180-82, 203, 205-6. On Christianity among the Kalmyks, see K. Kostenkov, "O rasprostraneni khrisianstva u kalmykov in Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshcheniia 144 (August 1869): 103-59. In the 1750s the government issued orders to baptize uncompromisingly the fugitives from among the nomadic Kazakhs (RGADA F. 248, op. 113, no. 1412, l. 6).

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<sup>44</sup>PSPR vol. 2 (1722) ( St. Petersburg, 1872): 400, no. 713; 578, no. 888. Peter I's decree of 1718 ordered non-Christians assigned to work in shipbuilding industries, while exempting the Russian peasants from this hard labor. Numerous complaints from non-Christians went unanswered and conversion remained the only way to avoid this onerous job (Ibid., vol. 3 [1746-52] [St. Petersburg, 1912]: 387-92, no. 1233). Tax exemptions upon conversion were offered as early as 1681 (PSZ 2: 313, no. 867; DAI 8: 310-11, no. 89).

<sup>45</sup>Khodarkovsky, Where, 172, 183, 184.

<sup>46</sup>One of the most striking accounts came from the Kazan metropolitan Sil'vestr in 1729. He reported that 170 years after their conversion to Christianity, the "old converts" ("starokreshchennye") continued to reside in their old villages far from the churches, remaining wholly ignorant of the Russian language and Christian laws ("Luka Konashevich, Episkop Kazanskii," in Pravoslavnyi Sobesednik 1858 [October]: 234-37).

<sup>47</sup>ODD 1: 141-43, no. 157; Appendix, no. 27, pp. CCCV-CCCXIV.

<sup>48</sup>PSPR vol. 5 (1725-1727) (St. Petersburg, 1881): 481, no. 1897; 511-12, no. 1928. In his revisionist article, Gregory Freeze showed that although formally incorporated into the state, operationally the Synod stood parallel to the government and the church and the clergy constituted a separate institution and a separate social group ("Handmaiden of the State? The Church in Imperial Russia Reconsidered," Journal of Ecclesiastical History 36, no. 1 (1985): 82-102.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., vol. 4 (1724-January 1725) (St. Petersburg, 1876): 51-2, no. 1192. For complaints about local authorities see Ibid., vol. 2 (1722) (St. Petersburg, 1872): 133-34, no. 484.



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<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, vol. 4 (1724-January 1725): 104, no. 1245; 150, no. 1321; vol. 5 (1725-1727): 125, no. 1590.

<sup>51</sup>RGADA F. 248, op. 126, no. 135 Dela i prigovory Pravitel'stvoishchego Senata po Orenburgskoi gubernii, 1735-37gg., l. 78; Vitevskii, Nepliuiev, 439; Khodarkovsky, Where, 208-9.

<sup>52</sup>PSPR vol. 5 (1725-1727): 416-18, no. 1846; 487-88, no. 1908.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, vol. 2 (1744-45) (St. Petersburg, 1907): 448, no. 933; vol. 6 (1727-30) (St. Petersburg, 1889): 313-16, no. 2214.

<sup>54</sup>One priest was paid off in furs and cash by the Ostiak people, who continued to worship their idols (PSPR vol. 5 [1725-27] [St. Petersburg, 1881]: 10, no. 1475). A 1736 decree of the Russian government forbade the construction of new mosques and religious schools. However, the decrees were easier issued than followed, and six years later a new decree ordered the demolition of mosques built since 1736 (PSPR vol. 2 (1744-45): 15-16, no. 540).

<sup>55</sup>PSZ 11: 248-56, no. 8236; Mozharovskii, "Izlozhenie," 61-62; Efim Malov, "O novokreshchennykh shkolakh v 18 veke," in Pravoslavnoe obozrenie 26 (July 1868): 354-57.

<sup>56</sup>"Luka Konashevich," 233.

<sup>57</sup>Polnoe sobranie postanovlenii i rasporyazhenii po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedaniia Rossiiskoi imperii. Tsarstvovanie Elizavety Petrovny. 4 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1899-1912), 2 (1744-45): 143-45, no. 662 (hereafter cited as PSPREP). Separating converts from non-Christians was seen as another important way of securing the success of the mission. In 1740 the Senate decreed appointing a trustworthy person who would not take bribes and would supervise the resettlement of converts ("Luka Konashevich," 464-65).

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<sup>58</sup>PSPREP vol. 1 (1741-43) (St. Petersburg, 1899): 21-22, no. 17; 85, no. 70; vol. 3 (1746-52) (St. Petersburg, 1912): 83-85, no. 1007; 200-2, no. 1115; PSZ 11: 369-70, no. 8349. The 1760 law superceded the previous law and stated that conversion should no longer serve as a pardon from capital punishment (PSPREP vol. 4 [1753-62] [St. Petersburg, 1912]: 497-8, no. 1735).

<sup>59</sup>Dokumenty i materialy po istorii Mordovskoi ASSR, vol. 2 (Saransk, 1940), 289-99, nos. 64-72. A Russian regional commander admitted that the recruit system was ruining the Mordva.

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*, 301-6, nos. 75-78; 313, no. 82; 326, no. 96.

<sup>61</sup>PSPREP vol. 2 (1744-1745): 123-28, no. 651; 310-3, no. 805.

<sup>62</sup>It was at this time that the issue of the status of the Christians within the Ottoman empire became a growing concern among the European states. In response, the Ottomans raised the issue of the status of the Muslims within the Russian empire.

<sup>63</sup>PSPREP vol. 3 (1746-52): 283--5, no. 1174; 310-3, no. 1193.

<sup>64</sup>Only a few years before, the number of converts in the region was 13,322 out of a total non-Christian population of 285,464 ("Luka Konashevich," 233).

<sup>65</sup>Istoriia Tatarii v materialakh, 190-91.

<sup>66</sup>During the Razin uprising the non-Christian gentry chose to join the rebels (Michael Khodarkovsky, "The Stepan Razin Uprising: Was It a 'Peasant War'?" Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas, 42, no. 1 [1994]: 13-17). In the Pugachev uprising non-Christians turned their rage against the church officials, murdering 132 of them in the Kazan region alone (Mozharovskii, "Izlozhenie," 98).

<sup>67</sup>PSZ 14: 608, no. 10,597.

<sup>68</sup>RGADA F. 248, op. 113, no. 257, l. 5.

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<sup>69</sup>"Luka Konashevich." 239-40, 469-70; PSPREP vol. 4 (1753-1762) (St. Petersburg, 1912): 291, no. 1550.

<sup>70</sup>Polnoe sobranie postanovlenii i rasporyazhenii po vedomstvu pravoslavnogo ispovedanija Rossiiskoi imperii. Tsarstvovanie Ekateriny Alekseevny. 3 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1910-1915), I (1762-72): 217-18, no. 176.

<sup>71</sup>Sbornik Imperatorskogo russkogo istoricheskogo obshchestva. 148 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1867-1916), 32: 541-44, no. 76.

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid.*, 147: 221-21; 115: 379-80.

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*, 115: 311-12; 319-28.

<sup>74</sup>*Ibid.*, 115: 353-56; 421-24; 448.

<sup>75</sup>Solov'ev, Istoriia, bk. 14, vol. 27: 49, 52. The empress found it appalling that two decades previously the bishop of Kazan, Luka Konashevich, acted against the decrees issued by Peter I, tore apart the remains of the ancient city of Bulgar, and used the stones to construct a church and a monastery (*Ibid.*, 53).

<sup>76</sup>The recognition of religious differences among its own subjects did not prevent Russia from seeing itself as a protector of all Orthodox Christians. Thus, four years after the conquest of the Crimea in 1774 and in spite of the promises to grant the Crimea an autonomous status, the Russian government insisted on the expatriation of all Christians who lived there. More than 31,000 of these Christians were reluctantly delivered to the Russians by the Crimean khan (Solov'ev, Istoriia, bk. 15, vol. 29: 235). One particular provision, which eventually led to recognizing Russia's right to be a protector of Orthodox Christians within the Ottoman empire, was negotiated in the 1774 treaty of Küçük-Kaynarja. This provision of the treaty later served as Russia's justification for laying imperial claims to much of European territory under

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the Ottoman dominion (John T. Alexander, Catherine the Great: Life and Legend [New York, Oxford: Oxford university Press, 1989], 141).

<sup>77</sup>Shcherbatov, "Statistika," 64.

<sup>78</sup>Mozharovskii, "Izlozhenie," 107.

<sup>79</sup>It is instructive to compare the fate of "converts" in Russia with that of conversos, the Jewish converts in the late-fifteenth-century Spain. Spanish authorities considered conversos a distinct and separate group. Conversos were discriminated against and their purity of blood ("limpieza de sangre") remained a criterion for their advancement until the early-twentieth century (Angus McKay, Spain in the Middle Ages: From Frontier to Empire, 1000-1500 [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977], 185-87).

<sup>80</sup>Like missions in Russia, the New World missions had also relied on the crown's financial and military support. However, unlike Russia, where the tsar or the emperor was in charge of both the secular and spiritual worlds, the Catholic church preserved independence from the secular authorities and cherished its ecclesiastical immunities. (Herbert E. Bolton, "The Mission as a Frontier Institution in the Spanish-American Colonies" in American Historical Review vol. 23, no. 1 [1917]: 46-9; N. M. Farris, Crown and Clergy in Colonial Mexico, 1759-1821 [University of London: The Athlone Press, 1968], 5-6, 19-20; Colonial Brazil, ed. by Leslie Bethel [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987], 22-23; W. J. Eccles, The Canadian Frontier, 1534-1760 [New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969], 35-59; Harry W. Crosby, Antigua California. Mission and Colony on the Penninsular Frontier, 1697-1768 [Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994], 178-220). For comparison with conversion process in the Islamic world and in south-east Asia, see Conversion to Islam, ed. by Nehemia Levtzion (New York: Holmes & Meier

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Publishers, Inc., 1979) and Vicente L. Rafael, Contracting Colonialism:  
Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society under Early Spanish  
Rule (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1988).