

ISCKMC 2022**International Scientific Congress «KNOWLEDGE, MAN AND CIVILIZATION»****DON KALMYK-COSSACKS DURING THE DEPORTATION
YEARS (1943–1957)**

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Abstract

Natives of steppe nomads, Kalmyk-Cossacks have always been an integral part of the Kalmyk people. The Kalmyks first appeared in 1648 on the Don, and in 1694 the Don army officially announced that the Kalmyks were granted the status of Cossacks with involvement in compulsory military service. In 1723, Peter I ordered all Kalmyks, roaming the Don, to be left in the Cossack class. The Kalmyk district was created in the Don Cossack Host. Born Kalmyk warriors reliably guarded the southern borders of Russia. The Kalmyks' ruler of that time, Taisha Daichin, said that he was always "ready to beat the sovereign's disobedient." In the centuries-old difficult history of the Kalmyk people, the 20th century has become one of the hardest, controversial, and tragic periods. One of the dramatic events in the Soviet period was the total deportation of the Kalmyk people due to ethnic lines to the eastern regions of the USSR (1943–1957). Don Kalmyk Cossacks, who mostly lived compactly in the Rostov region, also did not escape this bitter fate. The relevance of the topic under consideration is due both to the current situation of the Cossacks in our country, the revival of which was largely intensified in the late 20th – early 21st centuries, and the growing interest of scientists and the public in the most problematic aspects of the Cossacks' history including the Kalmyks-Cossacks deportation.

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1. Introduction

The issue of the Kalmyk and other peoples' deportation repressed during the Great Patriotic War, persecution against the Cossacks is one of the most acute and until recently "closed" topics, which continues to be relevant and argumentative in Russian historical science. The theme under consideration has gone through a complicated path of evolution, being exposed for a number of years to the influence of political conjuncture, restrictions on research and the use of sources. Many developments carried out in previous years on the basis of newly discovered archival documents, and evidence of participants in the events, require serious rethinking. In current conditions, the need has increased for objective research, for a critical understanding of deportation in relation to repressed peoples, including the Kalmyk Cossacks. Despite the adoption of the Law of the RSFSR "On the Rehabilitation of Repressed Peoples", measures related to the legal rehabilitation of the Cossacks, the Kalmyk people, the solution of territorial problems, the loss of cultural and religious values, have not been fully implemented. This actualizes the issue of deportation and rehabilitation of repressed peoples, involving the Kalmyks – Cossacks. The given research is of great practical significance, and is still relevant in the political aspect. The deportation of the Kalmyk-Cossacks, as part of the Kalmyk people and the Don Cossacks, caused them enormous moral and material damage, negatively affected demographic processes, the development of culture, and induced profound deformations in interethnic relations in Soviet society. The history study of ethnic and social groups of the South of Russia population, to which the Kalmyk ethnic group belongs, especially actualizes the problem with the development complexity of social processes and the Cossacks involvement in the politicization of interethnic relations.

2. Problem Statement

Various aspects of the peoples deportation in the USSR in the 30-50s of the 20th century, including the Kalmyk-Cossacks, despite the decades since these tragic events, are becoming increasingly relevant. The elaboration of new approaches to the development and implementation of national policy, federal relations in the Russian Federation is impossible without a deep, balanced and comprehensive analysis and consideration, critical understanding of historical processes of that period. In the USSR, the issues of peoples' deportation, repressive policies against the Cossacks were banned until the end of the 1980s. Only representatives of law enforcement agencies were allowed to access documents in the archives. Political changes of the late 1980s, characterized by democratization and publicity, gave researchers access to previously classified materials and the opportunity to study that tragic period in the Soviet state history. The works of domestic scientists Bugaj (2000), Matishov (2013), Matishov and Tyumencev (2014), Macievskij (2012), Polyan (2001) are devoted to the issues of peoples' deportation and Cossacks repression. Collective monograph "Essays on the history and culture of the Cossacks of the South of Russia", edited by Matishov and Tyumencev, significantly enriched the Cossacks historiography. Works of scientists from the regions Ubushaev and Ubushaev (2007), Maksimov (2016), Dzhalaeva (2008), Ochirova (2019), Dyakieva et al. (2020) are of great significance. The issues of deportation are reviewed ed in a number of works by foreign researchers and emigrant historiography, and besides the considered topic began to be studied earlier than in Russia by historians of western countries. The investigated problems are reflected in

the papers of Conquest (1960), McNeal (1987), Hoffman (2006), Shane O'Rourke (2007), Bormanzhinov (1991).

3. Research Questions

The research question is the Kalmyk peoples' deportation and, as an integral part of it, the Kalmyk-Cossacks during the years of forced exile to the eastern regions of the USSR (1943–1956). The discussed topic did not appear in the scientific research of Soviet scientists until the end of the 1980s of the last century. The historiography of the peoples subjected to deportation began to take shape only in the early 1990s under the conditions of the proclamation of democratization and publicity. Previously, the given topic was taboo in domestic historical science and was practically not covered, since access to archival materials for scientists was closed. Many problems of deportation, despite the existing fairly solid works and many documents of the tragic period in the country and its small peoples, still remain relevant both in the political aspect and in legal terms. Many aspects of the deportation processes are poorly studied: the placement geography, the daily life of special settlers, labor contribution to the development of regions, living conditions, human losses, especially in the first years of being in illegal exile, when the Kalmyks were dying out with their entire families. All questions undoubtedly refer to the Kalmyk-Cossacks, who survived the double repression – for belonging to the Cossack estate and for nationality, like the Kalmyks. The current research is intended to some extent to fill in the existing gaps in the study of the repressive policies history against the North Caucasus peoples and the Lower Volga region in the Soviet period, and, above all, the Kalmyk people.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the paper is to objectively study the issues of the Kalmyk-Cossacks' deportation, as part of the Kalmyk people, who have own specifics and characteristics (1943–1957).

5. Research Methods

From a methodological point of view, the research is an experience of building a comprehensive vision of the problem. An interdisciplinary, integrated approach to solving current research issues makes it possible to synthesize all relevant aspects of studying the deportation history of the Kalmyk-Cossacks, and to carry out a holistic research.

6. Findings

The history analysis of the forced resettlement of the Kalmyk-Cossacks, as an integral part of the Kalmyk people, was carried out as a research outcome. The Kalmyk population was deported to eastern regions of the country by the Presidium Decree of the USSR Supreme Soviet of December 27, 1943, Kalmyk ASSR. The fate of the Don Kalmyk Cossacks, who mostly lived compactly in the Kalmyk national region of the Rostov region, was created in 1929 by the decision of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the USSR. In 1932, the inhabitants of the Kalmyk nationality were more than 5 thousand

people. In 1940, there were 11 village councils, 36 settlements, 28 collective farms, 3 state farms, and 3 industrial enterprises in the Kalmyk region. On the fronts of the Great Patriotic War at the time of the Cossacks – Kalmyks' eviction, there were 371 people. Most of them died in the battles for the Motherland, in some families there were 2-3 front-line soldiers. In December 1943, the eviction of 812 families or 3185 people from 11 settlements of the Kalmyk region took place. Later, in March 1944, the Kalmyk national region was disbanded, and its territory was divided and transferred to the jurisdiction of the Zimovnikovskiy and Martynovskiy regions. The deportation of the Cossacks-Kalmyks from other regions of the Rostov region took place from March 1944 to August 1945. Families were evicted from Grabbevsckaya, Ilovaiskaya, Kuteynikovskaya, Kovalevskaya, and Novo-Nikolaevskaya villages, Stoyanovskiy farm, and etc. Thus, 753 families (3383 people), who were transferred to the Novosibirsk and Tomsk regions, were evicted from 22 districts. Residents forcibly deported from the Zavetinsk district ended up in the Tyumen region, from other districts of the Rostov region – in the Tomsk, Omsk regions, and also in Khakassia. A small part of the Kalmyk Cossacks was in a particular settlement in the republics of Central Asia during the period of exile (Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan). Residents of the Kalmyk region and other representatives of the Kalmyk Cossacks were divided, since they were settled in many areas of Siberian regions – Bogotol, Tyukhtekht and Uzhur regions of the Krasnoyarsk Territory, Ubinsky district – Novosibirsk region, and etc. Many families did not have the opportunity to communicate, they were separated for 13 years, being under the strict control of the special commandant's office of NKVD without the right to move from the places of deportation. During the Soviet period, the Kalmyk Cossacks retained their identity with the Don Cossacks, despite the persecution, and tried to observe the customs and traditions of the Cossacks along with the Kalmyk ones, preserved the spiritual values of their ancestors in places of special settlement, despite the difficulties and hardships, as well as prohibitions from Soviet supervisory authorities. It should be noted that it was somewhat easier for the Kalmyk Cossacks to survive, communicate, and contact with the local Siberian population in places of deprivation, owing to the knowledge of the Russian language, since the vast majority of them spoke Russian, unlike the Kalmyks evicted from Kalmykia. Nevertheless, they were influenced by Siberia peoples' culture, and became acquainted with their traditional values, which were actively ideologized and integrated into the new system of Soviet culture, requiring unification during the socialist construction period.

It has been established that the Soviet state made certain attempts to socialize special settlers in their places of exile, the purpose of which was to prevent their physical extinction, mainly from hunger, disease, and disorder. Moreover, the state pursued a targeted policy of destroying the ethno-cultural foundations of the deported peoples, including the Cossacks-Kalmyks, which, along with the destruction of tribal ties, dispersed settlement over a vast territory and ties, hindered by the ban, should have sooner or later put them before the fact of separation and subsequent disappearance. The repressive measures of the Soviet leadership did not justify themselves in achieving the goals that were set during the peoples' deportation and were replaced by ideological ones. First real steps towards the rehabilitation of peoples and social groups were made in the early 1950s with the adoption of the Government Decree “On the removal of particular restrictions on the legal status of special settlers” (July 5, 1954): the obligation to appear at the commandant's office every three days for registration was replaced by once a year. Children of special settlers who did not reached the age of 16, as well as those who reached, but being accepted or sent to study,

were exempted from the special settlement. The movement of special settlers was allowed within their region. In 1956, decrees on the lifting of restrictions were adopted in the legal status of a number of peoples, including the Cossacks-Kalmyks (without the right to return to their homeland). At the beginning of 1957, the Kalmyk ASSR was restored as the Kalmyk Autonomous Region, then transformed back into a republic. Together with all the people, the Kalmyk Cossacks returned to their native lands. Most of the Kalmyks began to go back to the recreated Kalmyk ASSR from Siberia. A smaller part of the Kalmyk Cossacks returned to their places of historical residence – to the Don land. The outflow of the Kalmyk population from the Rostov region to Kalmykia continued since that time. The peoples and the Cossacks had to go a long way from removing the loss of their rights to restoring and exercising these rights to the deportees; some of the restrictions were in effect until the early 1990s. Mass terror, repressions, famine, and mass extermination were called generically and succinctly “decossackization.” The very word “decossackization” meant the termination of the Cossacks’ existence by force. Farms and villages were renamed into villages and volosts; the Cossacks were instructed to hand over their weapons and “take off their stripes.” The villages were depopulated, up to 80 percent of the inhabitants were exterminated in some of them. The Cossack way of life and unique centuries-old culture were destroyed. On April 26, 1991 “Law on the rehabilitation of repressed peoples’ was adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. It was a document that returned the Cossacks, including the Kalmyk Cossacks, the right to continue their traditions, after many years of “decossackization.” The law gave impetus to the revival of the Russian Cossacks. The Federal Law, despite the general positive aspects, did not fully justify the Cossacks’ hopes, and the expectations of the repressed peoples, because it was dictated by the opportunistic interests of the Soviet leadership.

Therefore, the study revealed that the Kalmyks-Cossacks were subjected to double repression – on the basis of their attitude towards the Cossacks in the Soviet period, and then in reliance on national belonging to the Kalmyk ethnic group. Cultural losses were among the causes of the current crisis condition of the Kalmyks, primarily the real threat of language loss, rooted in the depths of the 19th-20th centuries, atheistic policy, which led to the destruction of traditional religious institutions. It should be noted that the greatest damage to the cultural identity of the Kalmyks was inflicted during the period of the Kalmyk-Cossacks’ deportation, the entire Kalmyk people in 1943–1957. The rehabilitation and return of the Kalmyk people from exile, and the restoration of national statehood – the Kalmyk ASSR are marked by a noticeable rise in national self-consciousness. Meanwhile, in the 1980s, it became clear that the educational and cultural priorities of the period of the Soviet socialist system and the ongoing national policy turned out to be disastrous for the languages and cultures of small peoples, including the Kalmyk people. The post-Soviet period since the early 1990s, when there was a tendency to turn to the language and folk culture, was marked by signs and attempts at national revival. National classes, centers of folk art opened in the republic, festivals of ethnic cultures were organized and held, national holidays (Jangariada, Tsagaan Sar) were widely celebrated. Buddhism was being actively revived, as well as religious culture (traditions, medicine, astrology, rituals, rituals and practices) and Buddhist institutions that had close ties with foreign Buddhist centers, contributing to the development of Buddhology in leading scientific Oriental and Mongolian studies centers.

7. Conclusion

The research revealed that the Kalmyk people, like other repressed peoples, were subjected to total deportation during the Great Patriotic War. This fate was shared by the Kalmyk-Cossacks, who mostly lived compactly on the land of their ancestors in the Kalmyk district of the Rostov region, who, even under the tsarist government, were ranked among the Cossack estate. In these tragic years, many representatives of the people, the most mobile and educated, died on the fronts of the Great Patriotic War, defending their homeland. Arbitrariness against entire ethnic groups was allowed by the country's leadership, manifested in the violation of their political, social, and civil rights. Thirteen years of exile and its consequences were disastrous for the small Kalmyk people. Discrimination of the entire national gave rise to a crisis in the language, culture of the Kalmyk people, and the loss of many historical values. The deportation of Kalmyks slowed down socio-economic development of the republic. The state pursued a targeted policy of destroying the ethno-cultural foundations of the deported peoples, including the Cossacks-Kalmyks, which, along with the destruction of tribal ties, dispersed settlement over a vast territory and ties, hindered by the ban, should have sooner or later put them before the fact of separation and subsequent disappearance. During the Soviet period, the Kalmyk Cossacks retained their identity with the Don Cossacks, despite the persecution, and tried to observe the customs and traditions of the Cossacks along with the Kalmyk ones, preserved the spiritual values of their ancestors in places of special settlement, despite the difficulties and hardships, as well as prohibitions from Soviet supervisory authorities. The study revealed that the Kalmyks-Cossacks were subjected to double repression – on the basis of their attitude towards the Cossacks in the Soviet period, and then in reliance on national belonging to the Kalmyk ethnic group. Cultural losses were among the causes of the current crisis condition of the Kalmyks, primarily the real threat of language loss, rooted in the depths of the 19th-20th centuries, atheistic policy, which led to the destruction of traditional religious institutions. It should be noted that the greatest damage to the cultural identity of the Kalmyks was inflicted during the period of the Kalmyk-Cossacks' deportation, and the entire Kalmyk people in 1943–1957. The subsequent return of the people from exile and the restoration of national statehood – the Kalmyk ASSR – are marked by a noticeable rise in national self-consciousness.

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