CHRISTIANIZATION OF THE KALMYKS AND ITS INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC RELATIONS OF THE KALMYK KHANATE AS A FACTOR IN THE IMPERIAL ACCULTURATION POLICY (LATE 17TH - MID 30S OF 18TH CENTURIES)

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Abstract - The creation of a Christian mission was determined both by the political interests of the state — strengthening of Russian influence in the Kalmyk steppe, and by the interest of the Russian Orthodox Church in increasing the number of congregations. At the same time, the focus was on christening of representatives of the Kalmyk nobility. But when it became apparent that the most influential applicant to the khan's throne, able to bring the Kalmyks to an agreement, was an adherent of Buddhism, the imperial authorities decided to retreat from their original ideas and withdraw the christened Kalmyks from the bounds of the Volga Khanate.

Keywords - Acculturation, Kalmyk Khanate, Christened Kalmyks, Christianization, Russian Empire.

I. INTRODUCTION

Formation of the christened Kalmyk settlement in the Samara Volga region in 1737-1738 of the 18th century became possible as a result of the convergence of civilizations moving towards each other – the European one, represented by the Moscow kingdom and the nomadic Asian one, represented by the last major wave of immigrants – Oirats, or Kalmyks – natives of Western Mongolia (Dzungaria). Temporary territorial losses on the western frontiers of Russia at the beginning of the XVII century were compensated by the expansion of Russian possessions in Western Siberia. In 1604 Tomsk ostrog, which was built at the request of Tomsk Tatars and later became the center of Tomsk uezd, was added to burgs, built in the last decade of the 16th century on the shores of Tobol, Irtysh and Ob. At the same time, there were accumulations of Kalmyk nomads – Torgouts and Derbet in the Irtysh region.

II. THE ENTRY OF KALMYKS INTO RUSSIA. RUSSIAN-KALMYK RELATIONS IN THE 17TH - EARLY 18TH CENTURIES

The outflow of a significant part of Kalmyks from their historic homeland – Dzungaria – and their movement within Russia are attributed by researchers with a set of related reasons: 1) lack of pasture areas in Dzungaria of the late 16th century due to an increase in the total livestock of Oirat taishis and territorial losses as a result their military failures; 2) the aggravation of the internecine struggle between individual feudal clans, as well as among taishis of one dynasty for the redistribution of pastures and uluses, hereditary disputes, etc .; 3) the desire of the Kalmyk taishis to have stable free markets for exchange and trade with neighboring sedentary peoples.

The initial date for the voluntary entry of Kalmyks into the Russian state is considered to be 1609, when in the Siberian fortress town of Tara 50,000 Torgout Kalmyks, brought by taishi Ho-Urluk, took the oath of allegiance to Russia. Later, representatives of other Kalmyk communities followed their example: Derbets, Khoshouts and Torgouts. The migration of Kalmyks to the West ended in the 30-90s of the 17 century by their resettlement in steppes along the banks of the Yaik (the Ural), the Volga (from Astrakhan to Samara) and in the Don region. The Volga Kalmyk Khanate was formed on this territory. Historians of different times with rare unanimity noted the positive significance for Russia of the location of Kalmyks in the sparsely populated Volga-Ural region. The neighboring Turkic-speaking and North Caucasian peoples, many of whom enjoyed the patronage of the Ottoman Empire, were hostile to the emergence of newcomers. Being in conflict with the Kazakhs (Kirghiz-Kaisaks), the Nogais, the Crimean and Kuban Tatars, the Kalmyks were dragging off the forces of nomads, who were engaged in predatory raids on the border Russian villages. However, even for the Moscow kingdom itself, building diplomatic relations with the Kalmyk rulers was complicated by the lack of legal guarantees to ensure the reached agreements. In the first half of the 17th century Kalmyks often violated all embassy customs without any motive. B.A. Aznabayev, who studied the order of service of Ufa service people, noted that they were perceived to be assigned to Kalmyk uluses as “not a punishment, but at least as a sign of obvious dislike by the authorities”.

By the middle of the 17th century a legal model of relations between Russia and Kalmyks was determined, which was legally enshrined in sherts – special contractual records concluded by Kalmyk rulers personally or through authorized representatives in 1655, 1657, 1661 and in following

years. Of course, Kalmyks did not have to rely on equal allied relations with the powerful Russian state, but, in our opinion, they managed to consolidate the most favorable conditions for themselves. The status of the territory inhabited by Kalmyks was defined as the Kalmyk Khanate. According to the record of 1657, the Kalmyks were supposed to "be in perpetual citizenship and obedience". They also took obligations of a "sovereign service": to participate in military affairs, not to get in touch with the enemies of Russia, not to fight with the tsar's subjects and not to rob them. Thus, the Kalmyk Khanate got the status of a state within Russia with relations that were built on a contractual basis.

However, the presence of written obligations didn't stop Kalmyk taishis from violating them. Pre-revolutionary researchers G.I. Peretyakovich, V.N. Vitevsky and others noted that the Kalmyk rulers continued to behave completely independent from Russia, freely conducting relations with China and Tibet, and did not break connections with Dzungaria, from where thousands of tents came to them and left the Volga region. Both Russian settlements and the possessions of peoples who recognized themselves as subjects of the Russian tsar: the Bashkirs, the Nogais, and the Tatars – were suffering from devastating raids by the Kalmyks. One of the reports said: "Cities are at war, villages are burned, Nogai uluses are ruined". Incidents of this kind were especially frequent when Khan Ayukah (1670-1724) came to power. Honored in Kalmykia as an outstanding commander and skillful diplomat, Ayukah repeatedly made oaths of loyalty and obedience to the Russian government, but this did not prevent him from violating them in any case. In 1674, he refused to go on a military campaign against the Crimea, for the next two years he allowed the Kalmyks to attack Russian settlements with impunity, rob and take their inhabitants into captivity. In 1681, 1683 the militant Kalmyk ruler, together with the rebellious Bashkirs, participated in the rout of the Russian and Cheremiss villages in Kazan and Ufa districts and on the Volga.

The robber attacks of the Kalmyks headed by Ayukah against the subjects of the Russian tsar should not be explained by the treachery often undeservedly attributed to the steppe nomads. Rather, it was a defensive reaction of the Kalmyk ruler on Russia's ever-increasing influence in the Lower Volga region and the pressure exerted on its part. In addition, Khan Ayukah had grounds for personal grievances. He hoped he could always count on the military assistance of the Russian allies for the military support rendered by the Kalmyks in the elimination of the uprising of the archers in Astrakhan and for pursuing of the rebellious Don Cossacks led by K. Bulavin. But when the Kalmyk Khan was forced to flee to Astrakhan after the defeat of his troops by the Kuban Tatars in 1715, his request to send Russian troops and artillery was rejected by Astrakhan waywodes (commanders).

III. CHRISTIANIZATION OF THE KALMYKS AS A PROJECT OF IMPERIAL ACCULTURATION POLICY

The incessant concern of the Russian government was caused by perpetual Kalmyk predatory raids on Russian settlements in the lower reaches of the Volga and the Yaik. The spread of Orthodoxy among the Kalmyks was supposed to contribute to their "pacification" and transfer to a non-Slavic military class. A key role in the implementation of this task was assigned to the Russian Orthodox Church. However, it was impossible to proceed to the forced Christianization of the Kalmyks, as was with the peoples of Siberia and the Urals, who professed paganism. Firstly, by this time the Tibetan Buddhism becomes the national religion of the Kalmyks (in pre-revolutionary Russia it was called Lamaism – S.D.) secondly, the tsar's government needed military assistance of the Kalmyks in guarding the southern and southeastern borders of the Russian state; thirdly, direct pressure in such an important issue for any ruler as the choice of state religion could be perceived as a gross interference in internal affairs and an encroachment on power with unpredictable and negative consequences for Russia. Therefore, at the initial stage, the Kalmyk perception of Orthodoxy could be of a single and, most likely, if not always conscious, but voluntary nature.

K.V. Orlova, referring to shert (contractual oath – S.D.) of February 27, 1673, signed by taishi Ayukah and the Astrakhan waywode, boyar Y.N. Odoevsky, came to the conclusion that the Christianization of the Kalmyks was legalized in the 70s of the XVII century, although the process began long before 1673. In this and the following sherts (dated January 15, 1677, January 24, 1683) there was a promise not to ask for the return to the uluses of those Kalmyks, who had become Orthodox Christians.

The historian of the Ural Cossacks A.B. Karpov discovered news of the use of the christened Kalmyks in Russian military service in the 17th century. In 1686, 51 christened Kalmyk families were settled in Kursk. They were assigned to the Belgorod Regiment of the Don, Yaik and Oreshkov Cossacks. They got salaries and provisions for the service.

Khan Ayukah was very displeased with the change of religion of his subjects, which he made clear in an order to burn down the first compact settlement of Orthodox Kalmyks outside the Kalmyk Khanate. It was formed in 1700 and was located above Saratov, on the Tereshka River, which flows into the Volga. Before, its inhabitants belonged to Erketenovsky ulus, which was under the jurisdiction of Ayukah. The executor of the Khan's will was the brother of the Erketen zaisang Yaman (zaisang is a representative of the feudal clan aristocracy — S.D.). Justifying to the Russian authorities, Ayukah said that the Erketen zaisang made an attack on the Tereshken settlement without asking him, but the Khan couldn't bring him

to justice according to Kalmyk laws, "because any zaisang always has the full right to take his slaves". Later, in order to rid the newly christened Kalmyks from the khan's anger, they began to relocated them to the Russian cities of Kiev and Chuguev for residency and later admission to the Cossack class.

Emperor Peter the Great continued the purposeful policy of Christianization of the Kalmyks. The tsar highly appreciated the fighting qualities of the Kalmyk cavalry, that they demonstrated in the battles of the war with Sweden and in the campaigns on the Crimea and the Caucasus. The clashes between the contenders for the khan's throne and the nobles supporting them, which began at the end of Ayukah's rule and especially intensified after his death, gave the Russian authorities grounds for intervening in affairs of the Kalmyks and creating favorable conditions for the deployment of Orthodox missionary activity. From 1724 representatives of the Kalmyk nobility became the main target of missionary influence. The requirement "to incline the owners and legalists to Christianity" was in the Decree of Peter I of January 20, 1724. The reason for the adoption of this Decree, probably, was the desire to go to Orthodoxy by the grandson of Ayukah – Baksadai Dorji. Baksadai hoped to return the property taken from him during the insurgency raised against Ayukah Khan by his elder brother Dasang with the assistance of high Russian patrons. The decision was made in deep secrecy from other Kalmyk owners. According to the official version, he was sent for an audience with the highest court in order to make a complaint about his brothers, who took away his uluses. In the government circles of Russia an exceptional state importance was attached to the christening of the khan's offspring. Baksadai Dorji with his retinue was first taken to Moscow, and then to St. Petersburg, where on November 15, 1724, the rite of christening was held at the Cathedral of the cathedral Trinity Church.

It was a solemn ceremony due to the presence of the emperor, members of the Synod, senators and court dignitaries. Peter I himself deigned to be the recipient of the Kalmyk owner, who, by his grace, was named Pyotr Petrovich Taishin. At the same time, seven zaisangs from the retinue of P. Taishin were christened. Their followers were A.D. Menshikov, Chancellor G.I. Golovkin and other royal dignitaries. For the conversion to Orthodoxy, the Kalmyk owner was assigned an annual salary of 1,000 rubles and 500 quarters of rye. The newly christened Kalmyks from his entourage were also endowed with cash payments and gifts. After the completion of the celebrations, P.P. Taishin and the whole Kalmyk delegation returned to the Kalmyk Khanate. This was the beginning of the tradition of conducting the rites of christening of noble Kalmyks in a solemn atmosphere with reception from high-ranking officials and generous remuneration. The latter circumstance served as a weighty reason for the change of religion for the Kalmyks.

IV. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FIRST ORTHODOX MISSION IN THE KALMYK KHANATE

The Russian government and the Orthodox Church hoped to consolidate the success and continue the spread of Orthodox Christianity directly in the Kalmyk Khanate by establishing a permanent Orthodox mission at Pyotr Taishin's Ulus. It was organized in 1725 under the leadership of Hieromonk Nikodim (Lenkeevich). Students of the Slavic-Greek-Latin Academy – Andrei Chubovsky, Ivan Lyakhov, Maxim Dolmatov, Pyotr Smirnov, Fyodor Lvov – were sent to study the Kalmyk language to P. Taishin. Regardless of their age and duties in the mission, they remained enrolled as pupils.

The activities of the first Orthodox mission are sufficiently covered in the latest literature. It functioned until 1736, when it was curtailed, not reaching its main goal – the formation of a sustainable Orthodox Kalmyk settlement within the Volga Kalmyk Khanate. The activities of the mission were hindered by the undisguised hostility of the Lamaite clergy, who had a great influence on the notable strata of Kalmyk society. Pyotr Taishin, who called himself Prince, did not become an ally of Orthodox missionaries. After returning to the native ulus, he continued to demonstrate a commitment to Buddhism. Hieromonk Nikodim denounced in 1730 that his newly-converted son "communicates more with gelongs (representatives of the Lamaist clergy – S.D.), prevents young children from christening, and receiving a salary, distributes it not to the christened Kalmyks, but to gelunds for pleading idols for him".

In correspondence with the Russian government, P. Taishin, at least in the first few years after christening, tried to present himself as a decisive defender of Orthodox Kalmyks. As early as 1726, he petitioned Empress Catherine I to build a town with an Orthodox church for his residence near Astrakhan. Taishin motivated his petition with concern for the spread of the Christian faith among the Kalmyks: "That the Christian faith should not be weakened, since all Kalmyk owners and their people hate the christened people". The construction of the fortress could provide the Orthodox Kalmyk prince with reliable protection and would noticeably raise it above the other Kalmyk nobility. Apparently, the lack of a definite opinion forced government officials to shy away from direct promises. So, Chancellor Count G.I. Golovkin wrote to Taishin that, at least in the near future, his request could not be fulfilled, since he had not notified where he was going to wander with his ulus after crossing the Don to the Volga steppes.

Hieromonk Lenkeevich resolutely spoke out against the transfer of all the christened Kalmyks into the possession of Pyotr Taishin beginning with 1730. He

wrote to the Synod that there were only two families of christened Kalmyks at Taishin. The rest who were "christened in St. Petersburg and by him, a hieromonk, on the Don, in the possession of Taishin, were plundered by his disregard and some of them died without support, and it is impossible to assemble them".

When hopes for patronage of the royal court were dispelled, P. Taishin decided to openly oppose the royal will in 1734 and supported the armed action of his cousin Donduk-Ombo against Petersburg-recognized governor of the Kalmyk Khanate Tseren-Donduk. Russian military intervention was required to pacify the rebels. P. Taishin was captured by lieutenant-general I.F. Baryatinsky, who was directed against him with the army, and sent first to Tsaritsyn, where he was kept in prison, and then to St. Petersburg. Donduk-Ombo managed to outwit Baryatinsky. He started a rumor about his intention to cross the Volga and migrate with his ulus to Dzungaria, and after the Russian troops concentrated on the Volga crossings, the rebel owner with his uluses went to the Kuban, to the Kuban Tatars who were hostile to Russia.

From this time on, the brothers' life paths crossed only in absentia. Tseren-Donduk, who did not enjoy prestige among his subjects, and, moreover, abused alcohol, did not justify the hopes of the Russian authorities. In 1735, relations with Donduk-Ombo were restored, and at the initiative of the tsarist government, he replaced Tseren-Donduk as governor of the Kalmyk Khanate, and two years later he was elevated to Khan dignity for victories against the Kuban Tatars. Pyotr Taishin, who was at the position an honorary prisoner in St. Petersburg and who had lost all chances not only to the khan's throne, but also to return to the Kalmyk steppes, turned to Anna Ioannovna with a penitential letter. He asked the empress to hand over the management of all the christened Kalmyks to him and to allocate the land within the Russian empire to them. This petition was the basis for the settlement of christened Kalmyks on the Middle Volga.

V. THE VIEWS OF SECTARIANS ON RUSSIAN SOCIETY

The priests who received information about the sectarians reported this to the authorities, and also independently undertook actions to "convince" the people. At the same time, there is a clear tendency to understand the causes of "delusions". Thus, archival materials for 1897 according to the Gorodishchensky stanitsa indicate that the sectarians "abused chiefs", calling them "evil wolves", "bloodthirsty beasts", "antichrists", etc. , this gives grounds to believe that officials or superiors sometimes exceeded their authority, and the result of this was the negative attitude of the population. But despite such seemingly detached and distrustful attitude toward the Church, many converting sects often confused sectarian and Orthodox faith, urging priests to serve in their meetings. That is, the sectarians sought to attract other people into their ranks, as well as to form their own ritual. So, the residents of the village Trebiatsky and Fershampenois asked the local priest "... to them, to the place of sacrifice with the cross and the icons to serve a prayer ... and to drink with holy water all the food. The purpose of the sacrifice is that the Lord would give them rain and not deprive them of hail...".

VI. MISSIONARYISM OF SECTARIANS IN THE ORTHODOX ENVIRONMENT

The efforts of the Russian Orthodox Church led to the fact that people themselves converted to Orthodoxy, renouncing the sectarian teachings. In some years their number reached 800 people a year. However, often such transitions were only an appearance and the ability to escape from missionary persecutions or successfully marry / marry. An example is the case considered in the Orenburg Uyezd Police Department for 1896: "... She, three years ago at the behest of her parents, married a burgess of the mountains. Novouzensk Mikhail Frolov Ivanov, who belonged to the Molokan sect earlier and only a month before the marriage with her who had gone to Orthodoxy. A month before the marriage, he ... took communion ... but soon after the wedding he left to fulfill the duties of Orthodox Christian, did not go to church, observe fasts and Christian rites and apparently again moved to the Molokan sect, which he tried to seduce and her ".

Similar "preachers" were repeatedly sent "to the people" in order to attract as many people as possible to their side, often marrying to create a "favorable image" and having several families in different villages. So, for example, in the investigation file, examined in the Orenburg Uyezd Police Department on September 18, 1896, it was said that "... her husband, as she learned, has a wife in Novovuzensk and her child and not long before marriage with her has a wife and from her two daughters in Iletskaya Protection .. ".

Another way to conceal sectarian activity was the establishment of various societies whose meetings were closed and whose activities were not questioned. In particular, in the report of the priest Nikolai Balalaev, sent to the Bishop of Orenburg and the Urals, it was said that "members of the sobriety society belong to Tolstoy. The facts, to which the priest of the Ryov community referred, were confirmed, but only by the testimony of those people, from whose words he wrote the statement. Deacon Sharonov really showed that he was offered the Gospel of Tolstoy. Mintyev said that Chalusov was indeed a member of the society, that he doubted the image of the descent of Jesus Christ to hell. From the documents of the church it can be seen that the members of the society were not at St. Volodya's

during the service in the Lbischensky parish of Ryouev .... Nevertheless, none of this speaks for the fact that members of the sobriety society with. Lbischevo belong to Tolstoy. To be fair, not only the deacon Sharonov, but Valdimir himself, can hardly correctly define the essence of Tolstoy's teaching. The possible thing that the members of the society heard about Tolstoy, a few got acquainted with his works, even unprintable, but this does not in the least prove the adherence of the whole society to Tolstoy. I say the possible thing that the members of society read Tolstoy's works about themselves, and as soon as they saw what was behind them, that it turned out bad consequences and stopped reading it, at least nothing is visible in the propaganda and the inhabitants do not yet understand , what is Tolstovism; To admit to their own and their near intellectual development they can not digest the teachings of Tolstoy .... ".

However, with all such efforts, the total number of sectarians in the Orenburg province did not decrease, and very often a picture of its distribution was observed. In particular, a lot of Molokans moved from the Kherson province.

VII. SECTARIANS AND DECREE ON RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN 1905

On April 17, 1905, under the influence of the development of the democratic process in the Russian Empire during the reign of Nicholas II, the government issued a decree "On Strengthening the Foundations of Tolerance", which essentially changed the legal status of "heterodox" and "heterodox" confessions, including and in the Orenburg province. By this decree, the rights of sectarian communities that were not of a "fanatical nature" were significantly expanded. Almost in all respects, in particular in possession of property, in the right to build prayer houses, to build monasteries, monasteries, to print liturgical books, teach their children the "Law of God", to conduct metric books, they were equalized with the Orthodox Church. The previous restrictions for sectarians on their admission to the civil service were abolished. However, the sectarian clergy did not receive the right to the officially recognized use of spiritual ranks and titles, which was used by the Armenian-Gregorian, Armenian-Catholic, Lutheran and reformist clergy. The decree made essential changes in the legal order of the change of religion. The old prohibitions and restrictions on the transition from one Christian-recognized confession to another have been lifted. The document did not mention the possibility of joining the "heterodox" to one of the non-Orthodox Christian communities, but in practice, after the issuance of the decree, such transitions did not encounter any obstacles from the state authorities of the Orenburg province. It was legalized to return a "convert of the Orthodox" or "heterodox" Christian at his request into his past faith. Relative freedom in the choice of religion was presented.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

From the above, it follows that initially, at the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th centuries, the Kalmyks were christened as a result of their direct contacts with the Russian population, when the Kalmyks, by the will of circumstances, fell within Russia. In the second quarter of the 18th century a political character was given to christening of the Kalmyks. In accordance with the strategy developed by the Russian government, emphasis was placed on the Christianization of representatives of the highest Kalmyk nobility, who were assigned the role of “agents of imperial influence” in the Kalmyk Khanate. Unlike church devotees, government circles did not have a particular interest in increasing the number of Orthodox neophytes from the common people. Therefore, when it became obvious that the most influential aspirant to the khan’s throne, able to bring the Kalmyks to an agreement, was an adherent of Buddhism, the imperial authorities decided to abandon their original ideas and bring the christened Kalmyks out of the Volga Khanate.

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