

HISTORY OF THE SOUTHERN FRONTIER
ИСТОРИЯ ЮЖНОГО ФРОНТИРА

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Orphanage in Skobelev: the Care of the Russian Empire for the Children of Russian Immigrants in the Turkestan General Government at the Early 20th Century

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Abstract: The author examines the history of the formation and activities of a children’s orphanage in Skobelev, Fergana Region, and analyzes the problems that arise in the work of the Fergana Board of Trustees for Children’s Orphanages. The purpose of the article is to study the implementation of Russia’s imperial policy on the issue of orphans in the territory of the Turkestan Governorate-General, which was part of the imperial authorities’ efforts to modernize the national frontier. The source base is based on administrative materials extracted from the Russian State Historical Archive. The author describes the conditions under which a children’s orphanage was established in the Fergana region, which was one of the last such institutions in the Turkestan Governorate-General. In addition, the author reveals the activities of the Board of Trustees of Children’s Homes, founded by the wife of Alexander II to manage such institutions, and then established in the Fergana Regio in particular to oversee the activities of the orphanage and maintain contact with the Department of Institutions of the Empress Maria. The author concludes that the organization of the orphanage’s activities was no different from similar institutions in the central regions of the Russian Empire, which can serve as evidence of the Russian administration’s desire to elevate the national frontier its own level. As the study shows, the existence of such institutions in the Turkestan Governorate-General is a testament to the Russian administration’s concern for its subjects who found themselves in challenging circumstances in a foreign land.

Keywords: National outskirts of Russia, Russian immigrants, child orphanhood, origin, upbringing, and financing

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Детский приют в г. Скобелев: забота Российской империи о детях русских переселенцев в Туркестанском генерал-губернаторстве в начале XX века

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Аннотация: Рассматривается история формирования и деятельности детского приюта в г. Скобелев Ферганской области, анализируются проблемы, возникающие в работе Ферганского попечительства детских приютов. Целью является исследование реализации имперской политики России по проблемам детей-сирот на территории Туркестанского генерал-губернаторства в русле проводимой имперскими властями фронтальной модернизации национальной окраины. Источниковая база основана на делопроизводственных материалах, извлеченных из Российского государственного исторического архива. В статье показаны условия возникновения детского приюта в Ферганской области, ставшего одним из последних учреждений такого рода в Туркестанском генерал-губернаторстве. Раскрывается деятельность попечительства детских приютов, созданного в Ферганской области для контроля за деятельностью приюта и связи с Ведомством учреждений императрицы Марии, основанному супругой Александра II и курировавшему заведение такого рода в Российской империи. Автор приходит к выводу, что организация деятельности приюта ничем не отличалась от подобных учреждений в центральных областях Российской империи, что может служить доказательством желания российской администрации поднять национальные окраины до своего уровня. Как показывает исследование, существование такого рода учреждений в Туркестанском генерал-губернаторстве является свидетельством заботы российской администрации о своих подданных, находившихся в непростых условиях на чужбине.

Ключевые слова: национальная окраина России, русские переселенцы, детское сиротство, происхождение, воспитание, финансирование

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Introduction

Relevance. Contemporary historical studies clearly show interest in imperial issues caused by multiple factors, most notably the impact of the empire's laws on its outskirts. This was driven by the desire to modernize them and raise them to the level of the rest of the empire. The problems of charity and orphanhood concerning the territories that were part of Russia are also relevant to these issues. One of the aspects of this direction was the task of creating orphanages on the outskirts of the country for the children of Russian migrants, with the aim of their gradual transition to acculturation influence on the local population.

Elaboration of the problem. The issues of childcare in the Russian Empire are currently being actively explored in the works of Russian historians, particularly those devoted to the regional aspect of the problem¹. The issue of immigrants in Turkestan, their

¹ L.A. Dashkevich, "Labor education in the rural shelters of the perm province in late XIX – early XX centuries," *Pedagogical Education in Russia*, no. 5 (2018): 6–12, <https://doi.org/10.26170/po18-05-01>; V.N. Zakolodnaya, "State and society in the organization of social assistance to orphans in St. Petersburg

adaptation, and their relationship with the local population has also attracted researchers' keen interest for several years, which demonstrates its relevance². However, the issue of Russian migrants' children living in orphanages in Turkestan has not yet received adequate scholarly attention, except for a few works published in recent years³. This determined the choice of this aspect as a research topic.

The purpose of the study is to demonstrate the impact of Russian imperial policy on the creation and development of orphanages in Turkestan. It is the activities of the Fergana orphanage Board of Trustees which are considered as an example.

The source base includes the records (reports) of the Fergana orphanage Board of Trustees for 1906–1917 from Collection № 763 of the Russian State Historical Archive. The analysis of these records have allowed us to identify the procedure for discussing all issues at the Skobelev orphanage at the board meetings: to determine the methods for resolving them in accordance with the established procedures, to characterize the orphanage's internal procedures, to demonstrate the changes in the number of children and their causes, and to identify the orphanage's funding sources.

The results of the work with the archival materials were tested by the author in the presentation at the V International Scientific Conference "Ethnic Minorities in Russian History" in St. Petersburg in October 2024⁴.

Establishment and development of trusteeship and orphanage in the Fergana region: approval of staff

The Fergana region appeared on the map of the Turkestan Governorate General after Russia's conquest of the Khanate of Kokand in 1876 and was formalized by the edict of the Russian Governing Senate № 8424 of March 5 (17), 1876. The city of New Margilan (after becoming part of the Russian Empire, the name was spelt with the letter "e") became the administrative center. It was founded on the initiative of Russian commander, Major General Mikhail Dmitrievich Skobelev, who became the first military governor of the

and the province in the second half of the 19th – early 20th centuries," *Pushkin Leningrad State University Journal*, no. 3 (2011): 145–150; E.N. Selyutina, "Creation and activities of establishment of department of the empress Maria Fedorovna for contempt of children in the Oryol province of sulfurs XIX – the head of the XX centuries," *Scientific notes of Orel state university. Series: Humanities and social sciences*, no. 1 (2014): 331–336.

² O.I. Brusina, *Slaviane v Srednei Azii: Etnicheskie i sotsial'nye protsessy: konets XIX – konets XX veka* [Slavs in Central Asia: Ethnic and social processes: late 19th – late 20th centuries] (Moscow: Vostochnaia literatura Publ., 2001); T.V. Kotyukova, "Problems of Russian resettlement policy in Turkestan at the beginning of the 20th century," *Military History Magazine*, no. 2 (2010): 58–64; T.V. Kotyukova, "Problems of Russian resettlement policy in Turkestan at the beginning of the 20th century," *Military History Magazine*, no. 3 (2010): 54–57; S.N. Brezhneva, "Russian immigrants in Turkestan: problems of interrelation with the local population," *Belgorod State University. Scientific Bulletin. Series: History. Political science* 37, no. 1 (2016): 112–118; V.P. Litvinov, "Administrative and Police Regulation of Muslim Women's Position in Russian Turkestan," *RUDN Journal of Russian History* 23, no. 3 (2024): 272–285, <https://doi.org/10.22363/2312-8674-2024-23-3-272-285>

³ G.M. Alikeeva, A.M. Shakhieva, A.S. Sayatova, "The history of guardianship and social protection of orphans in Verny city (1879–1917)," *Vestnik KazNMU*, no. 3 (2017): 405–408; I.V. Volkov, "On institutions of public charity in Turkestan: historical-legal aspect," *The Authority*, no. 12 (2017): 137–142; S.N. Brezhneva, "Orphanages on the National Outskirts of the Russian Empire: the Experience of the Syrdarya Regional Guardianship in Russian Turkestan," *Journal of Frontier Studies* 8, no. 3 (2023): 112–135, <https://doi.org/10.46539/jfs.v8i3.534>

⁴ S.N. Brezhneva, "Deiatel'nost' Ferganskogo oblastnogo popechitel'stva detskikh priiutov skvoz' prizmu frontimoi modernizatsii Rossiiskoi imperii (nachalo XX v.) [The Activities of the Fergana Regional Guardianship of Orphanages through the Prism of Frontier Modernization of the Russian Empire (Early 20th Century)]," in *Etnicheskie men'shinstva v istorii Rossii. Materialy V Mezhdunarodnoi nauchnoi konferentsii 25–26 oktiabria 2024 g.* (St. Petersburg: Leningradskii gosudarstvennyi universitet im. A.S. Pushkina Publ., 2024), 89–94.

region and held this position until March 17, 1877. On October 23, 1907, the city was re-named Skobelev in his honor.

The Fergana orphanage Board of Trustees of the department of Empress Maria's institutions was established in 1906, much later than in other regions of the Turkestan Governorate General. At the same time, the opening of an orphanage in the regional center, New Margilan was reported. By Imperial order announced by the Ministry of Justice on September 17, 1906, the rules of the Regulations on orphanages of July 18, 1891, were extended to the newly created trusteeship and orphanage. In addition to the list of persons specified in the Regulations, the Fergana Orphanage Board of Trustees included: the governor's assistant, the inspector of public schools of the second district, the Margilan district chief, and two members appointed by the Turkestan governor general⁵.

Even earlier, in 1904, military governor of the Fergana region, Major General G.A. Arandarenko (Arendarenko), petitioned Turkestan governor general N.A. Ivanov to transfer the orphanage from Andijan, where it had been opened following the earthquake there. The orphanage received supplies worth 7,000 rubles from the Kokand charitable organization and 15,000 rubles that were at the disposal of the military governor of the Fergana region at that time. In addition, a donation of 5,000 rubles by Andijan Sart Mumynbayev on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Fergana region and the annual assistance of the charitable organization made it possible to open an orphanage in a city building temporarily converted into an almshouse. The petition of G. A. Arandarenko, who personally managed the repairing of Andijan earthquake damage⁶, received approval of the Turkestan governor general, on account of which the orphanage in Andijan was closed and part of its property was transferred to the city of Skobelev⁷.

On December 21, 1906, in New Margilan almost simultaneously the Fergana orphanage Board of Trustees opened its orphanage. Soon after New Margilan was renamed Skobelev.

In conformity with the law, the head of the region was to chair the trusteeship, it was Major General Vladimir Nikolaevich Susanin (September 23, 1907 – March 8, 1911), the military governor of the Fergana region, who was appointed to this position. His assistant was Major General Alexander Ivanovich Gippius, who became the military governor in 1911. By Imperial order of September 17, 1906, Pyotr Vasilyevich Prilezhaev, inspector of public schools for the second district, was included in the trusteeship.

A director of the orphanage was also appointed. On September 16, 1907, retired state councilor Porfiry Nikolaevich Arkhangel'sky took this position. Maria Petrovna Slyunina, the brigade doctor's wife, was appointed the trustee of the orphanage; she was confirmed in this position by the Empress on March 6, 1907⁸. Nadezhda Alexandrovna Anantena, a sister of mercy, became the caretaker of the orphanage⁹. All of them were to be personally

⁵ “Vysochaishee povelenie, ob' iavlennoe Ministrom iustitsii – Ob otkrytii Ferganskogo oblastnogo po-pechitel'stva detskikh priiutov vedomstva uchrezhdenii Imperatritsy Marii i detskogo priiuta togo zhe vedomstva v gorode Novom Margelane. 17 sentiabrya 1906 g. – Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossiiskoi imperii [The Highest Command, announced by the Minister of Justice – On the opening of the Fergana Regional Board of Trustees for Children's Shelters of the Department of Institutions of Empress Maria and a children's shelter of the same department in the city of Novy Margelan. September 17, 1906 – Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire],” in *Polnyi Svod zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii* (St. Petersburg: Gosudarstvennaia tipografiia Publ., 1909), 863–864.

⁶ *Istoriia Andizhana v dokumentakh i materialakh (1876–1917 gg.)* [History of Andijan in documents and materials (1876–1917)] (Tashkent: SHARQ Publ., 2012), 65.

⁷ Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv (thereafter – RGIA), f. 763, op. 3, d. 444, l. 1 ob. – 2.

⁸ *Ibid.*, d. 502, l. 2 ob.

⁹ RGIA., f. 763, op. 3, d. 444, l. 5–5 ob.

approved by the Empress, but in exceptional cases, these individuals were approved by the Turkestan Governor General. In 1908, retired state councilor Grigory Nikandrovich Sokolinsky became the new director of the orphanage¹⁰.

In 1910, following M.P. Slyunina's departure from the region, Krasnoslobodskaya, the wife of the retired Major General, was appointed trustee of the orphanage. She died shortly thereafter. Following her death in 1911, Nina Nikolaevna Guppius, the wife of military governor of the Fergana region A.I. Guppius, was temporarily appointed trustee¹¹. However, she was soon replaced by Zinaida Vasilyevna Kalmakova, the wife of the assistant to the military governor of the Fergana region¹².

Following the Kalmakovs' departure from the region in 1913, Natalya Alekseyevna Mukhanova, the wife of the chief of staff of the 2nd Turkestan Rifle Brigade, was appointed trustee¹³. During that period Sergei Vasilyevich Zhukov served as assistant to the military governor.

The outbreak of World War I could not help but affect the situation in the orphanage in Skobelev, as the Turkestan Governorate General, albeit remote, was part of the Russian Empire. This event directly affected the staffing of the Fergana orphanage Board of Trustees. Assistant to the military governor S.V. Zhukov, a full member of the Board of Trustees, was called up to serve in the army. Collegiate councillor Leybin became acting assistant to the military governor. Archpriest Voznesensky, an honorary member of the Board of Trustees, was sent to the active army¹⁴. Feodosia Pavlovna Mazurkevich remained the caretaker of the orphanage during the war.

However, even during this difficult period for the country, the Board of Trustees continued to care for the well-being of the children in the orphanage.

Number and origin of children cared for in the Fergana orphanage

In the first year, there were 25 children in the orphanage, including 22 girls and 3 boys. A report of the Fergana orphanage Board of Trustees notes that of the 6 children who left during the year (one boy and five girls), the boy was sent to a workshop, and the girls were returned to their parents¹⁵. It was also noted that not a single child died, although there were naturally cases of children's illnesses. The maintenance of one child cost 48.9 rubles¹⁶. Of the total number of children, three were supported by their parents, while the remaining 22 were supported by the orphanage.

All the children were Orthodox. The social composition of the children in the orphanage was not homogeneous. Most of them were children of peasants. However, there were also children from the families of: commoners, government officials, lower military ranks, and even noble families. There were full orphans of unknown origin. The orphanage children also varied in the family status. Immediately after the orphanage establishment, there were four full orphans, ten children had only a father, two children had only a mother, and one girl had both parents¹⁷. The age of the children ranged from one year (one boy and one girl) to 14 years¹⁸.

¹⁰ RGIA., f. 763, op. 3, d. 502, l. 1.

¹¹ Ibid., d. 626, l. 1.

¹² Ibid., d. 695, l. 1.

¹³ Ibid., d. 821, l. 1.

¹⁴ Ibid., d. 880, l. 1.

¹⁵ Ibid., d. 444, l. 10.

¹⁶ Ibid., l. 3 ob. – 4.

¹⁷ Ibid., l. 9.

¹⁸ Ibid., l. 9 ob.

In 1908, the number of children in the orphanage increased to 32 (28 girls and 4 boys). Three of the four children who had left (two girls and two boys) were returned to their parents. In 1909, there were 28 children in the orphanage. The maintenance for each child was reduced to 38.7 rubles¹⁹. In terms of social composition, most children were from the families of peasants and officials, a few were from the families of commoners and lower ranks, and the one girl who was from a noble family was a full orphan. Four children were of unknown origin, which was recorded in the Board of Trustees report. The children varied in the family status. Five children were full orphans, three had both parents, six had only a mother, and most children (14) had only a father²⁰. The age of the children still ranged from 1 to 14²¹. Four children were supported by their parents, while the remaining 28 were supported by the orphanage.

In 1909, there were 31 children in the Skobelev orphanage. By early 1910, there remained 23 children²², eight had been returned to their parents. The social composition changed: most children (10) were from the families of officials. There were still children from the families of commoners, peasants, and lower-ranking military officers. The number of children from the nobility had increased to three. Four children were of unknown origin. The number of children who had only a mother had increased to 11, nine were full orphans. The age of the children still was from one year. The oldest girl was 15. Three children were supported by their parents, one child was supported by a private benefactor, and all the rest were supported by the orphanage²³.

In 1910, there were 33 children in the orphanage (6 boys, 27 girls). Of the six children who left, two were returned to their parents, two were given up for adoption, and two died of illnesses²⁴. These were the first deaths after the orphanage establishment. In terms of social composition, peasant children outnumbered other children, while the number of the children of commoners and lower military ranks was equal. Two children were of noble origin, and four were of unknown social status. In terms of family status, most children were full orphans – 10 of them. Eight children had only a mother, seven had only a father, and one girl had both parents²⁵. The age ranged from 1 month (the orphanage probably began providing assistance to infants or perhaps these were foundlings) to 16 years.

By January 1, 1911, the number of children was 27. According to the Board of Trustees report, that year the number of the children in the orphanage increased to 37, but 10 of them left: four were returned to their parents, three were put into service, one went to school, one was adopted, and one died (the cause of death is not specified)²⁶. The report states that 11 children were ill over the past year, one of whom, a girl, never recovered²⁷. The illness the children suffered from is not specified; one can only assume it was an epidemic.

In 1911, in the orphanage there were 27 children, of whom one was supported by a private benefactor, while the remaining 26 were supported by the orphanage²⁸. The peasant children still outnumbered the other children – there were 16 of them; while the children of commoners, officials, and lower military ranks numbered three of each class; one girl was

¹⁹ RGIA., f. 763, op. 3, d. 502, l. 4 ob. – 5.

²⁰ Ibid., d. 502, l. 6.

²¹ Ibid., l. 6 ob.

²² Ibid., d. 564, l. 4 ob. – 5.

²³ Ibid., l. 6.

²⁴ Ibid., d. 626, l. 6.

²⁵ Ibid., l. 5.

²⁶ Ibid., d. 695, l. 6.

²⁷ Ibid., d. 695, l. 3 ob. – 4.

²⁸ Ibid., d. 695, l. 6.

of noble birth, and one boy was of unknown origin. In terms of family status, most children had only a mother (18), two children had only a father, two children had both parents, and four were full orphans²⁹. The age ranged from one to 12 years³⁰. Apparently, older children were among those who left the orphanage.

In 1912, the number of children in the orphanage reached 44. After two children returned to their parents, one boy entered high school, and another was put into military service³¹, there were 40 children in the orphanage (4 boys and 36 girls)³². In terms of social origin, there were mostly peasant children (23). Seven were from the families of commoners, three were from the families of lower military ranks, two were from the families of officials, one girl was of noble origin, and for the first time, the report provides data on children born out of wedlock (4)³³. The age of the children ranged from 1 to 13 years³⁴. The number of the children having only a mother increased to 21 (including four born out of wedlock); eight children had only a father, and five had both parents. Six were full orphans³⁵. That year, two children were supported by private benefactors, while the remaining 38 were supported by the orphanage³⁶.

In 1913, in the orphanage there were 46 children (8 boys and 38 girls). The Board of Trustees report stated that 10 children had left the orphanage but provided data for only eight. Four children were returned to their parents, two were put into service, two died, and the whereabouts of two more are unknown. After that in the orphanage there were 36 children³⁷.

In terms of social composition, there were still mostly peasant children (18). Nine children were from the families of commoners, two from the families of officials, one girl was of noble origin, and five children were of unknown origin, probably they were foundlings. The number of the children having only a mother was the largest – 16; five had only a father, four had both parents, and 11 were full orphans³⁸. The age of the children, all supported by the orphanage, ranged from 1 to 14 years³⁹.

The number of children in the orphanage increased each year, therefore there was a need for more housing. In 1913, A.I. Gippius, the chairman of the Board of Trustees raised the issue of expanding the Skobelev orphanage and establishing an elementary school and a handicrafts class at the orphanage. This initiative was approved, which resulted in the construction of an extension to the main orphanage building (two children's bedrooms and two rooms for the future school).

A.I. Gippius petitioned Colonel I.A. Brzhezitsky, the head of the Andijan uezd to give a small plot of land to the orphanage, where they could set up retail shops for rent. Thanks to his assistance, the orphanage received a plot of land measuring 383 square sazhen, on which it was planned to build 25 shops for rent. The city of Andijan was a bustling trading center, and the Board of Trustees expected an annual capital of 6,000 to 8,000 rubles in rent⁴⁰.

²⁹ RGIA., f. 763, op. 3, d. 695, l. 5.

³⁰ Ibid., l. 5 ob.

³¹ Ibid., d. 759, l. 7.

³² Ibid., l. 4 ob. – 5.

³³ Ibid., l. 6.

³⁴ Ibid., l. 6 ob.

³⁵ Ibid., l. 6.

³⁶ Ibid., l. 7.

³⁷ Ibid., d. 821, l. 5.

³⁸ Ibid., l. 6.

³⁹ Ibid., l. 6 ob.

⁴⁰ Ibid., l. 1–1 ob.

In 1914 the number of children in the orphanage reached 46 (12 boys and 34 girls). Of these, nine left within a year: five were returned to their parents, one was put into service, one went to a gymnasium, and two died⁴¹. In early 1915, in the orphanage there were 37 children (9 boys and 28 girls).

The number of peasant children remained the largest (22). Eight children were from the families of lower military ranks, three were from the families of commoners, two were the children of officials, one girl was from an officer's family, apparently the aforementioned girl of noble origin, and additional one boy was found⁴². Most children (15) had only a mother, seven had only a father, three had both parents, and 12 were full orphans⁴³. All children were supported by the orphanage.

The last report from the Fergana orphanage Board of Trustees for 1915 was sent to the Chancellery of the Empress Maria's Department with a long delay – on November 9, 1916. It was due to the uprising of the native population of the Fergana region that occurred in the summer of 1916 and was an integral part of the major Central Asian uprising sparked by Nicholas II's decree of June 25, 1916, under which males aged 19 to 43 were to be drafted into the rear in frontline areas. This was explicitly stated in the report: "... due to the unrest among the native population that occurred in mid-summer of this year."⁴⁴

In 1915, in the orphanage there were 62 children (17 boys and 45 girls). However, since 24 children left, only 38 remained in the orphanage. 13 children were returned to their parents, three were put into service, and eight died⁴⁵. It was noted that 18 children had illnesses during the year; those who died were likely among them. All 62 children were supported by the orphanage⁴⁶.

Most children were peasants by origin (27); four were from the families of commoners, three were from the families of officials, one was from the family of an officer, and three were found alone. Of these, eight had only a father, 19 had only a mother, and the other 11 were full orphans⁴⁷. The age of the children in the orphanage ranged from 1 to 15 years⁴⁸.

Below are the tables that provide information on the increase in the number of children in the Skobelev orphanage, the change in the social composition of the children in the orphanage, and their family status.

Table 1

Change in the number of the children in the Skobelev orphanage

Year	Number of those admitted	Number of those who left	Number of those who remained
1907	25	6	19
1908	32	4	28
1909	31	8	23
1910	33	6	27
1911	37	10	27
1912	44	4	40
1913	46	10	36
1914	46	9	37
1915	62	24	38

Sources: Russian State Historical Archive, f. 763, op. 3, d. 385, l. 9; d. 502, l. 6; d. 564, l. 4 ob. – 5; d. 626, l. 6; d. 695, l. 6; d. 759, l. 4 ob. – 5; d. 821, l. 5; d. 880, l. 7; d. 905, l. 7.

⁴¹ RGIA., f. 763, op. 3, d. 880, l. 7.

⁴² *Ibid.*, l. 6.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, l. 6 ob.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, d. 905, l. 1.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, l. 7, 14.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, d. 905, l. 7.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, l. 13.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, l. 13 ob.

Table 2

Social origin of the children in the Skobelev orphanage

Year	Nobles	Peasants	Commoners	Officials	Lower military ranks	Unknown Origin
1907	–	11	5	4	1	4
1908	1	9	5	9	4	4
1909	3	5	6	10	3	4
1910	2	8	6	–	6	4
1911	1	16	3	3	3	1
1912	1	23	7	2	3	4
1913	1	18	9	2	–	5
1914	1	22	3	2	8	1
1915	1	27	4	3	–	3

Sources: Russian State Historical Archive, f. 763, op. 3, d. 385, l. 9; d. 502, l. 6; d. 564, l. 6; d. 626, l. 5; d. 695, l. 5; d. 759, l. 6 ob.; d. 821, l. 6; d. 880, l. 6; d. 905, l. 13.

Table 3

Family status of the children in the Skobelev orphanage

Year	Number of children having only a father	Number of children having only a mother	Number of children having both parents	Full orphans
1907	10	2	1	4
1908	14	6	3	5
1909	8	11	2	9
1910	7	8	1	10
1911	2	18	2	4
1912	8	21	5	6
1913	5	16	4	11
1914	7	15	3	12
1915	8	19	-	11

Sources: Russian State Historical Archive, f. 763, op. 3, d. 385, l. 9; d. 502, l. 6; d. 564, l. 6; d. 626, l. 5; d. 695, l. 5; d. 759, l. 6; d. 821, l. 6; d. 880, l. 6 ob.; d. 905, l. 13.

Table 3 shows that while there initially increased the number of the children having only a father, soon there steadily increased the number of mothers who gave their children to the orphanage, which may indicate that the women were forced to work to support their children.

The Board of Trustees reports indicate nothing about the sanitary and medical conditions in the orphanage. They only note that there were almost no deaths among the children, except for the last year, when eight children died. Pointing out illnesses that were cured testifies to adequate medical care.

Funding of the Skobelev orphanage

When the orphanage was opened, it had a capital of 34,533 rubles 11 kopecks, of which 4% was state rent of 33,606 rubles 25 kopecks and 926 rubles 83 kopecks in cash. In 1906, another 19,925 rubles 13 kopecks were received, and 25,169 rubles 44 kopecks were spent that same year, of which 12,500 rubles were spent on the purchase of the plot of land in the city of Skobelev “measuring 6,030 square sazhen with a house under an iron roof” for the orphanage⁴⁹. The remaining funds were spent on the maintenance and equipment of the orphanage, repairs, and construction. As of January 1, 1907, the orphanage had funds in

⁴⁹ RGIA., f. 763, op. 3, d. 444, l. 2 ob.

the amount of 28,709 rubles, of which 588 rubles 80 kopecks were in cash⁵⁰. All this was noted in the Board of Trustees report sent to the Chancellery for the Management of Orphanages of the Department of Empress Maria's Institutions on July 7, 1907.

The submitted statement of receipts and expenditure contains detailed information on the maintenance of servants – 546 rubles 34 kopecks, and the caretaker's remuneration – 538 rubles 36 kopecks. Of interest is the point “sending the children to the spa” – 100 rubles. There is also information on citizens' donations – 1,877 rubles 68 kopecks⁵¹. In 1910, the caretaker's salary was reduced to 500 rubles, the cook got 180 rubles, the nurse – 140 rubles, the janitor – 180 rubles, and the laundress – 180 rubles⁵².

The citizens of the city and region continued to provide financial and material assistance. Thus, the 1908 report of the Fergana orphanage Board of Trustees contains information on donations from trustee M.P. Slyunina, honorary member of the Board of Trustees Evtikhidi, teacher Sokolov, as well as money bequeathed to the orphanage by Sadovskaya, the recently deceased wife of the doctor – a total of 417 rubles 84 kopecks. In addition, 139 rubles 57 kopecks were received from performances staged by theater enthusiasts⁵³.

The citizens who regularly donated money to the orphanage became honorary members of the Board of Trustees. For example, in 1909, merchant Rakhmin Davydovich Davydbaev became such a member⁵⁴. Lipinsky, the managing director of the Fergana Electric Society, also became an honorary trustee in 1913, since, as stated in the report of the Fergana orphanage Board of Trustees, “thanks to him, the orphanage was provided with electricity free of charge.”⁵⁵

From 1909, in accordance with the permission of the Empress Maria's department of September 25, 1909, lotteries were held to benefit the orphanage in the city of Skobelev of the Fergana region. This led to an improvement in the financial situation of the orphanage. Thus, within a year, 3,000 tickets were made and sold for 50 kopecks, totaling 1,499 rubles 74 kopecks. 315 rubles 17 kopecks of them were spent on various items for the lottery. Thus, the net profit was 1,184 rubles 57 kopecks⁵⁶.

According to the report on public festivities in 1910, the profit amounted to 2,688 rubles. The expenses for the kiosks, buffets, lottery, etc., amounted to 761 rubles 54 kopecks. The net profit was 1,926 rubles 46 kopecks⁵⁷.

On May 29, 1911, public festivities were held for the benefit of the orphanage, resulting in the profit of 3,352 rubles 66 kopecks. With an expenditure of 864 rubles 07 kopecks, the net profit was 2,488 rubles 59 kopecks⁵⁸.

In 1912, in addition to the funds from public festivities, the orphanage received significant monetary contributions from ordinary citizens. The citizens of the region contributed 259 rubles⁵⁹. In 1913, the citizens donated 165 rubles 75 kopecks⁶⁰. The profit from the public festivities on May 23, 1913, amounted to 3,157 rubles 30 kopecks. After spending 841 rubles 30 kopecks, the net profit from the festivities amounted to 2,316 rubles⁶¹.

⁵⁰ RGIA., f. 763, op. 3, d. 385, l. 1 ob.

⁵¹ Ibid., d. 444, l. 7–8.

⁵² Ibid., d. 626, l. 13.

⁵³ Ibid., l. 11.

⁵⁴ Ibid., d. 564, l. 1.

⁵⁵ Ibid., d. 821, l. 1 ob.

⁵⁶ Ibid., d. 564, l. 15.

⁵⁷ Ibid., d. 626, l. 14.

⁵⁸ Ibid., d. 695, l. 14.

⁵⁹ Ibid., d. 759, l. 11.

⁶⁰ Ibid., d. 821, l. 11.

⁶¹ Ibid., d. 821, l. 16.

At the beginning of World War I, the citizens began to donate less, and in 1914 the donations only amounted to 66 rubles. In 1915, private donations totaled 1,305 rubles⁶². During the wartime, the Board of Trustees increased the nurses' salaries, which in 1914 amounted to 200 rubles, and in 1915 – 280 rubles⁶³.

All receipts and expenditures on the orphanage were carefully recorded in the reports of the Board of Trustees, and funds were set aside for unforeseen expenses. There were mentioned Christmas celebrations, visits to the cinema, and amateur theater performances.

Subsequently, the events of 1916 in the Fergana region, which were part of the major Central Asian uprising, and the Russian Revolution that began soon after, put an end to the existence of institutions like the Skobelev orphanage and after 1917 the activities of the orphanage and the Fergana Board of Trustees ceased.

Conclusion

The Russian authorities in Turkestan kept a strong focus on the children of Russian migrants who had been partially deprived of parental support or who were completely destitute. The orphanages in the Turkestan Governorate General operated in full compliance with Russian law and were an integral part of the Empress Maria's department, which oversaw the care for children. This reflects the Russian authorities' desire to raise the empire's national outskirts to its level.

All problems of the Skobelev orphanage established in 1906 were discussed at the meetings of the Fergana orphanage Board of Trustees and were resolved in accordance with the established procedures. The Board of Trustees reported on all matters discussed and decisions to Empress Maria's department and received its assistance and instructions. The Fergana orphanage Board of Trustees was the last to be established in Turkestan, but its members actively participated in the affairs of the orphanage. Thanks to their compassion and hard work, they resolved issues related to the construction of buildings, renovation of premises, and improvement of the children's lives in the Skobelev orphanage. Its internal regulations were the same as those of all other Russian orphanages.

The orphanage was supported by the funds of the Fergana orphanage Board of Trustees and donations from the citizens, who became honorary members of the Board of Trustees. From 1909, with the permission of Empress Maria's department, lotteries and public festivities were held to benefit the children of the Skobelev orphanage, which led to an improvement in their financial situation.

The orphanage admitted children of Russian immigrants, typically from single-parent families and orphans. The orphanage was also open to children from two parent families who had financial difficulties. Based on the results of the study, one can conclude that while previously most children had only a father, over time there increased the number of single mothers who had lost their breadwinner or single mothers whose children were born out of wedlock and who had given their children to the orphanage. This can be explained by the fact that women were forced to work to secure the future of their children. It was common to return children from the orphanage to parents who had improved their financial situation.

The social composition of the children in orphanages varied. The children were mostly from peasant families; there were also children of other underprivileged classes. There were even a few children from the nobility, although their number was small. There were also full orphans, often of unknown origin. It can be assumed that there were also

⁶² RGIA., f. 763, op. 3, d. 905, l. 6.

⁶³ Ibid., d. 880, l. 16.

those found alone, as can be inferred from the reports of the Board of Trustees regarding the admission of young children under one year old. The girls outnumbered the boys in the orphanage, perhaps due to the fact that boys could provide greater physical assistance while in the family. The number of children increased, in ten years it more than doubled (from 25 to 62). All the children were Orthodox.

Thus, the life of the Skobelev orphanage during its ten years of existence followed a pattern typical of similar institutions in the Turkestan Governorate General and throughout the Russian Empire. The all-Russian standards observed in the orphanage are evidence of the authorities' care for the children who were Russian citizens, which was a top priority for the empire.

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