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Central Asian Conference (1926-1929)

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Valeriy N. Nazimko, B.A. in theology (Zaoksky Theological Seminary, Zaoksky, Tula Region, Russia), served as executive secretary of the Southern Union Mission, and then president and executive secretary of the Kyrgyz Mission. At present, he is a retiree.

Dmitry O. Yunak graduated in Finance and Economics from a Soviet secular educational institution and completed a six-year course of Theology at an underground SDA Theological Institute (Moldova, USSR). In the Soviet times, he served as a pastor, administrator, and bible/history professor in the underground Theological Institute. In

1990, he was appointed as Treasurer and Publishing Ministries Director for the USSR Division. After the Euro-Asia Division was organized in 1991, Dmitry O. Yunak served as ESD auditor and under treasurer. He was the author of a dozen of SDA history books and scores of other publications. He owns a major SDA history archive.

The Central Asian Conference was a church unit that operated in the Central Asian Soviet Socialist Republics from 1926 to 1929, when it became the Central Asian Mission. It is unknown when or whether the mission was dissolved.

Territory and Statistics (1930)

Territory: The Kazakh, Kirghiz, Tajik, Turkmen, and Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republics, and the Karakalpak Autonomous Oblast

Membership: 439

Churches: 19

Origin of Seventh-day Adventist Work in the Territory

Adventists arrived in Central Asia in the 1890s. The territory became part of the East Russian Mission ca. 1907, and its own Central Asian Mission in 1909. It was renamed the Turkestan Mission by 1911. For the origin of Adventist work in the territory, see the article on the Turkestan Mission.

Organizational History

In 1923, the All-Union Council of Seventh-day Adventists voted to send Pastor I. T. Klimenko to Ashgabat.² In the mid-1920s, Pastor F. M. Ostapenko organized a church in Alma-Ata (Vernii).³

In 1926, the Turkestan Mission was dissolved and the Central Asian Conference was organized.⁴ It comprised Central Asia, later described as the Kazakh, Kirghiz, Tajik, Turkmen, and Uzbek SSRs, and the Karakalpak Autonomous Oblast.⁵ The address remained a post box in Samara. By 1927, membership was 271. The initial officers were President K. F. Rempfert, Secretary-Treasurer R. K. Weibert, and executive committee members G. Ott, P. G. Bondarenko, and G. Trippel. The conference remained in the East Russian Union.⁶

In 1929, the conference became the Central Asia Mission and was assigned to the Southeastern Union. Its address was Pishpek Street 19, Tashkent.⁷

In 1930 it was listed as the Middle Asiatic Mission Field.⁸ After that year, Central Asia did not appear in the *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* until 1982. It is unknown when or whether the church unit was dissolved.

During the years of repression, in the 1930s, the organizational structure of the church in the region was virtually destroyed. It was only in the 1950s that the situation improved to some extent.

In 1953, Pastor Kazimir A. Korolenko was sent to serve in Central Asia. In 1956, the first Adventists appeared in Frunze (Bishkek), capital of the Kirghiz SSR. By 1957 there were 16 church members there. In 1958, Korolenko was arrested and sentenced to eight years of imprisonment. Mikhail Petrovich Kulakov, after serving his sentence in Kazakhstan (1948–53), superseded Korolenko and superintended the work in Central Asia from 1959 to 1979. Later David Petrovich Kulakov held this position for two years.⁹

In the early 1950s, the Adventist message reached Tokmak. Putyatin and Klassen were the first church members there. The church was officially registered in 1976.

In 1958, an Adventist congregation emerged in Osh. During the 1960s, worship services were conducted at the house of R. F. Faber.¹⁰

Pastor Vladimir Vysotskiy served the church of Ashgabad in the mid-1970s, and Pastor Alexander Kondratov until 1980.¹¹

The successor church units of the Central Asia Mission were the Kirghizian District (1978), the Kazakhstan District (1979), the Uzbek-Tajik District (1979), and the Asian-Caucasian Conference (1989), the last one including Turkmenia in its territory.¹²

List of Presidents

Central Asian Conference President: K. F. Rempfert, 1926–28.

Central Asian Mission President: K. F. Rempfert, 1929–1930.

SOURCES

Nazimko, Valeriy N. "Kyrgyz Mission." Manuscript, June 2019.

Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook. Various years. <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/>.

Yunak, Dmitry. "Southern Kazakhstan Mission." Manuscript, May 2017.

Yunak, Dmitry. "Turkmenistan Missionary Field." Manuscript, June 2017.

NOTES

1. For territory and statistics, see "Middle-Asiatic Mission Field," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1930), 270.?
2. Dmitry Yunak, "Turkmenistan Missionary Field," manuscript, June 2017.?
3. Dmitry Yunak, "Southern Kazakhstan Mission," manuscript, May 2017.?
4. According to Yunak's article "Turkmenistan Missionary Field," the Turkestan Field was renamed Central Asia Field in 1921, and then reorganized as the Central Asian Conference in 1926. This is not footnoted in his article and not reported like this in the *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*.?
5. "Central Asia Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1929), 165.?
6. For statistics and information, besides territory, at the organization of the Conference, see "Central Asian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1927), 144.?
7. "Central Asia Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1929), 165.?
8. "Middle-Asiatic Mission Field," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1930), 270.?
9. Yunak, "Southern Kazakhstan Mission," manuscript, May 2017.?
10. These paragraphs are reworded material from Nazimko's article, "Kyrgyz Mission," manuscript, June 2019.?
11. Yunak, "Turkmenistan Missionary Field," manuscript June 2017. It is unclear whether the two pastors served one after another or overlapped.?
12. "Kazakhstan District," "Kirgizian District," and "Ubek-Tadzhik District," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Archives and Statistics, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1982), 337; "Asian-Caucasian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Silver Spring, MD: Office of Archives and Statistics, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1991), 342.?

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