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Transformation of social life in Kazakh steppe: case of dynasty Bekimbaevs (XIX c.)

The article considers changes in the social status of the Berkimbayev family in the process of administrative integration of the Kazakh steppe into the imperial system of government in the first half of the XIX century. Representatives of the Berkimbayev family entered the newly created system of governance in the Steppe, serving positions from the head of the tribe, the distant chief, the volost ruler, the official of special assignments under the military governor. The Berkimbaevs had all the attributes of Russian officials: salaries, awards of military ranks, honorary certificates, medals, and orders. For their long service (1820 to 1917), they became part of the honorary citizenship and hereditary nobility of the Russian Empire. Possessing administrative resources of authority dynasty of Berkimbayevs contributed to the spread of secular education, introducing the history and culture of the Kazakh people to Russian public society.

Keywords: Kazakh officials, administrative integration of the Kazakh steppe, hereditary nobility.

Introduction

The Berkimbaevs about whom I will tell in my paper were representatives of the nomadic elite from the Jagalbaily tribe of the Zhetyru. The first ambassador of the Russian empire to the Kazakh steppe, Aleksey Tevkelev, wrote that Zhetiru consists of seven clans, namely Tabyn, Tama, Kerderi, Jagalbaily, Tilyau, Ramadan». [1:406]

Berkimbayev' dynasty controled manat branches, which were located in the border zone along the Or river, to the Tasty-chu ford (15 versts from the Orsk fortress) created in 1734) and to the mouth of the Tamdy river, where the Kazakh tribes of the Alimuly nomadize. [2;3] It was border zone of cultural contact [3], where different faces of the Russian Empire met: Orthodox Christianity and Islam, settled and nomadic life-styles, urban center (Orsk) and traditional tribal customs (Steppe). In the archival documents was noted that the influence of the biy Berkimbai Buchibaev (1805/1806), extended not only to of the Zhagalbayly tribe, but also such neighboring clans as tortkara, alashi, etc

The Berkimbaev family was not only witnesses, but also active participants of the policy of the Russian Empire on the territory of the Little Zhuz during the 19th century. In 1824 the territory of the Little Zhuz was divided into three parts: Eastern, Middle, Western, at the head of which sultans-rulers were appointed, and the Khan's power was abolished.[4]The nomadic tribe of the Zhagalbaily entered the new territorial-administrative structure — the Middle part of the Kazakhs of the Orenburg region. Sultans-rulers could not manage vast territories in the parts, so the Russian administration considered it important to introduce fractional administrative units and small in the form of distances and localities in the each parts of Little zhus [5; 1575–1583]. According to this reform, the territory of the Western, Middle and Eastern part of the Little Zhuz was divided on a distances (distance between fortresses) along the border line. The territory of the Western part was divided into 8 distances (№ 1–8), the Middle part into 13 (№ 9–22). The greatest number of distances was in the Eastern part (No. 23–57), their number reached the 21st. The area of distance included winter nomadic pastures of each tribe. Each distance was headed by a representative of the Kazakh nobility (sultans, biies, foremen) and was named the distance chief. The regional authorities understood that only representatives of the clan aristocracy, who knew the nomadic life and places of location of each tribe, could carry out the main function — the collection of taxes from the Kazakh population.

The purpose of my report is to review the transformation process of the position of the nomadic elite, namely the Berkimbaev clan and their adaptation in the Russian imperial bureaucracy and clerisy.

The article is considered in the framework of microhistory. By itself, a microhistorical approach makes it possible to analyze the ways of everyday life of people and communities and their ability to adapt to changing living conditions and the desire to reach a new level of social positions and relations.

Berkimбай Buchibaev as distant chief and volost ruler

The life of Berkimбай Buchibaev in the 30s of the XIX century faced a new stage, that was connected with the creation of a special distance, located opposite to the fort Orsk. It was an important site, where had winter pastures more than 700 tents of different branches of the Zhagalbayly tribe. Sultan ruler of the Middle part Arslan Janturin noted that they were not included in any of the near-linear distances [2;19ob.].

As a result, on January 26, 1848, by order of the Orenburg Governor-General, the 56th distance was established, including 885 Kazakh tents along the Or river, from the fort of Tastych to the mouth of the Tamdyur, and along the rivers Taldyk and Kairaktam, flowing into the Irgiz river. On February 10, 1848, biy Berkimбай Buchibaev was appointed as a ruler of the 56th distance. Mikhail Aleksandriysky, the trustee of the near-line Kazakhs of the Orsk distance, reported that 42-year-old Berkimбай Buchibaev was respected by «local Kazakhs, wealthy, quite sensible and worthy of being appointed to the post.» [2; 12–13]

As the head of the distance, Berkimбай Buchibaevu was ordered a personalized stamp and assigned a salary of 50 rubles silver per year. The Sultan ruler of the Middle Part, Arslan Dzhanturin, took the oath of allegiance to Buchibaev's service and Berkimбай submitted an oath to the chairman of Orenburg Border Commission. In the subordination of the new chief of the distance were 5 local rulers and the clerk [2; 59–62].

Berkimбай Buchibaev served on this position for more than 20 years, before the introduction of the new provision in 1868. Russian officials of regional administration listened to his opinion and accordingly, his sons, as representatives of a clan which were loyal to ruling dynasty, began to be involved in the service in the local government. So, his son, Derbisaly Berkimbaev (1838–25.XI.1913) at the age of 22, was appointed as chief of the 15th and then 23rd distances of the middle part of the Orenburg Kazakhs and served on this position for nine years (1860–1869) [6;1–3].

Award medals and valuable gifts became recognition of his service as a distance chief. A special group consisted medals «for diligence». They depicted a portrait of the emperor (head in profile). The hierarchy of these medals was determined by the quality of the metal (silver, gold), and the place of wearing (on the neck or chest) [7]. Berkimбай Buchibaev was awarded by silver (July 18, 1859), and two years later by gold (1861) medals on Anninsk ribbon for wearing around his neck. On February 14, 1864, he was given the rank of zauryad-cornet. The apogee of the awards of Berkimбай Buchibaev, while on position of distant chief, became the golden medal on the Vladimir tape for wearing around his neck (July 19, 1868). The awards from the Russian government as a social phenomenon [8] testified that Berkimбай Buchibaev managed to establish good business relations with the Russian administration.

The Berkimbaev family actively participated in the process of introducing a new administrative reform in the late 60s of the 19th century. Derbisaly Berkimbaev was a member of the organizing commission in the introduction of the «Provisional Regulations on the management of the steppe regions of the Orenburg and West Siberian Governor-General» dated by October 21, 1868, participated in the creation of volosts on the territory of the Irgiz district of the Turgai region. [9;18–27].

Berkimбай Buchibaev in 1869 was elected as volost ruler of Aral'yubinsk volost of Aktobe district, Turgai region and served on this position for more than twenty years. On the territory of the Aral'yubinsk volost were located the pasture of the Zhagalbayly tribes, along Or river, on the tracts Ashchibutak, Akkuduk, Akzhar, Rary-Bulak, Koyandy-Kul, who lived on these lands for more than 40 years. Fedor Sherbin, who conducted the research on Turgai region, noted that administrative divisions in Aktobe district more often than anywhere coincided with summer and winter pastures of Kazakh clans. [10; 8].

The peculiarity of the management of this volost was that his son, Mirali, was a candidate for volost ruler during all these years. According to the electoral lists, the number of electoral votes for their candidatures was almost always 99 %. The head of Aktobe district emphasized that Berkimбай «.. really governs as a person whose influence is complete.» [11]

The fact that persons from the Berkimbaev family were elected to the post of ruler in the Aral'yubinsk volost was evidence of the people's trust. In fact, there was a dynasty volost rulers of the Berkimbaevs. Mirali, the son of Berkimбай Buchibaev, being a volost candidate under his father, became a volost ruler in 1895 and served one three-year term on this position. During the period of his service, Mirali Berkimbaev received the title of hereditary honorary citizen [11; 5]. Since 1899, Berikimбай's grandson, Laik, served as ruler of the Aral'yubinsk volost, who served until the revolutionary events of 1917. The materials of the expedition of F. Shcherbin recorded that he was one of the rich volost governors who owned more than 30 thousand heads of sheep and 12 thousand heads of horses. [10]

We can say that the Berkimbaevs became good intermediaries between the imperial power and the Kazakhs and defended the interests of a own clan. Berkimbaev's dynasty contributed to the socio-cultural development of their volost. We know that each volost was allowed to have one mosque and one mullah. In this case, only a Kazakh could be a mullah, who was approved and dismissed by the military governor. Archival data show that the Aral'yubinsk cathedral mosque functioned in the volost center and Aitmuhamet Akbayev performed the duties of the mullah. [12; 1–2]

From the beginning of the 20th century, petitions for the opening of mosques began to arrive in the auls of the Aral'tiubinsk volost. In this regard, aul number 3 of the Aral'yubinsk volost was particularly notable; in 1910, a petition was received to build a mosque on ur. «Sary-Gus» of the Komsakt river at the expense of Ischan Utuleev and Zhanuzak Kuletov (200 men at the mosque), in 1913 the petition was again from nomads Babdili Aytuganov, Germurza Aykharykov, Sitemuhamed Ilekbayev and Sagytel Urtambayev for building mosque [12; 14–27]

The Ministry of the Interior affairs came to the conclusion that by the beginning of the 20th century for overseeing the mosques of it was more convenient to allow construction of them than to carry out an unsuccessful fight against mosques organized secretly by «mullahs of other nationalities Tatars, Khivans, Bukharians who were imbued with fanaticism». Therefore, from the point of view of the Russian authorities, it has become «much more useful to allow the opening of mosques and prayer houses and to appoint mullahs chosen from the Kazakhs.» [13; 3 ob].

The Berkimbaevs were supporters of the spread of education in their volost, with their funds the Russian-Kazakh school was opened in 1896, which received the name Berkimbaevskaya. In 1896, volost ruler Mirali Berkimbayev and his brother Derbisaly Berkimbayev gave their daughters (Alifu and Kaliya) to study at the Russian-Kazakh school [11; 5].

Derbisaly Berkimbayev as an official and nobleman of the Russian Empire

The fame of this clan was brought by the activities of Derbisaly Berkimbayev, who served as a distance chief, junior assistant by head of Aktobe district, official of special assignments under the military governor. [14; 5].

The military governor of the Turgay region, Lev Balluzek, wrote that Derbisaly Berkimbayev was «one of the best kazakh officials of the former local government.». Firstly, his « level of well-being « allowed him to be indepent in his activity. Secondly, his connections with influential clans and a good knowledge the nomad life of the Kazakhs, the origins of internal conflicts and dynamics of relations between Kazakh tribes, made it easier for him «to have constant, accurate and detailed information about the conditions in the steppes». And the fair execution of Derbisaly Berkimbaev's duties on the previous service made military govonor to describe Derbisaly as «value» and a «useful figure» for the administration». [15; 1–3]

It should be noted that the official of special assignments under the governors held a special place in the administrative apparatus, because their duties do not fit into the range of actions of ordinary full-time officials. Officials of special assignments had the status of state advisers, the first assistants of the military governors. [16; 116–117]

The primary task was to collect and provide information to the governor that adequately reflects social processes in the Steppe. Derbisaly presented to the governor his vision of the situation in the Steppe, suggested ways to resolve conflicts or tensions, and monitored the effectiveness of the measures taken in the Steppe by regional authorities. The regional administration wrote, that the activities of Kazakhs officials on special assignments are also important because they «... could always and everywhere submit their useful opinion.» [17; 1]

Three years later (May 3, 1873) D. Berkimbaev was appointed as junior assistant to the head of Aktobe district. Almost from this time, D. Berkimbaev worked in the system of Aktobe district administration for more than 20 years. [14; 5]

As a result of his activities on the service in the local administration system Derbisaly Berkimbaev became a cavalier of the orders of St. Stanislaus and Anna of the 2nd and 3rd degree, of St. Vladimir of the 4th degree (April 18, 1899). It is necessary to give explanations regarding the order of Vladimir. According to Article 35 of the Code of Laws of the Empire for 1857 «Hereditary nobility could be acquired by persons awarded with the Russian orders of St. Vladimir of all degrees. Interestingly, Berkimbaev after receiving this order immediately, namely in October 1899, appealed to the Orenburg Assembly of nobility about his inclusion in the hereditary nobility. [18; 1] This fact indicates that being a representative of Russian officials, Berkimbaev had a good awareness of the laws of the Empire. And he set an example of how to use administrative resources and desire to join the privileged strate of the empire.

On October 23, 1900 by the decision of the Governing Senate, D. Berkimbaev was included to the hereditary nobles of the Russian Empire. At the same time D. Berkimbaev was included to the Orenburg Assembly of the nobles and listed in the third part of the noble ancestry book of the Orenburg province for number 229. [19] The contradiction of the empire's policy towards the Kazakhs was manifested in the fact that Derbisaly Berkimbayev received the title of hereditary nobleman, but his 6 sons were not counted to this privileged strata only because their metric books (parish registers) from the Orenburg Muslim spiritual assembly were not presented. [18;2–2 ob.]

Such complexity and confusion emerge because the government in 1868 separated the Kazakhs from the Orenburg Muslim Spiritual Assembly, but did not resolve the question of who should issue metric books. Historian Charles Steynwedel defined metric book as «invisible links of the empire,» [20; 67] that impacted awareness of the individuals as a part of this vast state. Interesting from the point of view of self identification was the application of Berkimbaev to the Senate about the assignment of his children to the nobility. He emphasized that, as a Kazakh in the Turgai region, he did not belong to the Orenburg Muslim spiritual assembly, and consequently his children too. Moreover, he noted that the Steppe regulation of 1891 did not disclose the duties of the volost mullah and he was not given the responsibility for metric books. According to this head of district could certify the legality of the birth of children. But in the time, Dilyara Usmanova in article, gives an example of the fact that in the Spring of 1914 the Mufti of Orenburg asked officials of the Department of Spiritual Affairs for instructions on how the Spiritual Assembly should act, produce and send metric books to the districts of Akmola, Semipalatinsk and Ural oblasts, or regional administration will take this function [21; 106–153]

After a long correspondence, only two years later, on June 10, 1902, certificates of nobility were given for his children. [18;40–42]

Activity of Derbisaly Berkimbaeva were not limited to service in the local government system, he left a scientific and publicistic legacy.

Derbisaly was a member of the Orenburg branch of the Russian Geographical Society (since March 23, 1879), a full member of the Turgay regional statistical committee (since May 20, 1897). D. Berkimbaev was the author of ethnographic works, in particular, «Ancient ruins and mounds in the Kyrgyz steppe». Particular interest to the natural environment and history of the own tribe, family manifested in his article «Araltubinskaya volost», published in 1895, in the newspaper «Turgay newspaper».

Derbisaly contributed and popularize knowledge about the life and customs of the Kazakh people. He gathered more than 22 exhibits, including the national clothes of the Kazakhs (men and women) from Aktope district, silver jewelry, leathers made by Kazakhs at the All-Russian Exhibition in Nizhny Novgorod.

Derbisaly was three times in the Kazakh deputation in St. Petersburg (1876, 1881, 1898), participated in the coronation of Emperor Nicholas II in Moscow in 1896.

Conclusions

Thus, I have shown an example of how an individual family, building up relations with the authorities, was able to take positions in local administrative structures and become key figures in the steppe.

In conclusion, it is important to note that the Berkimbaev dynasty is a good example for understanding the process of incorporating the Kazakh patrimonial nobility into the system of the Russian Empire. but at the same time it does not cover the cases of opposition of members of this tribe to local Russian authorities. In the Central Archives, I did not find petitions of tribesmen for the unlawful actions of representatives of the Berkimbaev as volost rulers. Although such documents in the archives of Kazakhstan are sufficient in relation to other volost rulers. The activities of the Berkimbaev dynasty occurred in the context of major changes in the socio-political and economic life of the Steppe. Berkimbaevs were in the center of events. And they were able to use an important resource for keeping social order in their own way, creating normal conditions for the development of their tribesmen and own improvement of conditions.. Having mastered the system of colonial knowledge, the Berkimbaevs wanted to modernize their own communities. On the other hand, for the Russian authorities it was important to have influential figure in the Steppe as the Berkimbaevs. How we see, loyalty to the imperial authority opened up for by opportunities of integration to the imperial administration. On the other hand, the central government, granting privileges was a way of maintaining keeping control over a vast nomad land inhabited by non-Russian peoples.

The fate of this dynasty during the Soviet era was typical. In the 1930s, the son of Derbisaly Berkimbaev was repressed.

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Г.С. Султангалиева

Қазақ даласындағы қоғамдық өмірдің өзгеруі: Беркімбаевтар әулеті (XIX ғ.)

Мақалада XIX ғасырдың бірінші жартысындағы қазақ даласының империялық басқару жүйесіне әкімшілік интеграциялану процесінде Беркімбаевтар отбасының әлеуметтік мәртебесінің өзгеруі қарастырылды. Беркімбаевтар отбасының өкілдері ру басшысы, дистанция басқарушысы, болыс басқарушысы және әскери губернатор жанындағы арнайы тапсырмалар бойынша шенеунік лауазымдарын атқара отырып қазақ жерінде жаңадан құрылған басқару жүйесіне енді. Беркімбаевтар сол заманғы орыс шенеуніктерінің барлық белгілеріне ие болды: жалақы, әскери атақтармен марапатталуы, мақтау қағаздары, медальдар, ордендер. Ұзақ уақыт қызмет ету барысында (1820–1917 жж.) олар Ресей империясының құрметті азаматтығы мен ата тегінен бергі дворяндар құрамына кірді. Беркімбаевтар әулеті биліктің әкімшілік ресурстарына ие бола отырып, зайырлы білімнің таралуына, аймақтағы орыс қоғамының қазақ халқының тарихы мен мәдениетімен танысуына елеулі ықпал етті.

Кілт сөздер: қазақ шенеуніктері, қазақ даласының әкімшілік интеграциясы, ата тегінен бергі дворяндар.

Г.С. Султангалиева

Трансформация социальной жизни в Казахской степи: династия Беркимбаевых (XIX в.)

В статье рассмотрены изменения социального статуса семьи Беркимбаевых в процессе административной интеграции Казахской степи в имперскую систему управления в первой половине XIX в. Представители семьи Беркимбаевых вошли во вновь созданную систему управления в Степи, испол-

няя должности от управляющего родом, дистанционного начальника, волостного управителя, чиновника особых поручений при военном губернаторе. Беркимбаевы имели все атрибуты российских чиновников: жалование, награждение военными чинами, похвальными грамотами, медалями, орденами. За свою долголетнюю службу (1820–1917) вошли в состав почетного гражданства и потомственное дворянство Российской империи. Обладая административными ресурсами власти, династия Беркимбаевых внесла вклад в распространение светского образования, ознакомления российской общественности региона с историей и культурой казахского народа.

Ключевые слова: казахское чиновничество, административная интеграция Казахской степи, потомственное дворянство.

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