

# Central Asian Problems of Modern Science and Education

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Volume 4  
Issue 2 *Central Asian Problems of Modern  
Science and Education 2019-2*

Article 26

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7-15-2019

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### Recommended Citation

Rakhimova, Sh. A. and Djumaniyazov, Dj. N. (2019) "A GREAT TRAVEL OR THE NEW VIEW ON THE SETTLEMENT OF MENNONITES IN KHOREZM," *Central Asian Problems of Modern Science and Education*: Vol. 4 : Iss. 2 , Article 26.

Available at: <https://uzjournals.edu.uz/capmse/vol4/iss2/26>

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**UDC: 375**

## **A GREAT TRAVEL OR THE NEW VIEW ON THE SETTLEMENT OF MENNONITES IN KHOREZM**

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**Annotatsiya:** Ushbu maqolada O'rta Osiyoda, xususan, Xorazm viloyatida istiqomat qilgan Mennonitlar haqida ma'lumot beriladi. 1881 yilning avgustida Toshkentga Trakt nomli Mennonitlar guruhi keldi. Ular Turkiston bosh gubernatori Kaufman tomonidan qabul qilingan. O'rta Osiyo mamlakatlarida ular mahalliy aholiga ko'plab foydali kasblarni o'rgatganlar

**Kalits'o'zlar:** Mennonitlar, Xiva xonligi, Trakt, Oqmachit, Xorazm viloyati, O'rta Osiyo mamlakatlari, Klass Epp, gubernator Kaufman, cherkov, Vilgelm Penner

**Аннотация:** В этой статье приводится информация о меннонитах, которые жили в Средней Азии, а именно в Хорезмской области. В августе 1881 года группа меннонитов по имени Тракт прибыла в Ташкент. Они были приняты генеральным губернатором Туркестана Кауфманом. Во время своего пребывания на территории Центральной Азии они обучали местных жителей многим полезным работам.

**Ключевые слова:** Меннониты, Хивинское ханство, группа по имени Тракт,



Акмачит, Хорезмская область, страны Средней Азии, Класс Эп, губернатор  
Кауфман, церковь, Вильгельм Пеннер

**Annotation:** In this article is given information about Mennonites who lived in the Central Asia, exactly in Khorezm region. In August 1881, a group of Mennonites called Trakt, arrived at Tashkent. They were accepted by Turkestan GeneralGovernor Kaufman. During their stay in the Central Asian territory they taught local people many interesting and useful jobs.

**Key words:** Mennonites, Khiva Khannate, Trakt, AkMetchet, Khorezm region, Central Asian countries, Class Epp, Governor Kaufman, church, Wilhem Penner

**Introduction** Mennonites originating is connected with the Dutchman Menno Simons. Menno Simons, who lived in 1496-1561, was considered as a great philosopher and a religious scientist. He was born in 1496, in the Dutch city of Witmarsum. Menno Simons reformed Christianity in the early 16th century. According to the religious doctrines of Mennonites, against to obedience, oppression, evil and the power of violence, they propagated ideas of spiritual perfection. Mennonites regarded such things as obtaining weapons, taking part in wars, and killing innocents as non-religious phenomenon. His religious reform was strongly being harassed. The priests, the kings, and the military particularly confronted against to this religious current. Those, who were involved in this religious movement were exterminated and burned in the fire. Mennonites, who could not tolerate severe persecution and difficulties, decided to take a long and difficult journey.

**Literaturereview** Many Mennonites, in the mid-16th century, moved and located in the Prussian region of Western Germany. At the end of the 18 and early 19th centuries, a group of Mennonites came and settled in Ukraine.

The Prussian government begins to prepare for the war with France from the



second half of the 19th century. Mennonites refuse to give soldiers to the Prussian army. During 1853-1884, over 18,000 Mennonites settled down in Russia and the Canadian Canal through the Atlantic Ocean. From 1922 to 1926, they traveled through the United States to Kansas, Mexico, and Paraguay. In 1853-1861 Mennonites came to Russia's Volga River, Saratov, and Samara.

In 1874, Russia declared a total military obligation to all the citizens, regardless of their ethnic and religious beliefs. This law comes into force in 1880.

On July 3, 1880, a group of Mennonites called Khausan, consisting of 10 families, came by railroad car and settled in Kaplanbek village near Tashkent. They were here until October 18, 1880.

By the period of time August, 1880 till August 1881, over 6 groups consisting of more than 100 families, the Mennonites, called Medemtal, Valdekheim and Molotschna arrived by train at Tashkent and they lived in Kaplanbek till the end of November, 1889.

In August 1881, a group of Mennonites called Trakt, arrived at Tashkent. They were accepted by Turkestan General Governor Kaufman (1867-1882). Kaufman invites Mennonites to live in the vast territory of Turkestan.[1]

**Research methodology** They lived in the village of Awliyo Ata for a while. In September 1881, the group of Mennonites, named Trakt, due to the disturbances in Tashkent and Kokand Khanate on five railroad cars; moved to the village of Saraybulak, belonging to the Emirate of Bukhara. The Emir of Bukhara Muzaffarkhon strongly opposed them to live in Bukhara. In addition, the Mennonites are facing a serious oppression from a group of Muslim religious leaders in the Bukharan emirate, because the Mennonite women did not wear "parandji". After 9 months living in Sarabulak, following the invitation of Muhammad Rakhimkhon II, Mennonites go to Khiivakhon in spring, 1882. At that time, 39 Mennonite families came to Lauzan village, near the Amu Darya River. Mennonites, who faced difficulties, decided to leave to America. Mennonite Emil Rayson came to the reception of the Khiva Khan Muhammad



Rakhimkhon II, who referred to him with deep respect and promised them to protect.[2] As a financial assistance Khiva Khan gave \$ 2000 to Mennonites and peaceful, quiet, serene place for living located in the khan area 12 km from Khiva in the Southern-east on the shores of Shoirlake in the village of Chigirchi. On April 16, 1884, ClaasEpp, Emil Rayson, WilhemPenner, Jacob Jantzen, Michael Klaassen, and 34 other families settled in AkMetchet.

**Results and discussion** They lived independently and freely. Mennonites had their own administrative authority. Mennonites living in AkMetchet were led by ClaasEpp, in 1884-1913, who was born on September 21, 1838 in Furtsverder, Prussia. The AkMetchet was founded by ClaasEpp, who built a church in the area where he came to conduct religious services. The church was very high, white painted and served at one time to 25 Mennonites. The local people called the church " AkMetchet ", after that, the Mennonites's place have been named after " AkMetchet " by local people. Under the leadership of ClaasEpp housing, schools, hospitals, churches and other administrative buildings were built in AkMetchet. They have set themselves their own criminal and administrative cases. ClaasEpp died on 19 January 1913 in AkMetchet.[3]

The local population and a group of historians from Khorezm considered the Mennonites living in AkMetchet as "Germans", who originally were the Mennonites of the Netherlands. For a long time they lived in Prussia in Germany, this was the reason they spoke German.

The reconstructing work and parquet floor part of the "Nurullaboy" palace in Khiva khanate was built in the early 20th century by Mennonites in European style. In 1934, Mennonites celebrated their 50th anniversary at Whitehall.[4] During the jubilee, Mennonite schoolchildren's performances and musical performances were demonstrated. They describe the martyrdom of the Mennonites from the great historical process starting from the 16th century in the Netherlands, and the painful, difficult life till 1934. Mennonites, who have lived 50 years, during the jubilee were photographed for memory.





The merit of the Mennonites, who lived in AkMetchet from 1884 to 1935, was enormous in the representation of the film-photography in Khorezm. From WilhemPenner, as the Khivans called him "PanarBuva", KhudeiberganDevonov learned photography, film art, and founded the first film-photography art in Central Asia.[5] In addition, Mennonites had done a great deal in the socio-economic life of Khorezm district. In particular, they helped local population in creating new types of cotton and shrubs, in medical care, home-locking, in the sphere of chemistry, photography, planting potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers and other crops, cultivation. They brought European house heating system, had brought fireplaces, slopes and other European culture, music and art.[6]

In 1925, the former Soviet Union government adopted the markhian doctrine about the life of Mennonites. According to the doctrine the huge requires were put to Mennonites. After that, a group of AkMetchet Mennonites visited Moscow and signed the Kalinin agreement. In 1935, 10 people from the AkMetchet Mennonites opposed Kalinin's agreement and refused to comply with the terms of the contract. Mennonites who opposed the Soviet government's decision were arrested and shot dead.[7]

**Conclusion** It is also worth mentioning that the Mennonites were strong persecuted during the era of Russian imperialism. In the 1925-1930 period of water reforms, the period of community, was very expensive for AkMetchet Mennonites. [8]They instead of suggested forming of collecting farms gave a plan of creating a farming enterprise, which is a system of market-based systems. The Russian government denied their offer. In 1935, the Mennonites who lived in AkMetchet, were forced to abandon the AkMetchet.[9]

In summary, the Mennonites, who lived in Khorezm during 53 years (1882-1935), left a great mark on the socio-economic and cultural life of Khorezm region. The Soviet government's totalitarian policy, along with the local people, also did not overlook the AkMetchet Mennonites. Thanks to independence, their bright memories are



being restored.[10]

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