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**INTRODUCTION OF PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM
IN KALMYK STEPPE (END OF 18TH CENTURY)**

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Abstract

Traditionally, the policy of the Russian Empire towards non-Russian peoples was presented by unwillingness to their ethnic assimilation. In this regard, the predominant character of political reasons over economic during the expansion of the empire was partially affected. It is of historical, legal, and practical interest to comprehend on what state and legal grounds the Russian system of state administration was introduced in the region inhabited by Kalmyks. The last quarter of the 18th century in the development of Russia and its political and legal phenomena has experience of the formation of modern Russia and require further study. The process of the formation of Kalmyk public administration system was in the context of the application of common imperial principles based on the flexible use national approaches and political and legal institutions which had proven their feasibility in other regions of the Russian federation. At the same time, the national characteristics of the Kalmyks and the systems of traditional administration and customary law of the Kalmyk people were taken into account.

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1. Introduction

In the last quarter of the 18th century, the life of the government was not limited to the highest powers. New tendencies not only penetrated into Russia from Europe

But the study of the order of administration of the Russian Empire also can not be limited to an analysis of the organization of state institutions. It is equally important, along with consideration of the management features of individual regions of the multinational Russian state, to explore the specifics of public self-government at the lowest level (Ochir-Garyaeva, 2012, p. 25).

This will make it possible to try to identify a common feature inherent in Russia's peoples in organizing their daily lives and solving cultural and economic issues.

Traditionally, the policy of the Russian Empire towards non-Russian peoples was presented by unwillingness to their ethnic assimilation. The predominant character of political reasons over economic during the expansion of the empire was partially affected.

On January 5, 1771, the migration of most of the Kalmyk people outside the empire began. After that, all the Derbet owners who roamed on the Volga right bank stayed in Russia. The main reason why they did not follow the Ubashi Khan was the weather: "That year the ice went along the Volga for three months and it was constantly raining and windy". Neither did some Torgout and Khosheut owners follow the Khan. The Kalmyks who participated in the Russian-Turkish war had no opportunity to join the outgoing Kalmyks. Their 20,000-strong army fought in the Crimea and the North Caucasus. There were small groups of subordinate people of the Khan, who wandered because of poverty in Mochagi. A part of the Kalmyks who roamed on the left bank deliberately hid from the Khan. Among them were the subjects of prince Dondukov. Soon, the Russian authorities managed to return Kalmyks from Yaik. Some of them were returned voluntarily, while others were forced (NARK, 1998).

Novoletov (1883), based on archival documents of this department, recreated the following picture of the steppe left after the departure of the governor:

The authorities did not know what to do. Communication routes were cut off, and work on gangs and crafts was suspended. The steppe presented a devastating picture, with heaps of rubbish scattered in a hurry, with empty wagons standing separately, with children and the sick, left in the winter to their fate, with wandering cattle. (p. 39)

The news of the beginning of the departure of the majority of the Kalmyk uluses (30,285 wagons left, 73 %) took by surprise not only the central administration agencies of Russia but even the local authorities.

The new system of local administration was fixed in 1728. According to this system the competence of authorities was limited to specific and daily tasks. The authorities were forced to comply with the laws issued by the highest authority, to protect peace and tranquility in the entrusted territory. Some military functions were also retained by the governors, i.e., manning the army, quartering troops, etc. They were

entrusted with the collection of the poll tax, other direct and indirect taxes, the collection of tax arrears, and orders for various natural duties. With the liquidation of the courts' council, the governors received extensive judicial functions.

On January 26, 1771, an urgent order followed the Astrakhan governor. "Kalmyk cases" needed to be transferred from the Yenotayevskaya fortress to the city of Astrakhan, where, under the office of Governor Beketov, it was necessary to open the Expedition of Kalmyk Affairs. Such a facilitation of the administration system resulted in the elimination of the so-called courtier under the khans and governors of the khanate (AFPRES, 1999).

Governor Beketov set about restoring order in the Kalmyk nomad camps. The local administration collected information about the Kalmyks who remained in the province, they turned out to be 11,258 wagons (27 %) (AFPRES, 1999).

The governor specified the rough number of Kalmyks left without the owners of ulus and began to put into practice the temporary rule, even began to issue special state orders. He gave the Kalmyks under the control of other owners, who were trusted by the provincial administration.

The last quarter of the 18th century in the development of Russia and the accompanying political and legal phenomena have experience in the state formation of modern Russia and require special study.

The system of state administration in the Kalmyk nomads was based on the experience of similar institutions, which have confirmed their viability in other parts of the country. Nevertheless, the specifics of this national hinterland were also taken into account. In our study, we are trying to summarize the currently available theoretical information, assess the advantages and disadvantages of the regional policy of the tsarist administration, and indicate the significance of domestic experience in management, including negative aspects. We studied all Russian administrative institutions, paying special attention to the specifics of the management of national regions and the traditional forms of self-government of foreigners.

2. Problem Statement

The news of the beginning of the departure of the majority of the Kalmyk uluses (30, 285 wagons left, 73 %) took by surprise not only the central administrative agencies of Russia but even the local authorities. In the reports by Beketov, the Astrakhan governor to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs on the possible migration of the Kalmyks (for example, on April 15, 1770, Beketov sent a letter where he wrote about the possible departure of the Kalmyks) were taken into consideration (Novoletov, 1883). Nevertheless, the departure of most of the Kalmyks seriously alarmed the government. This was the subject of a special consideration at the Council of the Imperial Court. The Empress Catherine II participated in this discussion. Measures to return the Kalmyks to the Volga were taken precisely by the decision of the Council.

The governor of Astrakhan, who controlled the Kalmyks, reported to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs, which remained the central governing agency of these peoples.

The Russian authorities in St. Petersburg had the task to master the difficult situation in the remaining nomad camps, so they took immediate action in the hope of stopping Ubashi's migration, fearing the departure of the remaining subject people of the Khan.

3. Research Questions

- i. The research subject is the historical and legal aspects of the introduction of the system of the provincial administration in the Kalmyk Steppe in the last quarter of the 18th century, the relationship between central and local state agencies, the activities and competence of national systems.
- ii. On the 17th of February in 1771 Beketov made a report addressed to Catherine II. In this report he proposed the measures that according to him contributed to the order establishment in the Kalmyk uluses. The governor thought that it was necessary to create an executive and administrative organization, the composition and powers of which should be determined by the congress of Kalmyk landowners from Russia. Also, in Beketov's report were proposals for the division of land and livestock between them.
- iii. Without waiting for government orders, Beketov independently tried to restore order in the province. In March 1771, he dismissed the Khan's court and sent Colonel Kishinsky to the Collegium of Foreign Affairs. The “Kalmyk affairs” under the Colonel's jurisdiction were liquidated. Its work was transferred to the Kalmyk Expedition established under the provincial agency.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the paper is to analyse the political and legal processes in Kalmykia in the last quarter of the 18th century and the accompanying political direction of the Russian Empire.

This paper attempts to generalize the existing theoretical data accumulated, assess the advantages and disadvantages of the regional policy of the tsarist administration, and assess the significance of domestic administration experience, including the negative one. All Russian institutions of governance are considered, attention is paid to the specifics of the administration of national regions, and traditional forms of self-government of foreigners.

5. Research Methods

In the process of research, the authors were guided by the dialectical method of scientific knowledge, which implies the analysis of all processes and phenomena. Systematic, comparative and legal, historical, structural and functional, and other methods of cognition, principles of unity of historical and logical, abstract and concrete were used. These methods made it possible to consider the problem of introducing nomad camps into the system of state administration, taking into account the peculiarities of the social organization of the Kalmyks, as well as the development of Russian statehood and law.

6. Findings

The Russian authorities did not immediately drop the idea of the fate of the national administration in the management of the Kalmyk nomad camps given the difficult situation. It hoped to return at least some of the departed nomads. The governor Beketov proposed to appoint Prince Dondukov as “chief over

the Kalmyk people”, with the condition that the Derbet uluses were taken out of his control and began to report directly to the governor (NARK, 1998). The majority of the Kalmyk nobility were dissatisfied, because they considered themselves more worthy contenders for such a high position.

Meanwhile, the governor of Astrakhan waiting for special government orders began to receive more and more alarming reports about the impending escape of the remaining Kalmyks. Based on this, Beketov urgently sent the most wayward Kalmyk landlords to the detachment of Colonel Dondukov for joint operations with the Russian troops in the ongoing war with Turkey against the Kuban Tatars.

The fears and concerns of the Kalmyk nobility about the appointment of Dondukov as “chief over the Kalmyk landlords” were soon confirmed. The Russian protegee began to demand from the steppe feudal lords the recognition of his power and complete submission. He took measures to establish order in the uluses, in particular, to combat the growing number of thefts and aiding thieves. However, the general also took up the redistribution of the winter and summer nomad camps of the Kalmyks, regardless of the interests of the noyad. With such activity, Dondukov increasingly turned the Kalmyk nobility against him. The authorities in St. Petersburg could not fail to notice this confrontation, since already in the middle of 1771 they realized the impossibility of returning the Ubashi Khan to the Volga nomad camps. The government itself took care of their organization and management.

The Russian, as well as the provincial authorities, were not ready for the departure of the Ubashi with part of the people subject to him and the migration of the Kalmyks. Understanding the need for decisive action, the government introduced direct provincial rule in the territories where nomads lived. This can be considered a historical and legal prototype of the established institution of direct presidency in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. Governor Beketov became not only an intermediary in relations between the Russian authorities and the Kalmyks, but also a person in charge of controlling them. The appointment of Dondukov, a man who did not enjoy the recognition of the Kalmyks, as “chief over the Kalmyk landlords” was erroneous on the part of the authorities. It did not contribute to the establishment of satisfactory relations between the provincial administration and the Kalmyk people and caused a wave of indignation among the noble noyad.

The delay of the tsarist government in determining the status of the remaining Kalmyks in Russia is explained by its hope for the return of the Khan with the people subject to him. Therefore, the borders of the state for a long time, until October 1771, remained open for the returning Kalmyks.

Later it was obvious that it was impossible to return the Kalmyks who left with the khan, because Catherine II sent a rescript to the Astrakhan governor on October 19, 1771. At the same time, she did not issue a special law on the liquidation of the Kalmyk Khanate. The dispatch was delivered on November 12, and on December 6 the Kalmyk noyad were invited to the provincial center to announce it.

The document testified that the Russian empress considered the migration of the Kalmyks as treason. Meanwhile, the departure of the nomads was considered as an opportunity for a more systematic colonization of the region. Catherine II did not see the possibility of maintaining the former order of governing the Kalmyks, that is to say, there could be no talk of any own statehood for the nomads.

Ubashi's departure gave the Russian authorities the opportunity to form a direct mechanism to control those who remained subject to him. In this regard, special attention was paid to the Astrakhan province. At that time, it was a large administrative and territorial entity with a strong bureaucracy. The

governor occupied a predominant role. The actions and behavior of N. A. Beketov during the Kalmyk migration and his reports about the plans of Khan Ubashi convinced the empress that he was versed in Kalmyk affairs and understood the intentions of the imperial authorities to the foreigners of the entrusted to him province.

Catherine II in her rescript gave the governor more powers: ...so that, at the same time, all landowners are under your control and provide you for considering what they disagree with each other.

As a special form of legal act, the rescript charged the Astrakhan governor with temporary functions determined by the empress. The status of the Astrakhan governor was transformed. He became a confidant of the imperial power and a faithful defender of state interests on the territory of the Kalmyk steppe. This is how the principle of sole control over individual branches of activities of the Russian state appears (Ochir-Garyeva & Komandzhaev, 2017).

According to Catherine II, the Expedition of Kalmyk Affairs, established under the office of the governor, eliminate the issue of creating an administrative and executive organ to control the Kalmyks. In the opinion of the Empress, it was more expedient to have three zaisangs with him, that is, the Zargo court: ... one from all the Torgout owners: Prince Dondukov, Yandyk, and others; another from the Derbet owner, the main one and others. Therefore, not according to the number of changing landowners, but according to how many landowning clans there are. For their service, zaisangs were given a salary of one hundred rubles, the amount of which was established for members of the former Zargo court. The service of the zaisangs was to participate in resolving disputes between landowners.

Beketov, after he received the dispatch, eliminated the introduced post of the governor assistant, which was held by Dondukov. In his "Determination ... about the Kalmyks" dated December 12, 1771, Beketov named his three new assistants "all the zaisangs appointed as judges", as recommended by Catherine II, and as judges, he described them as "the general people's Kalmyk government" (AVPRI. F 119. op. 2. D. 37. pp. 45-46). Thus, he tried to hide the actual elimination of the national legal office that existing in the khan period and under the steward. The governor fulfilled the order of the empress and weaken the attention of the Kalmyk nobility, who were counting on strengthening their positions.

The only function of the zaisangs was described in detail in the rescript: to express an opinion on certain judicial issues that arise exclusively between Kalmyks. According to the empress, the governor was quite satisfied with the consultations of the zaisangs: "It will be enough for you to get help from the zaisangs who are with you, whose advice you will use if they are truly fair" (AVPRI. F 119. op. 2. D 34).

Such close attention of Catherine II to the judicial duties of the governor and zaisangs was explained by the fact that the rescript was intended to lay the foundations for the upcoming state reforms in the Kalmyk nomad camps, in particular in the field of legal proceedings.

In response to the proposal of Beketov to improve the "Kalmyk Ulozheniye" of 1640 for its further use, the empress drew the attention of the governor to the fact that changing this old collection of Kalmyk laws is inconvenient in connection with the current mood in the region. In support of this characterization of the Kalmyk legislation, examples were cited from contemporary judicial practice at that time: for committing a crime, you can pay off at a price.

Consequently, the use of the former Kalmyk code could not contribute to the successful eradication of illegal acts among the Kalmyks as subjects of the Russian state. The rescript of the empress also included

a warning to the governor Beketov that the preservation of the 1640 Code and the legal proceedings conduct on its basis did not allow the administration to perform their main functions on the protection of the legal rights of other entities, in particular, the residents of the province under his control.

Taking into account the concern of the governor about possible unrest of the Kalmyk nobility, Catherine II supported his proposal to secure the provincial power in the nomad camps through the compensation of the losses of the remaining ulus owners. She allowed the Kalmyks left without owners to be divided among a few nobilities in a reward form for loyalty to the Russian government. Also, the rescript explained in detail the principle that should have guided the implementation of compensatory measures. Initially, it was planned to satisfy those who had proven themselves to the government as the most trustworthy, and only then other owners according to their nobility and influence.

The empress paid special attention to the issue of nomadism of the remaining Kalmyks. Having received a message from the Astrakhan governor about the possibility of escaping the Derbetovsky and Erketenevsky uluses after the “traitors”, Catherine was inclined to believe that everyone should roam on the upland side of the Volga. This had to be done despite the need to maintain the Derbetovsky ulus on the meadow side of the river as a defense against the Kazakhs. The final decision remained with Beketov. This testified to the increased confidence in the governor on the part of the imperial government. The rescript read: To order them to be located where the Tatar hordes, who are not subjects of the Ottoman Porte, could not force them to leave. However, the Kalmyks should be at some distance from them and not be able to escape abroad across the Yaik River.

7. Conclusion

The results show that the rescript of Catherine II of October 19, 1771, justified the change in the legal policy of the Russian government toward the Kalmyks. The purpose of this policy was to bring the nomads into a useful state for Russia. The legal status of the Astrakhan governor was transformed. He was a confidant of the empress and a reliable defender of state interests in the steppes of the Lower Volga region. Catherine II addressed Beketov with her rescripts, beyond many central government bodies. Under the circumstances revealed as a result of the migration of the Kalmyk Khan, the empress recommended that Beketov, both directly and veiled, take all measures to destroy even the idea of the Kalmyks to restore the former statehood.

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