

KONSTANTIN N. MAKSIMOV

KALMYKIA

in RUSSIA'S PAST & PRESENT
NATIONAL POLICIES
& ADMINISTRATIVE
SYSTEM



 CEU PRESS

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Konstantin N. Maksimov



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	vii
1. Russia's Policy Towards Kalmyks (Late 16th–mid-17th Centuries)	1
Russia's policy at the initial stage of the Kalmyks' accession to Russia (late 16 th –mid-17 th centuries)	1
Russia's policy towards Kalmyks in 1620–1650	15
2. The Kalmyk Khanate as a Part of Russia (mid-17th–Second Half of 18th Centuries)	55
The political autonomy of the Kalmyk Khanate (mid-17 th –1 st quarter of 18 th centuries)	55
The Kalmyk Khanate's administrative autonomy (1 st –3 rd quarters of 18 th century)	87
3. Kalmykia's Status in the Russian Empire (Late 18th–Early 20th Centuries)	121
Gradual incorporation of Kalmykia into Russia's system of administrative and territorial control (last quarter of 18 th –first half of 19 th centuries)	121
Completion of Kalmykia's incorporation into the system of administrative and territorial control of the Russian Empire (first half of 19 th –early 20 th centuries)	162
4. The Kalmyk Soviet Autonomous <i>Oblast</i> in the Years of Socialism Building (1917–1935)	199

5. The Kalmyk Soviet Autonomous Republic Under Totalitarianism and During the Stagnation Period	271
6. Kalmykia Within the New Russian Federal System	347
Conclusion	427
Name Index	431

INTRODUCTION

The Russian Federation is one of the world's largest multiethnic states, whose internal structure includes various entities. Its political division is based on territorial, ethnic, and territorial-ethnic principles. The Russian Federation is not a result of unionization of its members by virtue of agreement or treaty. It is rather a historically formed federal state, whose federal principles were established as constitutional with consent and approval of the federation's constituent members. Therefore, Russia can be justifiably regarded as a historically established constitutional federation that has undergone several phases in its development.

The Russian state was formed on a multiethnic basis, by consolidating multiple small ethnic groups (that lived on territory now belonging to Russia), by establishing mutually profitable and historically acceptable forms of relations and interaction with the groups in question, in its gradual development on the path to federalism. This is where the main difference between the principles of contemporary Russian federalism and those of the former Soviet Federation lies. The latter was formed from sovereign states that had united either based on a "voluntary" agreement or under coercion. With rare exceptions, the political entities of the Russian Federation took shape and developed in a unified process of ethnic formation within Russia's geo-political and historical space.

Today, however, some journals occasionally publish articles whose authors have sensed the moods of particular political forces that adhere to the principles of the "localization" of power and are following the conformist trend by prophesizing a lack of prospects and even disintegration of the Russian Federation. When doing that, they refer to what is in fact a mere terminological similarity between the attributes of political constituents of the Soviet Union and members of the Russian Federation, namely the ethno-territorial principle of political division. These authors are trying to convince their readers that the fact that the division of federation is

based on the principle in question is a potential source of separatism and is ultimately bound to bring about a collapse of the federation.

The issue of federalism pertains to the academic, historical, and legal sphere, rather than to the realm of politics. It requires unbiased research, thorough examination, and comprehensive comparative analysis. It is only thereafter that conclusions and forecasts may be formulated. In our opinion, drawing comparisons between individual, and purely external, attributes characteristic of the Russian Federation's state structure, on the one hand, and the political pattern of the Soviet Union (whose federal form of government was hardly more than a mere formality) on the other is ungrounded.

Apparently, one should agree with those authors who believe that a transition from various types of political entities (implicitly historically) based on the territorial and ethnic principles within the Russian Federation to a unified territorial type is unfeasible any time soon. In contemporary conditions, both the specifics of the Russian federal structure and of Russia's socio-cultural civilization essence taken into account, a need for a closer link between the principles of federalism and nationalities issue arises. In this respect, it is vital for the Russian Federation to conduct a nationalities policy that would accommodate the issue of state integrity and unity preservation in the new nation-building conditions, ensure concurrence of the federal interests and those of all the peoples living in Russia, and address the need for their manifold cooperation and development of native languages and cultures.

Russian federalism differs from all preceding types of federalism not only insofar as the principles of the political division are concerned, but also in (more developed) forms of interrelations between the federal authorities of various levels and authorities of the peoples constituting the Russian Federation. The Tsarist administration used a variety of forms of interaction between the center and ethnic borderlands. In order for the new peoples joining the Russian state to adapt, the Tsarist administration would initially allow these people to keep their historically established government and legislation, allowing them to control their own local affairs, while components of the centralized Russian government were gradually introduced.

Under the Soviet-era decree "On Federal agencies of the Russian Republic" and the RSFSR Constitution of 1918, the ethnic and state aspects in the life of Russia's people, their social and political activities, administration and legislation were strictly unified. A new Soviet Party system of control, based on the principles of "democratic centralism," was introduced. The ethnic-state entities were operating as micro-modules within the Soviet state mechanism.

In the sweeping global changes of the late 1980s–early 1990s, when the fate of the Soviet Union and its republics was in the making, the autonomous republics of the Soviet Union claimed a more solid status for themselves as constituents of the modernized Russian Federation and upheld improvement in the federative relations with the federal authorities.

Kalmykia is a constituent of the Russian Federation that shaped and has been developing within the Russian state for several centuries. For all their specific nature, the development of relations between Russia and Kalmyks and the latter's accession to the Russian state constituted integral issues of Russia's policy in Siberia and its foreign policy in the southeast direction in general in the second half of the 16th and first half of the 17th centuries. The issue of Kalmyks was, therefore, constituent member to consideration and resolution mainly by way of peaceful diplomatic interaction at various levels of state authorities, including Russia's highest governing agencies.

Once Kalmykia was incorporated into the Russian state in the early second half of the 17th century, it was officially recognized by the Russian authorities and constituted as an ethno-political entity in the form of a feudal khanate with the status of a virtually autonomous unit. However, since the mid-1720s the Kalmyk Khanate's internal government could rather be defined as "administrative autonomy," because since the death of Ayuka Khan in 1724 the Kalmyk khans were considered governors, that is, the highest representatives of the Russian tsar.

In the 1760s, the Kalmyk Khanate was finally incorporated in the unified government system of the Russian Empire, on both central and local levels. The Kalmyks were naturalized in the Russian Empire; that is, their stable association with the state was established and legal statuses of social estates were clearly defined. This policy of the Tsarist administration cannot be regarded as "exceptional." It was a part of the general national policy of the Russian Empire in the second half of the 18th century. Starting from the 1760s, for example, Ukraine's autonomy became constituent member to a rather more decisive suppression.

The Kalmyk Khanate's status as an administrative autonomous constituent member within the unitary Russian Empire gradually transformed into the status of a conventional administrative territorial government under the Astrakhan *guberniya*ⁱ governor. Thus the Kalmyk Khanate became an internal province of the Russian state. The central state authori-

ⁱ Translator's note: *guberniya*—a major administrative subdivision of the Imperial Russia, divided into several *uezds*; replaced by the *oblast* in the Soviet Union.

ties—the Senate, Collegium for Foreign Affairs, and others—therefore started shifting their attention from the Kalmyk affairs.

Under these new conditions, and due to the fact that the Russian imperial policies became more oppressive, the Khanate's governor and his closest environment made a decision to return to their ancestors' homeland. They implemented the idea in early 1771, when a considerable number of Kalmyks migrated to Dzungaria.

The Kalmyks that remained in Russia completely lost their ethnic statehood and were incorporated into the Astrakhan *guberniya*. Kalmykia was administratively subordinated to the Astrakhan governor that controlled them through special administrative agencies of his secretariat.

In the late 18th–early 19th centuries, attempts were undertaken to restore Kalmykia's self-administration under its own governor. However a form of superintendence was to be administered, too, by a representative of the Foreign Affairs Collegium, an official that would be directly subordinated to the military governor of Astrakhan and commander-in-chief of Georgia and the “Caucasus line.”

A reform carried out by the tsarist administration in the 1820s and aimed at further centralization of control affected Kalmykia. According to the *Regulations on the Administration of the Kalmyk People* (issued March 10, 1825), Kalmykia was identified as an *oblast*,ⁱⁱ equal in its status to an internal *guberniya* (a status introduced in Russia in 1822). In terms of the highest administrative control, the Kalmyk *oblast* was now under control of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, locally represented by a chief police officer directly subordinated to the military governor of Astrakhan and commander-in-chief of the Caucasus. A Commission for Kalmyk Affairs was established in order to administer general control of the regional affairs. Judicial affairs were under the control of the Zargo authorized for administering the same functions as an *okrug*ⁱⁱⁱ court. In individual *uluses* meanwhile local *ulus* administrations were founded. These measures represented a significant move aimed at introducing the general Russian state administration principles in Kalmykia, and took their final shape in stipulations of the *Regulations on the Administration of the Kal-*

ⁱⁱ Translator's note: *oblast*—an administrative division. In the Russian Empire *oblasts* (mainly located on the periphery of the country) were considered to be administrative units included as parts of *guberniyas* or *krais*. In the Soviet Union, *oblasts* became large administrative units that replaced *guberniyas*.

ⁱⁱⁱ Translator's note: *okrug*—an administrative subdivision of a *guberniya* equivalent to the *uezd* in the region of the Don Cossacks in the Imperial Russia; in the Soviet Union, an administrative subdivision of the *oblast*.

myk People of 24 November 1835 and the *Regulations on the Administration of the Kalmyk People* of 23 April 1847.

Under the 1835 Regulations, Kalmykia obtained the status of a self-governed region under the direct control of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and—locally—under the supervision of the ministry's representative (the Astrakhan military governor). Independent regional and local administration that was not a part of the *guberniya's* administration was introduced. Officials serving in the Kalmykia's administration were included in the number of Russia's state officials, whose status and position in the official hierarchy were determined in accordance with the Table of Ranks. The police office was transformed into a guardianship institution. From this moment on the chief guardian of the Kalmyk people, who was appointed by the tsar on a recommendation of the Internal Affairs Ministry, became the highest official in the Kalmyk administrative hierarchy after the military governor of the Astrakhan *guberniya*. The tsar would also appoint the Lama of the Kalmyk people, upon a recommendation of the Internal Affairs Ministry, and the chairman of the Zargo court, upon the recommendation of the Ministry of Justice.

The 1847 Regulations subordinated Kalmykia to the Astrakhan *guberniya's* administration and to the Ministry of State Property. Its local administration and judicial system was now integrated into the general Russian system of state authorities. The legal status of the social estates was now in compliance with the Russian legislation. These measures prepared sufficient legal grounds for incorporating Kalmykia fully into the Astrakhan *guberniya*. In our opinion, it is not correct to regard the incorporation of Kalmykia as a special *uyezd*^{iv} into the Astrakhan *guberniya* in the late 19th–early 20th century as the moment of completion of the integration of the Kalmyk people into Russia's common imperial system of state control. In fact, Kalmykia was integrated into the common system of state control considerably earlier. The incorporation into another administrative territorial unit merely deprived Kalmykia of its former status of a constituent member of the state.

After being incorporated into the system of state control and even losing its statehood after a large part of Kalmyks left for Dzungaria, Kalmykia still retained some specific forms of self-government until the early 20th century. These forms of self-government were based on and envisaged by the Kalmyk historic traditions and Russian legislative norms with

^{iv} Translator's note: *uyezd*—an administrative subdivision of Russia, originally describing groups of several *volosts* formed around the most important cities.

their provisions for ethnically and economically distinct territories. The historic experience of decentralized development allowed the Kalmyk people (as it did to some other peoples of Russia) to acquire the autonomous *oblast* status and form of control under the Soviet rule. Yet, despite the fact that the state units of specific national and ethnic groups were recognized as constituent members of the federal state in various decrees and in the Constitution of the RSFSR, in practice the RSFSR represented rather a unitary state with some elements of a federation. This is why the formation and status of the national administrative and national state autonomous units in the RSFSR were of a rather formal nature.

At the same time, we should not deny out of hand a rather efficient role of the functional mechanisms (both state- and party-based) for developing the state nationalities policy under the Soviet rule. By the early 1940s, considerable achievements had been obtained in the cultural and economic development of a number of Russia's peoples, including Kalmyks. On the other hand, the arbitrariness and tyranny of the state authorities inflicted immense moral and material damage to the entire nation, while the policy of political repression led to genocidal consequences for some peoples, including Kalmyks.

This was a reason why the issues pertaining to statehood, status of autonomous units and relations between the peoples of Russia grew acute in the years of *perestroika*, when the state system and society started becoming more democratic. Autonomous republics and other autonomous units started showing more interest in having their status raised, in building a genuine federative state in compliance with constitutional principles of federalism and international law. Some autonomous republics, perhaps, decided then to take advantage of the turbulent times and win a state sovereignty, all the more so when being provoked by some prominent politicians and state officials. However, I am convinced that the majority of autonomous republics and *oblasts* did take into account the centuries-long common history and the historic experience of the state unity, and therefore were sincere in their aspiration to improve and strengthen the Russian Federation.

This work examines the issues related to the relations and rapprochement of Kalmyks and Russia, and Kalmyks' eventual incorporation into the Russian state, against the background of Russia's domestic and foreign policy, as well as its policy towards non-Russian people within Russia in the 17th–19th centuries. The research deals further with a special status of the Kalmyk Khanate as a politically autonomous unit until a certain point, the subsequent gradual transformation of Kalmykia into a part

of Russia's common system of state control. Special attention is paid to the structure and mechanisms of administration in ethnically distinct territories of the Russian Empire and particularly to the state policy towards Kalmyks. Considerable space is devoted to Kalmykia's history under the Soviet rule (the nationalities policy of the Soviet government, nation and state building, etc.), and to Kalmykia's development in the time of development of genuine federalism. The key goals pursued in this work are to reveal specific features and typical patterns in Kalmykia's development within Russia, the Russian Empire, and the RSFSR; to examine the relations and interaction between Russia and Kalmykia; to inquire into the process of gradual expansion into Kalmykia of Russia's common system of state authorities, legislation, bureaucracy, and the social estate hierarchy. Besides, the book seeks to assess the contemporary condition and ongoing development of Kalmykia's system of administrative, judicial, and local authorities; the process of this system adaptation to the new historical, economic, and political circumstances in the region; and the process of its integration into Russia's common system of state administration.

The chronological scope of this work ranges from the time when the first official contacts between Kalmyks and Russia were established and when Kalmyks voluntarily acceded to the Russian state, up until the present moment, when the Kalmyk Republic has become an equal constituent member of the Russian Federation and enjoys its own statehood.

The examination of the issues raised in this work has shown that the majority of the Russian Federation's constituent members with their own statehood or autonomy were founded and developing within Russia as its integral parts, preserving their ethnic composition due to the state's policy and eventually reaching the status of ethno-political entities. Therefore, the Russian Federation's constituent members that are historically established based on the national and national-territorial principles have a prospect of smooth development within the federation, and—providing the correct intelligent approach to the matter—can serve as a powerful factor stabilizing the Russian Federation. It seems to me that the policy towards further development and improvement of Russian federalism and federal relations should be pursued with careful consideration of the valuable experience accumulated in the course of Russia's interaction with and control of its ethnic territories. This should be done for the sake of preservation and consolidation of the unity of the Russian multiethnic state.

CHAPTER 1

Russia's Policy Towards Kalmyks (Late 16th–mid-17th Centuries)

Russia's policy at the initial stage of the Kalmyks' accession to Russia (late 16th–mid-17th centuries)

The process of establishing a centralized Russian state, which was formed as a multinational state on a multiethnic basis, was over in the second half of the 16th century. While before the middle of the 16th century the Russian state was joined by the Karelians, Komi, Khanty, Meshchera, Mor-dovians, Udmurts, and other peoples, in the second half of the 16th century the territory of the state was expanded to incorporate the conquered Kazan, Astrakhan, and Siberian Khanates. The entire territory of Bashkiria became a part of Russia; the Chat, Baraba, and Terena Tatars naturalized in Russia voluntarily in the late 16th century, while the Tomsk Tatars joined Russia in the early 17th century.

Both the territory of Russia and its population grew (from 2.8 to 7–7.5 million km² and from 6.5 to 7 million people, respectively) due to the Russian expansion beyond the Volga river and deep into Siberia. Thus, the Russian state embraced more ethnic groups by the early 17th century.¹ Oirats (Kalmyks) as well as other peoples became a part of Russia in the late 16th century. Kalmyks (the Derbet ruler Dalai Batyr and Torgout *taisha*ⁱ Ho Urluk) left Dzungaria, formed two groups and proceeded north-west from Lake Zaysan along the Irtysh river, reached the upper course of the river, and entered into negotiations with representatives of local and central authorities to acquire Russian citizenship. Despite their numerous armed forces (over 80 thousand soldiers and 200 thousand of the rest of the population),² sufficient material resources (horses, camels, and other

ⁱ Translator's note: *taisha*—a Kalmyk chieftain.

livestock) and reputation of a warlike people, they avoided large-scale armed conflicts or battles on their way from Dzungaria to the northwest (to Tara, Tobolsk, etc.) and west (to Ural and Yaik). Moving by unexplored ways and having no idea about their future permanent location, Kalmyks pursued a cautious and rather balanced policy during the period under examination and tried to maintain neutrality. In view of the major objectives of their migration to the northwest (searching for new pasture territories) and coming into contact with other peoples, geopolitical interests of the Kalmyk *taishas* went beyond the bounds of their *uluses*.ⁱⁱ

The safe policy that Kalmyks pursued during the expeditionary war between Russia and Siberian Khanate is evidence of this. When A. Voyeikov, an assistant of the Tara *voevoda*,ⁱⁱⁱ was exploring the Baraba Steppe with a small unit (of only 400 soldiers) to locate and defeat Kuchum Khan in August 1598, there was a large group of Kalmyk soldiers amounting to five thousand people at a two-day distance from the Khan's camp. The chief of the expedition unit failed to find out why they were there. At the same time, Kalmyks' treatment of the defeated Siberian Khan's children was humane. Kuchum Khan's three sons (two sons were captured and taken to Moscow)—Aleï, Azim and Ishim—as well as their people lived in Kalmyk *uluses* for a long time. Ishim was even married to a daughter of senior Tor-gout *taisha* Ho Urluk. Perhaps, this fact enabled authors of *History of the USSR (Vol. 1. From the Ancient Period to the Late 18th century*. Moscow, 1947) to conclude that "Kalmyks backed up Kuchum Khan's followers..." This conclusion means politics first of all: when *History of the USSR* was written, Kalmyks were deported to Siberia. At the same time, it became known from an *otpiska*^{iv} written by Ufa *voevoda* Mikhail Fedorovich Nagov (of 1601; after March 9) that Kuchum Khan's sons were sure their father "was suckered to Kolmaki and killed." Researches studying the issue were correct to note that Kuchum Khan's sons had no real authority to regain the former power upon the defeat of the Siberian Khanate. Moreover, Kalmyks broke off all relations with "Kuchum Khan's followers" after Ishim's raid on the Tyumen *uyezd* (1606–1608).³

The cautious policy of Kalmyks can be explained by the fact that the situation in Siberia was complicated at the time. Russia was gathering strength and expanding its territory in the east; while some parties tried to

ⁱⁱ Translator's note: *ulus*—a Kalmyk socio-administrative unit (a tribe, a large group of nomad families), later used to refer to a territorial unit.

ⁱⁱⁱ Translator's note: *voevoda*—an archaic Russian word for "military chief."

^{iv} Translator's note: *otpiska*—a report.

oppose this expansion and others kept an eye on it, taking the course of events into consideration and tailoring their own policies accordingly. At the same time, Russia was watchful about the Kalmyks' penetration into Siberia, since the "Russian sovereignty in Siberia was far from being stable."⁴ While expanding its territory, Russia employed a rather flexible peaceful diplomacy offering mutually beneficial terms and its patronage. Taking into consideration this important feature of the Russian national policy as well as availability of vast and free territories in the country, Kalmyks would intentionally establish links with town fortresses through engaging in active trade and other interaction with them. Intensifying such relations and encouraged by interest expressed even by central authorities, Kalmyks made their way deep into Russia trying to establish political links based on the suzerainty and vassalage basis, where both parties were to enjoy sovereign rights. At the same time, under such political circumstances the Kalmyk *taishas* did not oppose the establishment of a mutually acceptable hierarchy, that is, the supreme rule of the Russian tsar over them. However, the tsarist administration wanted to have relations with Kalmyks on the allegiance basis only. Such order not only complied with Russia's interests, both political and economic, but was also in line with the phase of state development.

Russian authorities were watchful of Oirats as a substantial military force and were confronted with the dilemma: either to allow those Kalmyks already inhabiting Russian territories to stay there, gaining their allegiance in a peaceful way, or to drive them away from the territory that had been won by Russia, thus launching a major war against numerous and bellicose Oirat tribes.

However, understanding the good economic situation of Kalmyks (as well as being aware of enormous herds of all cattle types, in particular, horses) and taking into account the character of the Kalmyk soldiers, steadfast Kalmyk policy all along their advancement and really peaceful aspirations, the tsarist administration showed interest in the Kalmyks' allegiance. Moreover, it is quite possible that when establishing close relations with Kalmyks, the Russian authorities must have kept in mind the international situation that was taking shape in the southeastern part of the country due to the formation of two Oirat states: Dzungar Khanate in Western Mongolia and Khoshout Khanate in Kukuinor (currently: Qinghai Province of the People's Republic of China). The Khanates, particularly Dzungaria, pursued an independent foreign policy and actively opposed the Qing Empire. It was via Siberia and these Khanates that Russia had a chance to establish routes to China and India.

It is a well-known fact that there are two opposite points of view in historiography regarding the migration of a part of Oirats from Dzungaria to the west, towards the Caspian Sea, and the formation of the Dzungar and Khoshout Khanates (presented, in particular, in articles by I.Ya. Zlatkin, M.L. Kichikov, etc.). According to one perception, its objective of the developments in question was to restore the Genghis Khan Empire and launch expansion against adjacent countries (N.Ya. Bichurin, A.M. Pozdneyev, N.I. Veselovski, S.A. Kozin, etc.). The other perspective maintains that the migration was caused by the fight among Oirat princes, growth of Oirats' cattle stock, as well as by a lack of pasture lands and forage resources, and by the scarcity of trade exchanges (G. Grumm-Grzhimailo, I.Ya. Zlatkin, etc.).⁵

One cannot agree with the concept of the Oirats' expansion, since there were major wars going on between eastern Mongols and Oirats in the 1670–1680s, which grew beyond the local boundaries. Any integration or joint policy of eastern and western Mongols was out of the question under such conditions. V.V. Bartold was right in maintaining that “the migration of Kalmyks or Oirats took place much later and had nothing to do with the Mongolian Empire.”⁶

It is necessary to mention in support of the second concept that all these objective processes characteristic of the feudal division period, mid-to-late 16th century, resulted in the formation of three large groups of Oirats, which determined their fate on their own. An objective factor of the Oirat ethnogeny—a gradual development period (that one can probably compare to the Renaissance)—created prerequisites for the creation of Oirat khanates in different parts of Eurasia (the Dzungar Khanate in Western Mongolia, the Khoshout Khanate in Kukunor, and the Kalmyk Khanate in the Lower Volga steppe lands) almost simultaneously.

Embarking on their route to the adjacent lands of Western Siberia and Russia, Oirats were certainly well aware of what was going on in the state, what its status was in the world arena, and what its policy was towards the peoples settled in the neighboring territories. The Russian state was closely watching the Kalmyks' migration even before they crossed its borders, and was well informed about them. Moreover, having smashed a powerful Turkish army in the environs of Astrakhan in 1569 and the Crimean Horde near Moscow in 1572, Russia was able to pay close attention to the east in the early 1570s. Therefore, it did not oppose, but rather appreciated the development of trade exchanges with all Siberian peoples including Kalmyks. It was not by accident that Ivan IV ordered in his Charter dated May 30, 1574, which allowed the Stroganov family to build

settlements near the Tobol, Irtysh, Ob, and “other rivers” in order to expand their estates up to the Urals and further and develop their trade relations with Siberian peoples including Kalmyks: “And when merchants from Bukhara and Kalmyks as well as Kazan hordes or other lands come to Yakov and Grigoriy to these fortresses with some goods, you are allowed to trade with them without any duty.”⁷

One can be sure to assume that the issue of this Charter was stipulated by the great role of the Russian foreign office—*Posolsky Prikaz*,^v which was established in 1549 to maintain diplomatic relations with foreign states, as well as the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*,^{vi} which was established in the 1560s to control the territories of the former Kazan and Astrakhan Khanates, and Siberia after 1599. Both of these offices were headed by the great Russian statesman and political figure of the mid-to-late 16th century, the experienced diplomat and *dumnyi diak*,^{vii} Andrey Yakovlevich Shchelkalov, who was actively pursuing the policy of state territory expansion both in the west and southeast.⁸ The fact that these two public offices were directly subordinated to Ivan IV and the *Boyar Duma*^{viii} testifies to their importance as well as significance of the policy they followed.

As it is known, the Russian state was going through hard times at the turn of 17th century, when both peoples (Kalmyks and Russians) started taking specific measures to get closer. Famine struck the country in 1601–1603, and armed uprisings burst out among lower classes (Khlopok near Moscow, and free Cossacks in the Lower Volga). At the same time (1602–1603), False Dmitri I from the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (*Rzeczpospolita*) declared himself a pretender to the Russian throne. His troops crossed the Russian border in the autumn of 1604.

Tsar Boris Godunov died in April 1605, and there was an uprising in Moscow in May. As a result, the pretender managed to march into Moscow. In a complicated situation like this, relations between Russia and the Crimea turned out to be unstable. The threat of the Tatar intervention against Russia was already imminent as early as at the beginning of 1604 when the Crimean khan broke off peace relations unilaterally.⁹

^v Translator's note: *Posolsky Prikaz*—literally “Ambassadorial office,” Russian Foreign Office.

^{vi} Translator's note: Palace *Prikaz*—an office in charge of administrative, judicial, and financial affairs of the Russian southeast.

^{vii} Translator's note: *dumnyi diak*—*Duma* secretary.

^{viii} Translator's note: *Duma*—generally, a representative legislative and/or advisory assembly in Russian history and modern Russia. *Boyar Duma* was an advisory council to the grand princes and tsars in Russia.

However, the situation did not calm down after the assassination of False Dmitri I, when Vasiliy Ivanovich Shuyskiy ascended the throne in May 1606. There were insurrections again as False Dmitri II emerged in 1607. The entire Southern Russia (from the Desna to the Volga mouth), except for a few towns, recognized the pretended Dmitri as their tsar. Uprisings came to Siberia. Some peoples of Western Siberia (Ostyaks and Siberian Tatars, who aimed “to resume their kingdoms as they used to be under Kuchum Khan”) were going to take advantage of the complicated situation that was shaping up in Moscow. At the same time, the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth and Sweden launched an open intervention.¹⁰

In spite of the extremely complicated situation in the country, the tsarist administration kept in mind the situation in the east, paid close attention to Siberia and worked diligently to secure Siberian lands for Russia. Roads and burghs (Ketskiy and Narymskiy, 1596; Verkhoturie, 1598; Turinsk, 1600; Mangazeya, 1601; Tomsk, 1604; Novaya Mangazeya (Turukhansk), 1607) were being built for this purpose on an active basis. Not only “officials and plowmen” but also “merchants,” hunters, and carpenters were sent to the newly built fortified towns of Siberia. At the same time, care was taken of indigenous peoples and the local population of Siberia. Boris Godunov instructed the Verkhoturie *voevoda* in 1598 as follows: “You shall not take carts for express messengers from the Tyumen Tatars; you shall not impose any *yasak*^{ix} on poor, old, ill or crippled Tatars or Ostyaks; you shall take care of making up benefits to natives and Russian migrants; you shall provide Voguls and Verkhoturie merchants with hay lands, fishery and hunting lands, and share all other lands among them so that Voguls and Verkhoturie people could live without any hardships.”¹¹

As Russia's situation in Siberia improved, Kalmyks started officially contacting local representatives of the tsarist authorities in the early 17th century. The very first contacts of Kalmyks were mainly related to such issues as territories for nomads' encampments or commerce in Siberian towns. The arrival of Katachey Burulduyev, representative of the Torgout *taisha* Ho Urluk, to Tara on September 20, 1606 to ask for permission to roam in the Upper Irtysh (along its tributaries—Kamyshlov and Ishim) and to carry on trade can be considered as an incident that initiated official Russian–Oirat relations. We think the major achievement of the meeting was that the representative obtained permission for the *voevoda*'s official representative to come to the *taisha* (“to send our ambassador to him”) with a reply (probably, it was positive). Officials of the Tara *voevoda*,

^{ix} Translator's note: *yasak*—a levy which was paid mostly in furs.

Cossack Tomila Alekseyev and Tatar Urdubay set off to Ho Urluk on October 2, 1606 with a mission to tell the *taisha* that “his people roam around our land without having humbly asked for our permission first” and inform him that “if he wants to be under the high authority of our tsar” then “he shall send his people of high standing to Tara for a *shert*^x and consolidation,” or otherwise “he must leave our lands and go away from our saline lakes...”¹²

In view of emerging bureaucratization of central administration as well as because the *uyezd voevodas* were not authorized to make decisions related to territorial issues or to send ambassadors to the tsar, the Tara *voevoda*, Prince Sil Ivanovich Gagarin, as we think, addressed the tsarist administration, having previously informed Tobolsk (*okrug*) *voevoda* R.F. Troekurov. In his letter of January 12, 1607 to the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*, he not only informed about the arrival of a representative from one of the largest groups of Torgout Kalmyks roaming in the Russian territories headed by *taisha* Ho Urluk and their requests, but also asked for instructions regarding his further actions with respect to the Kalmyks.

In reply to his letter and to the report from the Tobolsk *voevoda*, the Tara *voevoda* S.I. Gagarin received a Charter dated March 30, 1607 from the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* (issued by the judge and *boyar*,^{xi} Prince Dmitri Ivanovich Shuyskiy under the direction of Tsar Vasiliy Shuyskiy). The Charter instructed the Tara *voevoda* S.I. Gagarin to send officials to the Kalmyk *uluses* for negotiations “so that Kolmaki princes and *morzalar*”^{xii} as well as all *ulus* people would pass under our tsarist authority, take their *sherts* and oaths of allegiance and provide us with pledges of always being under our tsarist authority from now on; so that they would always pay *yasak* to us and bring the pledge to the town of Tara; and so that they would not oppress or do any harm to districts and people that are our *yasak* payers; and we order to take care of them and protect them against enemies.”¹³ If Kalmyks considered these conditions acceptable, they were to “take their *shert* according to their beliefs.”

From that time, central Russian authorities started working purposefully at making Kalmyks a part of the Russian state legally. The fact that the issue was under control of central authorities confirms that it was of great importance. The above-mentioned Charter instructed the Tara *vo-*

^x Translator's note: *shert*—an oath of allegiance.

^{xi} Translator's note: *boyar*—a member of the highest rank of the feudal Russian aristocracy, second only to the ruling princes.

^{xii} Translator's note: *morzalar*—a Kalmyk nobleman.

evoda to inform the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* and personally *boyar* Dmitri Ivanovich Shuyskiy about the course of negotiations with Kalmyks (S.I. Gagarin was earlier ordered to hold them).

Having informed the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* about his suggestions regarding the current relations with Kalmyks, *voevoda* and Prince Sil Ivanovich Gagarin, a skilled state figure experienced in rendering Siberian peoples constituent members of Russia as well as in eastern politics in general, decided not to wait for official instructions from the center (which, as it has already been mentioned above, came only on March 30, 1607) and sent his envoys to Dalai Batyr, the *taisha* of Derbets, and Ho Urluk, the *taisha* of Torgouts, with the proposal to pass under Russian authority and send their "high-ranking people" to Tara for taking the *shert* as early as January 27, 1607. The Kazan Palace *Prikaz* approved of the *voevoda*'s actions later.

While the lot of Cossack Tomila Alekseyev and Tatar Urdubay sent to Torgouts on October 2, 1606 turned out to be tragic (they went missing), the mission of the Tara *voevoda*'s representatives of the *yasak* payers "Yenobai the prince and Kugotai with their company" to Dalai Batyr was successful. They returned to Tara together with a delegation from *taishas* Dalai Batyr and Izeney on June 16, 1607. "Kolmaki *taisha* Kugonai Tubiyeu" was at the head of the Kolmaki delegation comprising 21 people. According to him, he represented "five key rulers of Oirats" ("*taishas* Baatyr Yanyshev, and Ichiney Urtuyev, and Uzhen Konayev, and Yurikty Konayev"), who had 45 *taishas* (minor chieftains) under their command. There were 12 *sans* (a *san* means ten thousand people; according to the traditions of the period, it is quite possible that they meant male population only) in possession of all the said *taishas*. Thus, one can speculate that the population under control of the aforementioned rulers made up over 200 thousand people. That is why one can perfectly agree with the opinion of S.K. Bogoyavlenski and U.E. Erdniyev that about 80 thousand Kalmyk soldiers and 200 thousand of the rest of the population came up to the Russian border by the late 16th century.¹⁴

Taisha Kugonai Tubiyeu, the head of the official Kolmaki delegation, took a verbal *shert* (oath of allegiance) to Russia represented by an outstanding state official—the Tara *voevoda* and prince S.I. Gagarin—on behalf of a major part of Kalmyks (Derbets), with the exception of Ho Urluk's and Kursugan's groups that were leading a nomad's life in the Upper Irtysh independently, for the first time in June 1607.

The Tara *voevoda* S.I. Gagarin submitted a report on the meeting with the Kalmyk delegation and taking the *shert* of allegiance to Russia, which took place in June 1607, to the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* on September 30,

1607. The report said as follows: “When interrogated, Kugonai-*taisha* said that he, Kugonai, was sent by Kolmaki people—*taishas* Baatyr and Ichiney with their people—to ask humbly for your, great Tsar’s, mercy, so that you ordered not to conquer them but let them be under your royal command and roam all over our lands in the Upper Irtysh towards the saline lakes; and so that we imposed *yasak* on them, Kolmaki people, in horses, camels or cows if we please; that is what they are humbly asking ... Kugonai-*taisha* *sherted*^{xiii} to you, the great Tsar, on behalf of all of his people and on behalf of 49 *taishas*, *uluses* and Kolmaki people, with the exception of Urluk-*taisha* and Kursugan-*taisha*.”

The Kalmyk delegation left back for their *uluses*. It was accompanied by five officials authorized by the Tara *voevoda*, whose objective was to meet Kalmyk *taishas*, explain the essence of the expected agreement with the tsarist government to them, emphasizing mutual benefits of the Kalmyks’ becoming a part of the Russian state. The key objective was as follows: “to deliver our charter to them [Kalmyks—*K.M.*] saying that we, the great sovereign, have generously agreed upon their *chelobitnaya*^{xiv} and ordered them to roam upstream of the Irtysh and other places where they want, and ordered to keep them under my high control, and ordered to protect them against all enemies including Cossack horde, Nogai and any other enemies, and demanded from them to be always loyal to my charter, and I am going to send my reward to them soon; and ordered them to pay *yasak* in horses and camels or anything else so that they did not suffer privations.”^{xv} These contractual relations were to be formed in Moscow at the top level—between the Russian tsar and chief *taishas* Dalai Batyr and Izeney—and the Charter was to be “sealed with golden seals.” The officials were instructed to provide the *taishas* with all conveniences and guarantee their security during their voyage to Moscow.

The Kazan Palace *Prikaz* reminded the Tara *voevoda* that he was to keep an eye on the Torgout *taishas* Ho Urluk and Kursugan and send his representatives to them to negotiate their accession to Russia. At the same time, he was advised to pursue a safe and consistent policy toward the two chieftains. “If Ho Urluk and Kursugan do not want to be under our high control, do not provide us with pledges and refuse to pay *yasak*, you must protect our *volosts*^{xv} being *yasak* payers from them and must not wage war

^{xiii} Translator’s note: *sherted*—took an oath of allegiance.

^{xiv} Translator’s note: *chelobitnaya*—petition.

^{xv} Translator’s note: *volost*—an administrative division of Muscovy and, later, in Russia, a part of *uyezd*.

on them until the great Kolmaki *taisha* Izeney and his company become loyal to us.” This implies that the central authorities did not recommend the *voevoda* to resort to the use of force so that not to “put off or alert” great Kolmaki *taishas* until official contractual relations were established with the Derbet *taishas*, Dalai Batyr and Izeney.

The charter issued by the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* on October 18, 1607 is one of the most important historic sources enabling to study the Russian national policy in the early 17th century. Making nomadic Siberian peoples parts of Russia on a voluntary and mutually beneficial basis was a part of the policy. With that purpose in view, the state authorities were to pursue a flexible and peaceful policy aimed at making peaceful agreements, developing mutually beneficial trade, ensuring security of merchants, and guaranteeing free communication. The following instruction of the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* to the Tara *voevoda* confirms this: “You must welcome them and take care of them, you must ask them to come to the marketplace for trade and protect them there. You must also select one or two good interpreters skillful in the Kolmaki language as well as in reading and writing in Kolmaki among our officials, Tatars, or captives.” Another particular feature of the policy was that Russia offering its territory, patronage, and protection demanded paying *yasak* in horses, camels, or other kinds of cattle in the amount that would not be an excessive burden on the people.

After the first successful agreement reached by the Kugonai Tubiyev’s delegation, another Derbet delegation, including a representative of Torgouts, arrived in Tara soon (on September 21, 1607). The delegation’s composition was more impressive this time: four ambassadors (Bauchin, Devlet Takhabaksheyev, Arley Alakov, and Kesenchak Chiganov) from five chief *taishas* (Derbet *taishas* Baatyr, Ichiney, Urukhtu, and Unginay, and Torgout *taisha* Shukhay [Sunke]—Ho Urluk’s son). A merchant caravan came to Tara along with the delegation (about 90 merchants alone), which had 550 horses with them for sale, to buy necessary goods. According to the agreement, Tara authorities exempted Kolmaki merchants from any duty. This was not just a financial question, it was a policy pursued to attract Kalmyks: “We must not exasperate them at first or put off from our tsar’s worship.”

According to the directive of the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*, the entire Kolmaki delegation (Alakov, Bauchin, Takhabaksheyev, and Chiganov) accompanied by the Tara *voevoda*’s official Boldan Boikach left for Moscow to meet the Russian tsar. The Tara *voevoda* S.I. Gagarin informed the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* on January 12, 1608 that Kalmyks were expanding

the territory where they were roaming (“they came there together with their *uluses* and started roaming along the Om’ river”) and the *taishas* were still asking “the great tsar and grand prince Vasiliy Ivanovich, the autocrat of the entire Russia..., to take them under the tsar’s control and protect them against Altyn Khan.”

After the Kalmyk delegation came to Moscow on February 7, 1608, a high-ranking official—Vasiliy Grigoryevich Telepnev, deputy judge who was probably in charge of eastern issues—received it at the *Posolsky Prikaz*. Tsar Vasiliy Ivanovich Shuyskiy received the entire Kalmyk delegation accompanied by V.G. Telepnev, a *diak* from the *Posolsky Prikaz*, on February 14, 1608. When ambassadors were presented to the tsar and subjected to the ceremony of his hand kissing, they set out *chelobitnayas* (petitions) from Kolmaki *taishas* through an interpreter. V.G. Telepnev, a clerk from the *Posolsky Prikaz*, read the reply of Tsar V.I. Shuyskiy to their *chelobitnaya*. *Taishas* and all their *uluses* were allowed to “roam in the land of Siberia along the Irtysh and Om’ rivers as well as near Kamyshlov and other places where they want, and ordered to stay always under the high tsar’s control, and they will always be protected against all enemies including the Cossack hordes, Nogai and Altyn Khan, and they must always and in every respect be loyal to the tsar in view of the tsar’s permission. And they must serve us, the great tsar, honestly and for ever and ever.” Kalmyks were supposed to pay *yasak* “in horses according to their own will and depending on how many horses they can give.” At the end of the reception, the tsar requested: “you, chieftains, are welcome to meet us, the great tsar, personally.”¹⁶

However, no document about their contractual relations was adopted as a result of the first official reception of the Kalmyk delegation by Tsar V.I. Shuyskiy. Indirect sources say that there was only one appointment in the tsar’s palace on February 14, 1608, which initiated the process of official incorporation of Kalmyks into Russia.

When Kalmyk ambassadors left Moscow and went to Tara, the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* instructed the Tara *voevoda* I.V. Mosalskiy (Charter dated February 27, 1608) to bring the delegation to “the Kolmaki land,” explain the terms and conditions of the Kalmyk incorporation into Russia and organize the oath of allegiance (*shert*) for senior *taishas* in Tara and “in rivers Om’ and Kamyshlov” for junior ones. The Kalmyk delegation accompanied by officials of the Tara *voevoda* with Cossack Anika Chernyi left Tara for “Kolmakia” on August 23, 1608.

Envoys of the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* came back “from the Kolmaki land” on December 5, 1608 and drew up an in-depth report saying, “they

visited all the Kolmaki *taishas* in their *uluses* and informed them about our charter.” The main point of the report was that Kalmyks agreed to the terms and “they are delighted with our charter and want to be under our control.” Yet since “there was a campaign against Altyn Khan, they do not have time for the *shert* in autumn; there was a snowfall and it is impossible to come to Tara for trade.” Kalmyks were supposed to take *shert* near the saline lakes or at the Om’ river as early as the next spring only but they “do not want to come to Tara” and “refuse to make a pledge or pay any *yasak*.” This confirms the fact that there were no contractual relations with Kalmyks in writing until the end of 1609 and that Kalmyks started to complain about the terms of the allegiance agreement.

That is why the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* recognized contractual relations between Russia and Kalmyks officially and sent a Charter to the Tara *vo-evoda* Ivan Volodimerovich Mosalskiy on behalf of V.I. Shuyskiy saying that he (Mosalskiy) was required to send officials to the Kalmyk *taishas* Izeney and Dalai Batyr to confirm the *shert* taken by their delegation in Moscow and allow Kalmyks to trade free of duty in Siberian towns on August 20, 1609.

When the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* learnt about the Kalmyk campaign against Kazakhs, they guaranteed security to all Kalmyk *uluses* roaming in the vicinity of Tara in the same Charter in response to a request from Kalmyks of December 10, 1608 (*taishas* Izeney and Dalai Batyr sent their messengers Igitei and Katoi)—this time in accordance with the agreement: “You can rely on our tsar’s mercy.” The Kazan Palace *Prikaz* sent another Charter to I.V. Mosalskiy on the same day (on August 20, 1609). It instructed him to send officials to the Kalmyk *taisha* Ho Urluk to administer the *shert*. Ho Urluk was supposed to give *shert* based on the terms and conditions reached in Moscow on February 14, 1608. Kalmyk *taishas* had an option of concluding an allegiance agreement directly with the Russian tsar in Moscow. The Charter read as follows: “If *taishas*, the high-ranking people, want to come to us, the great tsar, in Moscow, on their own, they can do it feeling absolutely safe... and I will confer my great mercy on them.”

It is possible to explain certain activation of the tsarist administration regarding administering *shert* to Kalmyk *taishas* in 1608–1609 not only by the Kalmyks’ corresponding activities, in particular, in 1608, but also by the Russian urge towards making Kalmyks a part of the Russian state in view of the complicated situation in the country, its southern border, and never-ending claims on the part of Poland. Moreover, it is probable that the tsarist administration was aware of changes in the politics con-

ducted by the senior Kalmyk *taishas*, who were trying to win a victory over Khalkhas Altyn Khan and Kazakhs in a combined effort in 1609.

Pospela Golubin, an envoy of the Tara *voevoda*, who was visiting Kalmyk *uluses* in March–July 1609 and was present at the *chulgan* (congress) with the participation of *taishas* Ho Urluk, Koshevchei, and Abai, the widow of the *taisha* Izeney, informed the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* about what was happening in the “Kolmaki land” as well as opinions and intentions of Kalmyk *taishas* (A. Chernyi reported about this before as well), in his report dated July 20, 1609. He said that the senior *taishas* could not come to Tara and junior *taishas* could not come to the Om’ and Kamyshlov rivers to confirm their previous *sherts* and suggested sending the Tara *voevoda*’s ambassadors to conduct negotiations. Speaking about the levy, “they neither sent any ambassadors to us nor paid any *yasak* to anyone... and they do not want to pay any *yasak* to anyone anymore.” In addition, P. Golubin understood a very important detail in Kalmyks’ opinions. He cited the *taishas* in his report: “We are not settled people, we are nomads: we roam where we want.”

The tsarist administration began altering its policy toward Kalmyks to a certain degree based on the information about the situation in Kalmyk *uluses* beginning from the middle of 1610. Along with peaceful diplomacy to make Kalmyks a part of the Russian state on a voluntary basis, Russia was ready to exert pressure then. The Kazan Palace *Prikaz* in its Charter dated June 15, 1610 instructed the Tara *voevoda* I.V. Mosalskiy to send officials “to high-ranking *taishas* Koshevchei and Baatyr and their company to Black Kalmyks (Dzungarians) and instruct them to comply with our previous *ukases* so that *taishas* and all *ulus* people were under our control, served us, were loyal to us, paid *yasak* and roamed in our lands along the Irtysh and Kamyshlov.” If Kalmyk *taishas* rejected the aforesaid offers, the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* instructed I.V. Mosalskiy on behalf of Tsar V.I. Shuyskiy to resort to threats during negotiations: “Otherwise they will be banned to roam in our Siberian land along the Irtysh and Kamyshlov rivers as well as towards saline lakes or own any fishery or hunting lands, and they will have to abandon our Siberian lands. And if they start roaming in our lands in spite of our prohibition, we will muster troops from all Siberian towns and wage a war against them. And we will order the troops to conquer them and their *uluses* and capture their wives and children.”¹⁷

At the same time, heads of the *Prikaz* recommended that the Tara *voevoda* should display vigilance and should not resort to armed force but, on the contrary, should try to resume previous peaceful negotiations on making Kalmyks a part of Russia. The document features a touch of ori-

ental policy—caution and peaceful regulation of foreign political issues as far as possible.

It was the last charter issued by the administration of Tsar Vasiliy Shuyskiy. As a matter of fact, he was deposed and arrested together with his brothers Dmitri and Ivan a month after it was sent to Tara. A group of seven of the most influential *Boyar Duma* members (F.I. Mstislavskiy, A.V. Trubetskoy, Z.P. Lyapunov, V.V. Golitsyn, M. Vorotynskiy, etc.) was administering the affairs of the state temporarily (from July 17 to the end of 1610). Contemporaries called the government *Semiboyarshchina*.^{xvi} The interregnum period from July 17, 1610 to February 7, 1613 turned out to be extremely hard and complicated for Russia. It seems that Kalmyk affairs were postponed under conditions of the ongoing fight of Russia against Polish–Lithuanian (claiming the Russian throne) and Swedish interventions, taking into account the race for power among different groups of *boyars* (as a consequence of imposture) and in view of practically ruined state administration. At the same time, Kalmyks felt certain safety after the victory over Khalkhas Altyn Khan and Kazakhs, and did not rush to establish political relations as they had done before. It was the end of the peaceful and relatively quiet initial period of rapprochement between Kalmyks and the Russian state and the Kalmyks' official allegiance to Russia.

As Russia was making its way deep into Siberia in the 16–17th centuries, it was trying to annex and incorporate Siberian peoples mainly by way of kindly treatment and based on contractual relations formed at various levels of the state administration, up to the highest level—the tsar. At the same time, Russia paid much attention to developing commerce and exchange as well as ensuring mutually beneficial obligations. Following a flexible policy in the east, the tsarist administration, first of all, aimed at reaching specific objectives: it was interested in ensuring security for the vast territory of Siberia, developing trade relations and economy and acquiring economic benefits (in the form of levy paid by subjects, but without imposing any excessive burden on them). It is well known that while pursuing its foreign policy in the east, the tsar administration laid a considerable emphasis on the policy of securing Russia's further advancement into Eastern Siberia and the Far East, as well as establishing new safe trade routes to southeastern countries.

The development of relations with Kalmyks and their incorporation into the Russian state were an important constituent of the Russian policy in Si-

^{xvi} Translator's note: *semiboyarshchina*—government composed of seven *boyars*.

beria, in particular, its foreign policy in the southeastern direction. That is why Kalmyk issues were examined and handled by the tsar himself and superior bodies of the Russian state authorities—*Boyar Duma*, *Posolskiy Prikaz*, and Kazan Palace *Prikaz*, as well as such territorial and administrative authorities as Tobolsk (*okrug*) *voevodstvo*^{xvii} and Tara (*uyezd*) *voevodstvo*, which at the same time represented national institutions with a broad range of functions and powers (civic, military, fiscal, etc.), up to diplomatic functions (sending and receiving ambassadors, negotiating and making agreements on behalf of the central authorities).

Diak Aleksei Shapilov edited, corrected, and signed all the charters of the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* mentioned above. Therefore, quite a senior state figure, a deputy judge (head of the *Prikaz*), was in charge of the Kalmyk issue. He pursued a purposeful national and uniform foreign policy on behalf of the central authorities in their relations with eastern and southern countries.

When annexing and incorporating Siberian peoples, taking them under its patronage, protecting them, and delegating the power over them to the local aristocracy (*taishas*), the Russian state acted well in line with its own territorial, economic, and political interests. It was expanding its territory and building up its natural, labor, and military resources. Such a policy was in compliance with Russian domestic and foreign interests.

Peoples taking Russian allegiance thereby won a strong patron and protector that put an end to sanguinary wars of annihilation between these peoples and their neighbors, which had had grave consequences for many of them. Moreover, they became a part of a common economic and geopolitical space thus breaking fresh ground in the common history of the Russian peoples.

Russia's policy towards Kalmyks in 1620–1650

The initial stage of relations between Kalmyks and Russia lasted for almost ten years, but it was practically suspended due to the internal situation that shaped both inside the Russian state and in the Kalmyk *uluses*. A new rapprochement of the parties began when the Time of Troubles was over in Russia.

^{xvii} Translator's note: *voevodstvo*—a military authority under control of a *voevoda*.

The interregnum period was over in February 1613: the *Zemsky Sobor*^{xviii} enthroned Mikhail Fedorovich Romanov. When the aftermath of the false royalty was eliminated (in the middle of 1614), the Russian statehood was resumed, and an independent consistent policy was formed. The Time of Troubles was over when the Truce of Deulino was made with Poland in December 1618. The results of the Truce were unfavorable for Russia: the European territory of the country was greatly reduced (Poland retained the Russian cities of Smolensk and Chernigov, the Novgorod-Severskiy lands with 29 towns, and Zaporozhye, while Swedes reserved the mouth of the Neva and the entire coast of the Baltic Sea, thus shutting up the access to the Baltic Sea for Russia). However, a refusal of the Polish king's son Władysław to claim the throne of Russian tsars was the key political breakthrough of the Truce.¹⁸

Being engaged in western matters, Russia kept in mind the need to develop and maintain relations with Turkey, Persia, and the Crimea prejudicing them against Poland, as well as to settle the relations with the Nogai, whose raids on Russian territories had escalated during the Time of Troubles.

While Russian affairs in the west were far from being successful, Russia moved towards the ocean in the east, to the Chinese borders, and expanded its territory by 70 thousand square miles "bringing scattered savage populations under the control of the tsar, collecting *yasak* from them and often exasperating them by plundering."¹⁹ The "plundering" was not merely a result of the complicated economic situation in the country; it occurred because the central authorities eased up their supervision over local Siberian authorities. The tsar's letter to the Stroganov family is a confirmation of Russia's complicated financial and economic situation. Mikhail Fedorovich applied to the Stroganov family to borrow some money and bread for the state in May 1613: "There is no money, and the stock of bread in garners is scarce. We have no money to pay wages to our officials." Under the conditions, collection of *yasak* from the Siberian peoples was one of the key sources of income to the treasury.

However, officials from the Siberian *voevodstvos* in charge of *yasak* collection were apparently "overdoing" it making additional profits for themselves. The tsar administration reminded *voevodas* more than once in this connection that they "must treat indigene subjects well... when collecting *yasak*, and *yasak* collectors must not offend people in vain or levy

^{xviii} Translator's note: *Zemsky Sobor*—the first Russian parliament of the feudal estates type, in the 16th and 17th centuries. The term roughly means "assembly of the land."

extra taxes. They must collect *yasak* imposed by the tsar in amiable and kind ways, without being cruel or ungracious. In order to collect *yasak* imposed by the tsar in a profitable way, the *yasak* amount must be based on their resources, and it is permitted to levy *yasak* only once a year; it is prohibited to levy it two or three times a year.”

The civil war between Oirats (Abai–Koshevchey’s group) roaming along the banks of the Irtysh, Om’, and Ishim rivers came to an end during the interregnum period in Russia (1610–1613). It was a period of lull and internal peace, which made it possible for them to conquer some peoples (Baraba and Kuznetsk Tatars) and impose a levy on them. This slowed down their movement to the west and taking Russian allegiance. As it has already been mentioned above, at that time the tsarist administration increased the *yasak* burden on the peoples that were not parts of Russia by then. “If people living in the new lands are not obedient, you must try to convince them in an amiable way first; if you fail to persuade them by any other means, you must restrain them by means of war and small-scale devastation so that to calm them down a little.”²⁰ The central authorities backed up the policy pursued by the administrations of Siberian towns. Though in a somewhat subdued form, this concerned Kalmyks as well. As a result, there were conflicts and even armed clashes between Russians and Oirats. According to N.Ya. Bichurin, it was not the entire people but individual small princelings that got involved in the clashes.²¹

These kind of clashes between Russians and Kalmyks became very frequent in 1612–1613. It is possible that the instruction of the central authorities saying “you must restrain them by means of war and small-scale devastation so that to calm them down a little” served as a basis for Tara *voevoda* Ivan Mikhailovich Godunov to organize punitive expeditions to some Kalmyk *uluses*. The tsar administration was backing up and encouraging these actions taken by the Tara *voevoda* for a while.²² The Tara *voevoda* sent big expeditions comprised of Yurt and *volost* Tatars as well to some roaming groups of Kalmyks in 1613 twice (in July and September). As a result, he did manage to “calm down” Kalmyks. Ambassadors (Av-gachka, Dalan, and Chedutay) of Kalmyk *taishas* Turgen and Dalai Batyr came to Tara on November 25, 1613 and suggested taking a *shert* according to their faith in order to put an end to mutual attacks. The Kazan Palace *Prikaz* received information that the Kalmyk ambassadors came to Tara in February 1614 and instructed I.M. Godunov (on April 4, 1614) to enter into negotiations immediately and send officials “to the Kolmaki land with Kalmyk people to Turgen and Dalai Batyr to make an agreement.” The fact that the Tara *voevoda* was to inform the Kazan Palace

Prikaz (dumnyi diak Aleksei Shapilov and *diaks* Petr Mikulin and Ofonasiy Ovdokimov) about the course of the negotiations confirms that the tsarist administration attached considerable importance to resuming peaceful relations with Kalmyks.

The next delegation from Kalmyk *taishas* Batyr, Turgen, and Ho Urluk arrived at Tara on May 3, 1615 and was dismissed back “to the Kolmaki land” on May 16 accompanied by interpreter Oleshka Masalitin. Yet it is not quite clear what happened on the way. When Oleshka Masalitin started feeling fear for his life, he escaped and informed ataman Yeremey Prutinkin, whose detachment was set up near the saline lakes, that he had apparently seen “great people coming up the steppe along the Kamyshlov to the Ishim.” However, scouts of the Tyumen *voevoda*, M.M. Godunov, revealed that “there were five Kalmyks with two horses near the Ishim.”

In the same year of 1615, Vlasko Kolashnikov, a Cossack from Tara who was sent to Kalmyk *taishas* Turgen, Butak, and Maldyshe, coped with the task given to him by the second Tara *voevoda*, Petr Mutokhin, “and made Kalmyk *taishas* take the *shert* so that they went under our tsar’s control, and the *taishas* wanted to send their high-ranking officials as ambassadors to us.” However, when the winter came, Vlasko Kolashnikov had to stay with *taisha* Maldyshe and lived there until the spring. When the spring came, “Kalmyks let him go away, and Kalmyk *taishas* Tabutai and Maldyshe sent their ambassadors, Kunai and Batyr, along with him to Tara.”

Instructed by the Tara *voevoda* K. Velyaminov, in June 1616 Vlasko Kolashnikov reported in person to the Tobolsk (*okrug*) *voevoda* and *boyar*, Prince Ivan Semenovich Kurakin about the positive results of his mission to Kalmyk *taishas*. The Tobolsk *voevoda* took a decision to expand and secure the arrangements made with Kalmyks. Therefore, between March 31–April 6 of 1616 he “sent officials from Tobolsk [apparently, the *okrug*’s officials were of a higher rank than before—*K.M.*], Tomilka Petrov and Ivashka Kunitsyn, with some companions to the Kolmaki land to *taishas* Batyr, Kuzeney, Chigir, and Urluk, as well as other *taishas*, and instructed them to tell *taishas* to be under our tsar’s control and to send their ambassadors to us, and to allow merchants to come to our Siberian towns with their goods, and not to roam in our lands along the Om’ and Kamyshlov rivers without our permission.”

The Tobolsk *voevoda* immediately informed the Tyumen *voevoda*, Fedor Semenovich Korkodinov, that “officials from Tobolsk and Tara were sent to the Kolmaki land on a diplomatic mission,” and that “you must not send military men from Tyumen to wage wars against Kalmyks.” On Sep-

tember 20, 1616 Ivan Semenovitch Kurakin reported to the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* about all of his actions including the official report to the Tyumen *voevoda*. The *Prikaz*, in its turn, responded immediately to this report by approving of the Tobolsk *voevoda*'s actions and disapproving of the Tyumen *voevoda*'s actions because the *Prikaz* paid much attention to the development of peaceful relations with Kalmyks ("Prince Fedor, you are not right in acting this way"). The *Prikaz* issued a strict reprimand with regard to the Tyumen *voevoda* Fedor Korkodinov because he kept suppressing Kalmyks and sending "military men from Tyumen to wage a war against Kalmyks and to carry out a war by robbery" (i.e., in an illegal way). In this connection, the Charter issued by the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* on October 15, 1616 instructed the Tyumen *voevoda* "not to send any military men from Tyumen or Tatars to levy war against Kalmyks any more, and not to suppress them... And if you resort to robbery again and keep sending military men from Tyumen or Tatars to levy war against Kalmyks without an order from Tobolsk, you *will be disgraced and punished*" (emphasis by the author).

Having received the report from the Tobolsk *voevoda* of September 20, 1616 regarding the dispatch of ambassadors to the Kalmyk *taishas* in March–April 1616, the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* sent a corresponding report to the *Posolsky Prikaz* (which was an executive authority of the tsar and *Boyar Duma* at that time). A Charter issued on October 2, 1616 by the *Posolsky Prikaz* (which was in effect controlled by the tsar himself) instructed the Tobolsk *voevoda* Ivan Kurakin to report in detail on the results of the mission carried out by Tomilka Petrov and Ivashka Kunitsyn as soon as the envoys from Tobolsk and the Kalmyk ambassadors came back (or failed to come back). If the negotiations were successful, the *voevoda* was to take measures to ensure security of this Kalmyk delegation and send them accompanied by Tomilka Petrov and Ivashka Kunitsyn to the tsar, with prior notification of the center about the terms of agreement and number of attendants.

Ivan Kurakin informed the *Posolsky Prikaz* about the return of the Tobolsk envoys and Kalmyk ambassadors from *taishas* Batyr and Isentur in October–November of 1616 with gifts for the tsar (two horses). The Tobolsk *voevoda*'s official report to the *Posolsky Prikaz* said that "The Kolmaki *taishas* asked for your, tsar's, permission to roam in your lands in the vicinity of Siberian towns, and they want to be under your control." The Kalmyk ambassadors were offered upon their arrival to inform their *taishas* that it was required to think over the terms of negotiations, make a draft agreement and dispatch "their high-ranking officials to you, the tsar,

to Moscow” as ambassadors. The Kalmyk ambassadors informed the Tobolsk *voevoda* that the *taishas* took a decision to send their ambassadors to the tsar. However, they felt concerned over two issues: the destiny of ambassadors Chetan, Baibagish, and Kerenti, who had been dispatched by the *taishas* to Tyumen as early as the summer of 1616, the results of their mission remaining unknown; and the problem of ambassadors’ security on their way to Moscow since “former *voevodas* of Tobolsk and Tyumen would oppress and rob their people [Kalmyks–K.M].”

The concerns of the Kolmaki *taishas* regarding the destiny of their deputation to Tyumen turned out to be grounded to a degree. Tyumen official Gavrilka Ivanov and “his companions” reported that Tyumen *voevoda* Prince Fedor Semenovich “Korkodinov robbed the Kolmaki and captured their horses and sheep.” “And Prince Fedor, my tsar, kept them in Tyumen for a long time for a reason I do not know, and did not give them any money from your tsar’s treasury that was appropriate to them, and the Kalmyks were allegedly reported to eat dead horses found along the way.” An inquiry made by an official from the *okug voevodstvo*, Vasilii Tyrnov, as well as memoranda of the Kalmyk ambassadors, who left Tyumen on October 12, 1616 together with Vasilii Tyrnov, confirmed all the facts. The Tobolsk *voevoda* concluded on that ground that “Prince Fedor robbed, suppressed, and tormented Kalmyks and I, my tsar, think that he did much harm and interfered with your tsar’s affairs.” The conclusion as well as the inquiry and memoranda were sent to the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* addressed to Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich.

At the same time, the Tyumen *voevoda*, Fedor Korkodinov was not merely robbing the Kalmyk ambassadors. He also held a Kalmyk *abyz*,^{xix} Baksha captive in 1616 and received a ransom for him: 30 horses and 100 sheep. The Kazan Palace *Prikaz* demanded on November 16, 1616 “to send Baksha to Tobolsk under guard” and inform the *boyar*, Prince Oleksei Yuriyevich Sitskiy (obviously, the head of the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*), about the date of his delivery beforehand. Due to the reasons mentioned above, the Kalmyk delegation failed to set off for Moscow in 1616. That is why in November–December 1616 the Tobolsk *voevoda* sent his officials “Litvin Tomilka Petrov and mounted Cossack Ivashka Kunitsyn... who had been to the Kolmaki land before” in June–July of the same year to the *Posolsky Prikaz* to report about the situation with Kalmyks to the tsar.²³

In their in-depth memorandum, which was obviously written in the second half of December 1616, they described the objective (on the in-

^{xix} Translator’s note: *abyz*—mullah.

structions of Ivan Kurakin) of their visit to “the Kolmaki land” ruled by the Derbet *taisha* Dalai: to bring the Kolmaki *taishas* under the tsar’s control “so that they were under the tsar’s control and came to the tsar’s land in Siberia as well as other Siberian towns to sell their goods.” They received a warm welcome in the Kolmaki land and the *taishas* took their offer to take Russian allegiance kindly.

At that time the Kolmaki land they wrote about was quite a large group of Oirats headed by the *taisha* Dalai and comprising four of his brothers as well as his cousins, nephews, Torgout *taisha* Ho Urluk, and Choros *taisha* Chokhur. “The Cossack Greater Horde and Kirghiz Horde” (Great Zhuz Kazakhs and Yenisei Kirghiz) “were under their control and obeyed to them” (to the Oirats of the group).²⁴ However, this group of Oirats depended on the Khalkhas Altyn Khan, who was “an ally of the Chinese tsar” and had to pay “*yasak* to them in the form of 200 camels, 100 horses, and 1,000 sheep per year from all *taishas* including high-ranking ones, except for small *taishas*.”²⁵

The results of the resumption and development of mutual relations with Kalmyks after Mikhail Fedorovich’s accession to the throne, actual steps taken by executive authorities and *voevodas* of Siberian towns in this direction, as well as information disclosed in the inquiries of Tomilka Petrov and Ivashka Kunitsyn, were examined in detail on December 31, 1616 at a session of the *Boyar Duma* (Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich, *boyars* and Princes Fedor Ivanovich Mstislavskiy, Ivan Nikitich Romanov, Dmitri Timofeyevich Trubetskoy, Dmitriy Mikhailovich Pozharskiy, Ivan Mikhailovich Vorotynskiy, Vasilii Petrovich Morozov, Ivan Vasilievich Golitsyn, Fedor Ivanovich Sheremetev, Ivan Borissovich Cherkasskiy, Mikhail Mikhailovich Saltykov, Grigoriy Volkonskiy, Ivan Semenovich Kurakin, etc.). The *Boyar Duma* took a decision “to consult... Kolmaki people from now... and take them under the tsar’s control. And if Kalmyks start sending ambassadors [a higher diplomatic rank—*K.M.*] or envoys [a lower diplomatic rank—*K.M.*] to the tsar, you must let them proceed from Tobolsk to Moscow to see the tsar without any delay.” The tsar issued a similar ukase complying with the *Boyar Duma*’s decision to be sent to Siberian towns.

The *Boyar Duma* examined the Kolmaki issue as a part of the foreign policy in the southeastern direction. That is why issues related to the Khalkhas Altyn Khan, China, and the tsar Bukhara were settled along with the Kalmyk issue. As for the case of the Tyumen *voevoda*, Fedor Korkodinov, the *Boyar Duma* acknowledged that “*voevodas* in Tyumen offend Kalmyk ambassadors, commit violence, and rob them.” This ver-

dict referred to the ukase on the subject already being in the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*. Nevertheless, the contents of the ukase remained unknown. However, Fedor Korkodinov was never mentioned in any other documents after this session of the *Boyar Duma*.

By way of executing the verdict issued by the *Boyar Duma* on December 31, 1616 and the corresponding tsar's *ukase*, on May 29, 1617 the Tobolsk *voevoda* Ivan Kurakin sent an ataman, Ivan Saveliev, and official Pervushka Petrov, along with the ambassador Buga, who arrived from *taisha* Dalai, "to the great *taisha* Bagatyr and all Kalmyk people so that they were under the tsar's control and sent their merchants with all their goods at their disposal to the tsar's towns."

The envoys of the Tobolsk *voevoda* arrived at the camp of the Derbet *taisha* Dalai Batyr, who was at the head of the Northwestern Oirats, in the first half of August in 1617, and stayed with him for two months. At the reception held by Dalai Batyr and in the presence of two lamas, two of Dalai Batyr's sons, wives, Kazakh envoys from the Great Zhuz, and envoys of the Yenisei Kyrgyz, ataman Ivan Saveliev disclosed the goal of his mission "by the tsar's order": "to instruct him to be under the tsar's control with all of his Kolmaki land, and not to send his people to levy war against the tsar's towns, and to detain prince Ishim, who has disobeyed the tsar recently and levied war upon the tsar's *volosts*, and to send him along with his ambassadors to the tsar." When accepting the offer made by the Russian envoys, Dalai Batyr replied that "he is ready to be under the tsar's control, and to send his ambassadors to the tsar's to ask him humbly about his mercy, and to oppose those who disobey the tsar whenever His Majesty instructs him so."

The delegation headed by Ivan Saveliev came back to Tobolsk on November 23, 1617 accompanied by Kalmyk ambassadors Buga and Koodan from the *taisha* Dalai Batyr, who were sent to Moscow a month later, that is, on December 25. The Kalmyk delegation consisting of two ambassadors mentioned above and accompanied by Tobolsk officials Ivan Saveliev and Pervushka Petrov arrived in Moscow on February 12, 1618. According to an instruction from Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich, *diak* Sava Romanchukov received the Kalmyk ambassadors in the *Posolsky Prikaz* on March 20, 1618.

The Kalmyk ambassadors described the purpose of their arrival to the *diak* at the meeting in the *Posolsky Prikaz*. They said that their people had already spent as long as 13 years in the territory of Siberia and they had maintained good trade relations with Siberian towns for all these years. That time they came from *taisha* Bagatyr to the tsar with an oral instruc-

tion to say “that the tsar is to accept only *taisha* Bagatyr with his people under the tsar’s control, while the whole Kolmaki land would like to be under the tsar’s control and to obey the tsar as well as oppose the tsar’s enemies whenever instructed to do so.” They also added that they would tell the tsar about that in person.²⁶

When ambassadors from Kalmyk *taisha* Dalai Batyr were received at the *Posolsky Prikaz*, *diak* Sava Romanchukov executed a note as well as a reference about the arrival of the Kalmyk ambassadors to Tsar Vasiliy Shuyskiy in 1608 for the *Boyar Duma* and the tsar. All documents prepared by the *Posolsky Prikaz* were presented to the *Boyar Duma*, which examined them, prepared its offers, and sent them to the tsar for a final decision. Since the Kalmyk delegation spent a lot of money during the long way (September 1617–February 1618), by the tsar’s order they received the same clothes and similar gifts and in the same amount and range as the delegation of 1608 (with the exception of silver scoops).

Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich received the Kalmyk ambassadors Buga and Koodan at his palace on March 29, 1618. As a result of the audience, the Kalmyk ambassadors obtained the first official statutory document from the Russian state—Charter issued by Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich to the Kalmyk *taisha* Dalai Batyr about his Russian allegiance made in the Russian and Tatar languages and dated April 14, 1618.²⁷ The enactment conveyed the politics of mutual relations between Russia and Kalmyks in general terms (“to be in love and friendship... and take care of each other on all things”) as well as key conditions for Kalmyks to be a part of the united state. In addition to taking the Kalmyks of *taisha* Dalai Batyr under its patronage, Russia took them under its allegiance, provided payment and care for them, guaranteeing protection from all enemies, as well as freedom of movement, travel, and trade in Siberian lands. According to the Charter, Kalmyks were not only to be “under my tsar’s high control” but also “to serve and be loyal to us, the great tsar, and your military men must take part in all military actions against our enemies whenever My Majesty instructs you so.”

The contents of the Charter of April 14, 1618 confirm that the policy of Russia toward Kalmyks changed to a certain degree. While before 1618 the tsarist administration demanded from Kalmyk ambassadors hostages and paying a certain tribute, in addition to loyal service, as mandatory requirements for Kalmyks to be a part of Russia, later a key prerequisite is military service: “Your military men must take part in all military actions against our enemies.” Obviously, the persistency of Kalmyks “neither to pay *yasak* nor give hostages” as well as outspoken and straight opinions of

some Kalmyk *taishas* that they roam in the territories seized by Russia contributed to such a change in the policy. Moreover, making Dalai Batyr's *uluses* a part of Russia would considerably strengthen positions of the latter in Siberia.

When Russia started taking allegiance of separate and large groups of Kalmyks officially and on mutual consent, it kept on combining peaceful diplomacy and power politics ("to restrain them a bit"). The *Posolsky Prikaz* complimented the Tobolsk *voevoda* Ivan Kurakin for organizing "bashing of Kolmaki people" in 1618 as well as for negotiating with them (an official, Yan Kucha was sent to *taisha* Khara Khula) and instructed to develop relations and pursue the policy of getting Kalmyks to give a *shert* in the Charter of January 30, 1619. It emphasized: "You should negotiate with Kalmyk ambassadors about all our issues, bring them under our tsar's control and encourage them to do so by promising to provide a payment for them from the tsar." At the same time, the *Posolsky Prikaz* ordered the *voevoda* "to provide the present ambassadors with food in the amount necessary for their trip and as before and let them go from Tobolsk." Executing the order given by the *Posolsky Prikaz*, the Tobolsk *voevoda* dispatched the ambassadors from the Kalmyk *taisha* Khara Khula to Moscow with the proposal "to be under our tsar's control" in the second half of 1619.²⁸

The tsar administration left hardly any avenue unexplored to exert pressure on Kalmyks in 1618–1619. Due to clashes with Altyn Khan and Kazakhs, the movement of Kalmyk *uluses* was very intensive during the period. They were getting closer and closer to Tobolsk, Tyumen, and Tara. Based on a relation (deliberate or erroneous) from the Baraba Tatars' Sargul-murza (who, as a matter of fact, depended on Kalmyks) that Kalmyks were allegedly going to attack Tobolsk and Tara *volosts* when it froze for the first time, Tara *voevoda* K.S. Velyaminov-Vorontsov organized an attack of a large armed group along with Yurt Tatars and Tatars being *yasak* payers on Kalmyks from the *ulus* of the *taisha* Sengil in October 1618, when it froze in Siberia for the first time that year. As a result, "many Kolmaki people of the *taisha* Sengil were killed; their *uluses* were destroyed and a lot of people were captured"; 50 camels were taken as well. The *Posolsky Prikaz* approved of the actions taken by the Tara *voevoda* and he was instructed "to send the camels to Moscow." At the same time, the Tobolsk *voevoda* Ivan Kurakin organized an attack against the Kalmyk *uluses* of the *taisha* Khara Khula (the unit was under the command of a solicitor Oleksei Velyaminov-Vorontsov)²⁹ even though he seemed to advocate the peaceful process of making Kalmyks a

part of Russia. After the armed attack, Khara Khula started seeking a peaceful agreement with Russians actively.

Khalkhas Altyn Khan, whose relations with Kalmyks were tense, in particular, during several previous years, decided to take advantage of the Russian–Kalmyk clashes immediately. He sent his ambassadors to Moscow in May 1619 with a proposal to organize a joint attack on Kalmyks, which were allegedly preventing the development of trade and diplomatic relations. A reply was given to Altyn Khan almost a year later. Mikhail Fedorovich promised in his Charter of April 24, 1620 “to protect you and your land from Kolmaki *taisha* Khara Khula,” but almost at the same time (on May 7, 1620) he instructed Toms *voevoda* I.F. Shakhovskiy to study in detail the Khalkha and Chinese states in compliance with the *Boyar Duma* order of December 31, 1616 and report accordingly to the *Posolsky Prikaz* as soon as possible. The Charter instructed not to take any independent steps towards relations with the states on any ground and to refuse to provide “any assistance of our military men” to Altyn Khan until then.

The fact that Russia somewhat changed its policy toward Altyn Khan can be possibly explained by Kalmyks showing no aggression on their part. Moreover, the *Posolsky Prikaz* learnt in November of 1619 that ambassadors from the Kalmyk *taisha* Khara Khula, the key enemy of Altyn Khan, were on their way from Tobolsk to Moscow. The Kalmyk delegation arrived in Moscow simultaneously with Altyn Khan’s ambassadors (on January 10, 1620). The tsar received both delegations in the presence of Ivan Tarasovich Gramotin, *dumnyi diak* of the *Posolsky Prikaz*, as early as on January 29.

The Kalmyk ambassadors headed by Anuchai informed Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich about the instruction from *taisha* Khara Khula given to them: “He ordered us to ask humbly so that he, *taisha* Khara Khula, his brothers, children, nephews and all their *uluses* could be under Your Majesty’s control, and gave an oath of allegiance to your statesmen so that to be directly subordinate to you and always be under your high control for ever and ever.” The *shert* given by Khara Khula’s ambassadors to the Tobolsk *voevoda* in 1619 is meant here.³⁰ When the Kalmyk ambassadors delivered their message and presented their gifts, *dumnyi diak* Ivan Gramotin read the tsar’s reply: “We, the great tsar, will order my officials to give a reply to you on another occasion.” Mikhail Fedorovich received the Kalmyk ambassadors again on May 23, 1620 and they finally left Moscow with a Charter and accompanied by Cossack ataman I. Belogolov a month later, on June 23.³¹

A face-to-face audience of the Kalmyk ambassadors with the tsar and oral assurance of *taisha* Khara Khula laid a basis for issuing a Charter by Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich's to the Kalmyk *taisha* Khara Khula taking him under Russian control on May 25, 1620. The Charter stipulated basic principles and terms of mutual relations between Russia and Kalmyks from Khara Khula's *uluses* as a part of the Russian state. Making Kalmyks a part of the country ("you, *taisha* Khara Khula, and your people are granted with our great tsar's mercy"), Russia guaranteed payment from the tsar as well as care and protection against enemies. According to the Charter, the *taisha* Khara Khula and all people from his *ulus* "are to be under my tsar's control and serve us, the great tsar, and you will be granted my tsar's payment for all of your services depending on your loyalty to us, the great tsar."

In view of lasting military actions and intensified attacks on the part of Altyn Khan, Kazakh and Kyrgyz, Kalmyk *taishas* Baibagish, Chokhur (Khara Khula's sons), Ho Urluk, and Dalai Batyr got together for a council, perhaps, in the first half of 1620. "And they agreed to send messengers to you, the great tsar and great prince of the entire Russia, Mikhail Fedorovich, to ask you humbly to allow them to be under your tsar's control."³² According to the decision taken by the four Kalmyk rulers in 1620, contacts between Kalmyk ambassadors and Siberian towns for taking *shert*, making contractual relations, taking Russian allegiance, and developing and improving trade connections revived very much. There was a specific feature characteristic of relations established between Russia and Kalmyks in 1620: the tsarist administration charged *voevodas* of Siberian towns with the authority to solve problems of taking Russian allegiance by Kalmyks while supervising over the process closely. *Voevodas* were to strictly follow instructions given by the center on a case-by-case basis.

A delegation comprising 27 people from the Kalmyk *taisha* Dalai Batyr, who took Russian allegiance in 1618, came to Tobolsk in June of 1620 "so that you, the tsar, gave him a favor and ordered to come to your Siberian towns for trade." It is obvious that the establishment of reliable trade relations was the key goal of merchants. The same year ambassadors from *taisha* Dalai Batyr arrived at Tobolsk to inform the local authorities that *uluses* were roaming "close to your tsar's Siberian towns because Altyn Khan and the Cossack Horde are levying war against them, the Kalmyk *taishas*." *Voevodas* from Siberian towns knew from other sources as well that Kalmyks were going to the Ishim and Tobol.

A representative delegation from the Kalmyk *taishas* Ho Urluk, Chokhur, Mandasher, Mangytai, and Baibagish arrived at Tobolsk on Septem-

ber 12, 1620. The delegation's arrival was probably related to the decision taken by the congress of the four rulers of Kalmyk *uluses*. Kalmyk envoys from the *taishas* brought to Moscow five horses of different colors as a gift for tsar Mikhail. The Tobolsk authorities showed due respect to the delegation, promised to report to the tsar, and let them go back to their *uluses*. Since it was required to clear up the situation on site, that is, in *uluses*, the Tobolsk *voevoda* Matvey Mikhailovich Godunov resolved to send officials headed by a *boyar*'s son, Dmitriy Cherkasov to Dalai Batyr and other *taishas*.

An in-depth official report about the arrival of ambassadors from the Kalmyk *taishas* from *boyar* Matvey Mikhailovich Godunov, who entered upon the office in September 1620, to the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*, was examined at a session of the *Boyar Duma* on January 20, 1621.

At the same time, the Kalmyk *taishas* sent their ambassadors to other Siberian towns as well on similar missions. Four ambassadors from Kalmyk *taishas* Ho Urluk, Chokhur, and Prince Ishim (Kuchum Khan's son) arrived at Ufa on October 6, 1620. On October 9, 1620, the ambassadors took an oath before Ufa *voevoda* O.Ya. Pronchishchev to Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich "to be under your tsar's control... to come to the city of Ufa for trade" and "not to levy war against the Ufa *volosts*."

On October 19, 1620, ambassadors from the Kalmyk *taisha* Baibagish (Baybagas), his brother Tygurchei, and his son Arkel, as well as from *taishas* Tolai (Dalai), Chokhur, Urluk (Ho Urluk) came to Ufa to *shert* on the *taishas*' behalf to the tsar. On 23 October, O.Ya. Pronchishchev administered the oath to the *taishas*' ambassadors "to be under your tsar's control." Moreover, the *voevoda* at his own discretion "granted them a favor, ordered to trade with Russian people... and ordered to buy horses from them and exchange them for some stuff." However, he did not let the Kalmyk ambassadors go to Moscow without an instruction from the central authorities upon the pretext "that winter is coming."

As a result of the meeting with ambassadors of the Kalmyk *taishas* and Prince Ishim and negotiations with them in October of 1620 and after administering a *shert* of allegiance to them, Ufa *voevoda* O.Ya. Pronchishchev compiled two official reports to the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* (October–November 1620). Both the tsar and the *Boyar Duma* examined them. They fully approved of the actions taken by O.Ya. Pronchishchev. Having heard written reports from the Ufa *voevoda*, "the tsar ordered and boyars said" that the *voevoda* "did well by taking Kolmaki under the tsar's control, and he must order them to come to the city for trade from now on, and he must take care of them and protect them so that nobody could of-

fend them, and he must ensure fair trade with them so that they got accustomed to it and not scare them away.” It is clear that the document issued by the supreme state authority stipulated the key directions of the Russian policy toward Kalmyks: to make Kalmyks a part of the Russian state by means of active negotiations, by employing peaceful diplomacy and trade relations and by providing direct protection to them. To strengthen the progressing contractual relations, the Ufa *voevoda* was instructed “to let Kolmaki ambassadors go to Moscow... whenever they come” in the future.

Due to the escalation of the ongoing war between Altyn Khan, who was allied with the Kazakhs and Nogai, and the Kalmyk *taisha* Khara Khula, who was backed up by other *taishas*, in 1621 contacts between Kalmyks and Russians were abruptly cut down. Ambassadors from the Kalmyk *taisha* Mangit (Dalai Batyr’s brother) arrived at Tomsk in 1621 with the proposal “to be always under the high tsar’s control and serve to the tsar, and to be loyal to him in every respect.” Tomsk *voevoda* I.F. Shakhovskiy sent his envoys Martyn Borzhevitskiy, Cossack Ivashka Shirokiy, and interpreter Druzhinka Yermolin together with the Kalmyk ambassadors on March 17, 1621 “so that *taisha* Mangit gave a *shert* to the tsar and always was under the tsar’s control, and always served to the tsar and was loyal to him in every respect without any vacillation.”³³ According to M.L. Kichikov, Kalmyk ambassadors came to Moscow in February of the same year to assure that “Kalmyk *taishas* will be loyal to the Russian tsar for ever and ever while they are allowed to roam along the Tobol River.”³⁴ However, it is not clear: which *taishas* had sent these ambassadors? Where were they received? Who received them? What were the results of their meeting? Tomsk *voevoda* I.F. Shakhovskiy informed Tobolsk *voevoda* Matvey Godunov the same year that “Black Kalmyks (Dzungarians), in particular Talai-*taisha*, and Babagan-*taisha*, and Mergen-*taisha*, and Shukur-*taisha*, and Saul-*taisha*, and many other *taishas* were roaming between the Irtysh and Ob as well as near the saline lake together with their *uluses* because the Black Kalmyks of *taishas* Khara Khula and Mergen-Tyumen, subordinates of Altyn Khan, oppressed them.”³⁵

Taking advantage of a relative lull that occurred in the armed conflict between Khalkhas and Kalmyks, the Tobolsk *voevoda* sent an authoritative delegation headed by the *boyar*’s son Dmitriy Cherkasov (that belonged to a stratum of middle and minor feudal lords) to *taisha* Dalai Batyr to clear up the situation in Kalmyk *uluses* in 1622. The “information warfare” intensified substantially during the period, and it was not favor-

able for Kalmyks. On the one hand, it was the *voevodas* of some Siberian towns that were interested in misinforming central authorities about alleged attacks to be undertaken by Kalmyks against Siberian towns and *volosts*, since these *voevodas* sought “armed soldiers” and “tsar’s payment (in the form of money and bread stock).” On the other hand, spreading of this kind of misinformation also aligned well with the interests of Kalmyks’ enemies that wanted to set Russians against Kalmyks.

In early April of 1623, Dmitriy Cherkasov visited some *uluses* where people of minor *taishas* were roaming. Later he came to Kalmyk *taisha* Sengil, who had heard about the Tobolsk *voevoda*’s proposal that Kalmyks “be under our tsar’s control” and replied in the affirmative. *Taisha* Sengil said: “I do not want to fight against the tsar’s people. I want to be under His Majesty’s high control. I understand that our senior *taishas* have been in contact with your boyars and *voevodas*, and I want to be under the tsar’s control like the *taishas*.” Sengil gave “a *shert* to the tsar and great prince of the entire Russia, Mikhail Fedorovich” and sent his ambassadors to Tyumen along with Cherkasov to confirm and verify his obligations.

The Ufa *voevoda* Grigoriy Vasiliyevich Izmailov sent ambassadors headed by a *boyar*’s son, Vasiliy Volkov, “to Kolmaki *uluses* to *taishas* Talai, Urluk, Baibagish, and Chokhur with his Charter” in April 1623. As early as in late May, Vasiliy Volkov met the Kalmyk *taisha* Mangit (*taisha* Dalai Batyr’s brother), who *sherted* to the Tomsk *voevoda* in 1621. *Taisha* Mangit informed Vasiliy Volkov “that his brother Dalai and his companions levied war against Mugan Altyn Khan and... it will take about two months to get to him, Dalai.” Mangit turned his attention to a certain feature in the delegation membership confirming the importance and authority of the Russian ambassadors. He said, “*Boyars*’ children from Siberian towns or from Ufa have never been ambassadors from His Majesty to *taishas* before; they would always send Cossacks from Siberian towns or officials from Mongolian Tatars to meet us, *taishas*.”

Since many *taishas* were absent (they were taking part in a campaign against Altyn Khan), Mangit decided to take *shert* to the Tobolsk *voevoda* Matvey Godunov based on the note delivered by the ambassadors. Mangit took *shert* in June of 1623 to the ambassadors “on his own and on behalf of his brothers, the Kolmaki *taishas* Talai, Urluk, Ilter, Shuklei, Kuilbosar, Tangir, Tepel, Sharakub, Kubonai, Manshir, Moidar, Vchemergen, Volbui, Ildan, and Kunderbei, as well as on behalf of all Derbet *taishas* from 30 *uluses* that they, the *taishas*, will be under the high tsar’s control.” Mangit “sent two of his people as ambassadors to ask humbly to the

tsar and one ambassador to the Ufa *voevoda* as well” along with the ambassadors from Ufa.

Boyar's son Vasiliy Volkov returned to Ufa on August 1, 1623 and compiled an in-depth report on the next day concerning his voyage to Kalmyk *uluses* and administering a *shert* to Kalmyk *taisha* Mangit. Kalmyk ambassadors Yelgutai Menzibayev and Karakai Kaiderev accompanied by Vasiliy Volkov (he had the report on him) set off for Moscow on August 7, 1623. The ambassadors reached the city only in early October, since they had been delayed in Vladimir until the tsar's instructions were received. On October 8, Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich examined an official report written by Ufa *voevoda* Semen Gavrilovich Korobyin on August 2, 1623 and the official report prepared by *boyar's* son Vasiliy Volkov from Ufa on September 15–18, 1623 for the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* concerning his stay with Kalmyk *taisha* Mangit (the reports comprised full information about *taisha* Dalai Batyr's loyalty), and ordered the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* to receive and hear Kalmyk ambassadors.

According to a note on the official report from the Ufa *voevoda* appended at the tsar's instruction, major amendments were made to the Russian policy toward Kalmyks. It was suggested that the administrations of Siberian towns establish and develop their relations with Kalmyks including trade, and assist Kalmyks in taking Russian allegiance in all aspects. However, all problems related to the mutual relations with Kalmyks had to be solved directly, in the Siberian towns, where the “authorities were to hold negotiations with them [Kalmyks] and bring them to the oath of allegiance,” yet they were “not to allow Kalmyk ambassadors to go to Moscow; as was permitted under the tsar's previous decree” or “to sell any weapons to them.”³⁶ One of the reasons behind the changes in the tsar administration's policy was that “they [Kalmyks—*K.M.*] were mostly military people, and they were not allowed to go to Moscow.” This was explained by the need to ensure security for Moscow in the conditions of aggravated relations with Poland, Lithuania, Turkey (after the assassination of Sultan Osman), the Crimean Khanate, and the Nogai movement. Moreover, the tsarist administration did not see or experience any economic or military assistance from Kalmyks. Therefore, it was not by accident that the note said, “and there is no benefit from them.” This new policy of the tsarist administration toward Kalmyks was naturally defined by the heads of the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* (*boyar* and Prince Ivan Mikhailovich Vorotynski) and *Posolsky Prikaz* (*dumnyi diak* Yefim Telepnev, who was appointed to this position on December 21, 1620 after a recommendation from the most holy Patriarch Philaret—the tsar's father³⁷). At

the same time, the *Posolsky Prikaz* suggested storing all reports on relations with Kalmyks at the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*.

The years of 1624–1625 were relatively quiet as far as the relations between Kalmyks and Russians were concerned. Mutually beneficial trade between Kalmyks and Siberian towns intensified during that time, and exchanges of envoys became more frequent. The main objective of Kalmyk ambassadors was to solve trade problems, while ambassadors from Siberian towns saw their goal in studying the situation and internal conditions in Kalmyk *uluses* (mutual relations between Kalmyks and other peoples, as well as among groups of Kalmyks), and in monitoring the attitudes of Kalmyk *taishas* and *uluses*. Judging from official documents (mainly diplomatic ones), during the period from June 1624 to November 1625, five embassies from different Kalmyk *taishas* visited Siberian towns, and four embassies came to Kalmyk *uluses* from Siberian towns (Tobolsk and Tyumen) for 4 to 5 months in 1625. Nevertheless, Tobolsk *voevoda* Yuriy Yansheyevich Suleshev instructed Siberian towns “not to send any Russian envoys to the Kolmaki land” in 1624. At the same time, due to the intensification of trade relations and active movement of Kalmyk *uluses*, the *voevoda* sent an official message to Siberian towns instructing them “not to send any envoys to Kalmyks so as to prevent any war with Kalmyks.”³⁸

The tsarist administration had to watch closely the violent internal fights which escalated among the Kalmyks in 1625. In late 1624 (or in early 1625) Chin-*taisha*, the eldest brother of Chopur and Baibagish, (all of them sons of Khara Khula), died, and a strife for his heritage burst out between the two brothers. Choros *taisha* Khara-Khula (their father) and Derbet *taisha* Dalai, who were interested in establishing peace and accord among Kalmyk *taishas* in order to ensure external security (especially protection against Altyn Khan), interfered in the strife in order to reconcile the two brothers. Later on they were joined by Torgout *taisha* Ho Uruk. However, Chokhur, who claimed Chin-*taisha*'s entire heritage Chin-*taisha* for himself, was backed up by other *taishas* (Dzungar *taisha* Tabitai, Torgout *taisha* Mergen-Tyumen, as well as Baty-Kuyan—a Khoshout *taisha*, to all appearances).³⁹ Violent clashes between the two opposing groups lasted until the autumn of 1629. In their resistance, both parties tried to incite Russians against each other.

In 1629, the Ufa administration learnt about an attack allegedly organized by *taisha* Chokhur against the Karataban *volost* in the Ufa *uyezd*. However, *taisha* Chokhur denied the allegations and laid the blame for the attack on *taisha* Dalai, his rival. To establish the true initiators of the attack, Ufa *voevoda* I.G. Zhelyabuzhskiy sent his military men headed by

boyar's son Artem Gladyshev to *taisha* Dalai on August 15, 1629. Dalai's headquarters received the envoys from Ufa at a due level. *Taisha* Dalai "with his children gave *shert* to be under the tsar's control for good as a true serf."⁴⁰ To confirm his *shert*, Dalai sent "his envoys Baltu and Bochei to the tsar" along with Artem Gladyshev, who left his headquarters for Ufa on October 15, 1629.

Kalmyk *taishas* Dalai and Gushi let the Ufa envoys as well as their ambassadors go in October of 1629 and levied a "war against Chokhur and Mergen-Tyumen because they disobey the tsar, levy war against the tsar's towns, oppress Bashkirs and capture them and they are his enemies."⁴¹ Thus, it is clear that Dalai did not only show that he was loyal to Russians and kept his *shert* given by his son Dorgi in 1624 but also smashed Chokhur's group under the pretext of "serving" the tsar and persecuting those who "disobeyed" him. After the defeat, Chokhur and his allies had to submit to Torgout *taisha* Daichin (Ho Urluk's elder son), who was roaming along the Yaik river.

It is probable that a new group headed by Daichin was formed at the time, and simultaneously the relations between *taisha* Dalai, on the one hand, and the Torgout group of Ho Urluk that was moving towards the Volga mouth with his sons and Torgout princes, on the other hand, finally broke off.⁴² In this connection, it is possible to speculate that the internal war of 1625–1629 accelerated the re-aggregation of Kalmyk *uluses*, as well as enhanced the process of selection of the routes by all groups to the destinations of their prospective permanent development.

According to some sources, *taisha* Ho Urluk did not reach any decision regarding a place of permanent roaming in 1625 yet but he examined closely previous places: "on both banks of the Irtysh and along the Kamyshlov and Om' rivers." Nazar Zhedovskiy, leader of a Tara mounted unit, met *taisha* Ho Urluk at the Sargatka river, in the upper reach of the Irtysh, in September 1625 and suggested that the *taisha* should ask for the tsar's permission to roam in the tsar's land wherever the tsar allows. Nazar Zhedovskiy threatened the *taisha* in case he failed to do so, "the tsar would order to send a numerous army to fight him from the town of Tara."⁴³ Ho Urluk listened to Nazar Zhedovskiy and said that he did not want to be under the tsar's control until it was clear "where the tsar would allow them to roam." As soon as "he sees Your Majesty's mercy to him, he will give a *shert* to you, the great tsar, to be under your high control." It is clear from the document that determining a permanent place for roaming was the key problem for the Kalmyks from this group. With this basic purpose in view, Ho Urluk's ambassadors Chutundei, Kunderi, Konai, and