

Governance principles of collaboration between state and indigenous peoples of Arkhangelsk Governorate

-Based on archive materials

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Abstract—The legislation of the Russian Empire on the governing of “inorodtsy” was quite progressive for its time due to the securing the rights of indigenous peoples to local self-government for the first time and taking the customs established in the aboriginal communities of the North, Siberia and the Far East into account. At least two groups of the indigenous population lived in the territory of the Arkhangelsk Governorate: Lapps (Sami) and Samoyeds (Nenets). The study of archival data from the Arkhangelsk Governorate for the XIX-early XX centuries allows identifying the principles of indigenous communities of the Russian North regional administration as well as the practice of law enforcement and interaction of regional officials and Russian population with nomadic reindeer-breeders and fishermen. Identifying the historical features of indigenous communities administration in the North-West gives an idea of the evolution of legislation and law enforcement mechanisms in this area of legal relations. Considering the presented practices allows improving the modern regulatory framework for the rights of indigenous small-numbered peoples.

Keywords—Arkhangelsk Governorate; Inorodtsy; Samoyeds; Lapps; Zyrians; Korels

I. INTRODUCTION

Historical experience of the collaboration between the government and ‘inorodtsy’ (indigenous peoples) is of tremendous value to developing modern approaches in securing guarantees of their rights to traditional way of life, economic activities and traditional trades. Legislative initiatives and management decisions in the field of the national ethnopolitics must be based on solid and secure foundation of historical memory applying the most valuable and progressive practices that were the basis of international peace and agreement in the past. Aboriginal communities of the Russian North are the most vulnerable social layer as they lead their way of life in unfavorable climatic conditions resting only upon the experience of the previous generations of fishermen and reindeer-breeders. Arkhangelsk Governorate was a vast territory in the North-West of Russian Empire, it included a series of regions that now have independent status as the subjects of the Russian Federation: Arkhangelsk region, Nenets autonomous area, Republic of Komi, northern lands of the Republic of Karelia. The main groups of indigenous population were Lapps

(Sami) [1] and Samoyeds (Nenets) [2]. Korels (Karels) and Zyrians (Komi) can also be mentioned but way of life considered there was a significant difference between them and the first two groups, as they led settled way of life and were notably assimilated into Russian peasant population (mode of life, religion, names, even language to an extent) [3]. In the article the stress is laid on archival sources that offer undoubtedly valuable historical material and demonstration of ‘living law’.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS (MODEL)

While interpreting facts and making judgements the authors of the article proceeded on the basis of the multifactorial explanation of history, according to it, origin and development of ethnopolitical processes and phenomena is regarded as the result of the interaction between different factors: those of social, political, legal and other nature. The following methods of scientific cognition were applied in the work: analysis, synthesis, analogy; specific methods applied were: historical, legal-historical, value-normative, anthropological, systemic methods.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Regional authorities and indigenous peoples

The aim of the regional authorities, communities of indigenous peoples considered was, first of all, to organize effectively the collection of natural tax from them and, apart from this, to successively include them into imperial cultural space by the means of Christianization.

Furthermore, in different periods there were diverse approaches to the issue of indigenous peoples administration, especially nomadic Samoyeds administration. In the archival case № 32 [4] it is mentioned that in the period from the 40-s of the XIX cent. Samoyeds administration was handed over to the corresponding department of the Ministry of state property. Arkhangelsk Military Governor approved ‘The rules’ that regulated relations between Mezen Samoyeds, these rules were aimed at mitigating their customs.

Subsequently Arkhangelsk Military Governor carried out monitoring and control on the activities of Arkhangelsk House of state properties. In particular, in case № 43 [5] there is an inquiry from the Governor dated 17th Ma 1857 № 1132 concerning a number of issues:

- About the quantity of reindeer kept by Samoyeds, peasants and petty bourgeois, living in tundra (separately for every tundra).
- About the quantity of Samoyeds families that left tundra for islands in the Arctic Ocean; acquired household effects there, what dimensions they are; about the quantity of those, staying there as Russians’ and Zyrians’ employees.
- What (administration) bodies will be responsible for cards delivery to get the right to do traditional economic activities and exercise traditional trades in tundra; what order should be established to claim and deliver these cards, what their form will be, including the information by whom they will be signed and who will verify these deliveries.

- On what grounds the price for cards for hunting and fishery will be charged; who will be in charge of checking if professional hunters or fishermen have available cards and if they are deprived of the right to trade including what the order of deprivation of the right is; what the penalty for reindeer-breeders is if they graze reindeer without a card or if in the pasture there are more reindeer than it is mentioned in their cards.

Arkhangelsk house of state properties conveyed the following to the inquiry of the Governor:

- The quantity of reindeer kept by Samoyeds is 26 570 head, by other persons – 123 295 head.
- Up to 200 Samoyeds and their families live on Kolguyev and other islands, there is no information about the quantity of those among them who live there as employees. The fact that lots of them are heathens and leave to hold the sacrifice ceremonies at seasons determined by their calendar is also mentioned as the reason for the lack of information.
- Cards are supposed to be manufactured near the Fiscal house, delivery procedure is planned the same way as the one with the forms for passports was.
- There are no grounds to charge a price.

One cannot help noticing that exactly Samoyeds were used as constantly residing population for development and support of colonization fund based on the islands of the arctic coast of the Empire. Moreover, in most cases they formed the main part of the colonists. For instance, in 1909 there were only 98 people in three colonies of Novaya Zemlya southern island, 92 from them were Samoyeds [6].

In late 60-s of the XX century status of Samoyeds changed, they were no longer subordinates to Arkhangelsk House of state properties and were placed under the authority of “arbitration institutions” to wit “arbitrators” (“peasant arbitration institutions”).

Model statutes were required in order to organize effective inorodtsy administration. In case № 483 [7] of Arkhangelsk House of state properties considering the Samoyeds foremen and their assistants’ supplies with statutes there is information about a report made by Pinega District Office dated 12th April 1864 № 1689 to the House about the corresponding application. It was delivered to Press department of the Second section of His Own Imperial Majesty’s Chancellery that in its turn prepared 68 books on inorodtsy governing from the “Code of Laws”, they were issued in 1857.

According to the information of Arkhangelsk House of state properties dated 20th May 1864 books must be passed to the Head of Zapechenskii krai Forestry Officer Gladyshev in order that he gives the necessary number of copies to Samoyeds foremen and reserves one for himself to subsequently give it to the District Superior assistant in Zapechenskii krai.

In case they were in need Samoyeds were supplied with timber on favorable terms [8] equally with ones who had lost all their possessions in fire, soldiers and other persons. Poor families in need of bread were concerned in the same [9].

As to yasak, special Books concerning income and expenditure amounts with a round black seal of certain Samoyeds foremen were used to calculate it. Most frequently corresponding amount of collected yasak was indicated in the Book and special receipt both in Arctic foxes, ermines and squirrels with paws and tails and in their cost in rubles [10].

In early 1890-s Ministry of internal affairs put a question on complete reconsideration of Samoyeds statute and of giving the rights for tundra not only to Samoyeds but also to Russians and Zyrians to Regional Office (interdepartmental commission). Particular attention in the initiative on model statute changing was given to juridical procedure, it was supposed to establish special “Collegial courts” set up by foremen in appropriate cases where at least one judge (of every two) had to be Russian if the considered case was against non-Samoyeds population. Appeals against such cases could be transferred under the authority of the “extreme case official” whose province was matters of tundra inorodtsy administration. Matter of peasants’ reindeer access to tundra had to be resolved by agreement with the “extreme case official” that charged a fee for each rein deer (10 cops a year) and allowed access on the condition that there is complete satisfaction in pasturing all reindeer belonging to Samoyeds proceeding from tundra’s fodder capacity. The other broached matter is further enhancing of extreme case official’s role, it is proposed to recruit more members of staff of the kind (2 all in all, to Mezen and Pechora districts) the sizes of certain tundra considered (first of all, Timan, Bolshezemelskaya and Kanin tundra) and stipulate that the candidates have high education. In connection with the supplementary officers’ responsibilities (including regular trips to tundra with the aim of controlling Samoyeds) it was suggested that the employees get substantial remuneration: 2200 rub. – salary, 800 rubs – departures.

At the beginning of the XX century it was proposed to keep Samoyeds under supervision according to the rules [11], formulated for inorodtsy in Arkhangelsk and Stavropol Governorates.

B. Disputes between peasants and indigenous peoples over land and bioresources

A conflict between Samoyeds and peasants on the occasion of peasants using Samoyeds pastures to graze their numerous reindeer herds is described in case № 240 [12] of Arkhangelsk House of agriculture and state properties. A matter of dispute was the fact that peasants’ reindeer pasture resulted in the exhaustion of the soil and the yasak (natural tax) rate did not change for the benefit of Samoyeds. They asked the authorities to oblige peasants to pay them “hoofed money” for each rein deer. The House in its address to Volost Department prescribes it to oblige peasants to take on liabilities (making them sign for it) that they would not drive their reindeer to Kanin tundra as well as go fishing in Samoyeds’ fisheries. It is also noticed that if peasants cannot keep the reindeer near their villages, they can direct reindeer to tundra only by agreement with Samoyeds.

In the archival case there is a text of “Agree act” dated 1856 in which 56 representatives of “Kanin Samoyeds clan” out of respect for the order of Arkhangelsk House of state properties give their consent for peasants to graze reindeer in Kanin tundra but exclusively on the condition that

Samoyeds are the herdsmen. Moreover, Samoyeds establish boundaries for fisheries. All those who signed left their stamps near their first and last names. Bobrikov was Samoyed foreman.

Nevertheless, in its turn according to the data of the House dated 4th February 1858 the conflict is complicated as peasants do not agree with Samoyeds’ opinion. In opinion of the former ones, it has been a long time a large quantity of peasants’ reindeer are kept by Samoyeds numbered 50 people themselves and their maintenance costs are paid back by peasants with foodstuffs the system of barter applied. What is more, as peasants claim, using them Samoyeds get the opportunity of free departure from tundra for different places in Arkhangelsk Governorate to go off in search of a living. Apart from this, Koidentsy (village Koida inhabitants) pay annual “yasak tax” instead of Samoyeds. As regards fishing in the Samoyeds’ lots the Koidentsy claim that even if it happens it takes place only in these particular Samoyeds’ lots that are on their maintenance and it is regulated by free-will agreement. On the other hand, they cannot refer to Samoyeds’ personal testimony as the latter have left for Kanin tundra to graze reindeer both ones belonging to Samoyeds and belonging to peasants. Peasants insist that they did not know anything about Samoyeds’ claims before the order as according to them the dispute did not exist.

House officers sent an order dated 12th February, 1858 to Zolotitskii Volost department prescribing it to forbid peasants to enter tundra to graze reindeer and go fishing pointing out that “tundra belongs exclusively to Samoyeds”, as well as to bind peasants with written undertaking and notice that in case of Samoyeds complaining about the matter the guilty ones would be brought to trial. As to Samoyeds, they were restricted to go fishing in peasants’ lots.

Thus, officers of the Governorate tried to respond to the interests of both groups that were similar economic activity and trades considered, concerning the interest balance but avoiding active involvement in their mutual relations, giving them complete control over the household matters.

Analogous conflict was described in the archival case № 205 [13] of Arkhangelsk regional state properties department according to the report of forestry officer of 2nd Kem forestry to the mentioned department dated 4th October 1887 № 695 local peasants of Keret settlement, by all means, oppress Korels in their trade accomplishment in rivers and lakes although they have no reason for that. On the grounds of stated information basing on the petition of Korel peasants Ivan Languiev and Nikita Nikiforov forestry officer intercedes for Korels to leave peasant society and to resettle to the new place of residence. The request complied. Kem district Korels were given the right to leave peasant society and resettle to the new place of residence – Osinovyi navolok.

On the other hand, while discovering Murman, Teriberka colony in particular, they also fixed colonists’ complaints about followed settling policy, connected with providing benefits for lapps (Saami) and about colonists’ indeterminate legal standing. Colonists’ grumble is also connected with the lack of lands appropriate for farming and reindeer pasture (exactly because of conflicts with lapps population) [14]. That is to say, Saams were the gainers in

the case. In addition the data of the ethnocultural space of the Sami (Skolts) on the Russian-Norwegian borderland can be found in the scientific article by K. Zaikov and N. Avdonina [15].

Quite often the nature of peasants and indigenous peoples' interaction was rather criminal, especially in the field of financial means. An investigation in respect of peasant Kozhevin, who illegally collected Samoyeds' money on account of yasak and misappropriated them in accordance with Samoyeds collectors was described in case № 502 [16] of the Arkhangelsk Regional board of administration. Peasant Kozhevin was the senior watchman of Pustozersk salt building sit and was deprived of the post after the investigation started by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

C. Missionary activity of the Church and advantages for christened Samoyeds

Orthodox Christianity was the official religion in the Russian Empire and for newly-converted "inorodtsy" (that is how indigenous peoples were called in the Russian Empire) there was a privilege in the legal procedure of yasak paying—that was usually the complete liberation from payments for three years [17].

In case № 301 [18] of the Arkhangelsk House of state properties there is a document dated 27th January, 1858 № 52 concerning the report of the Kanin Samoyed church dated 15th December 1857, this report contains information about Samoyeds-heathens and the amount of them that received the holy baptism in 1857 and submits application about providing church with "allowance for travelling expenses" (payment for travelling by post-chaise, levied on each verst) for priest salaries paid from household capital. The suggestion of christened Samoyeds liberation from yasak for the conjectural period was also introduced in the report.

In addition to this, a direction for Arkhangelsk Spiritual Consistory was introduced, it was about the definition of Samoyeds priests responsibility to grant a report considering missionary activities among Samoyeds and a separate list devoted to orthodox Samoyeds who do not do their Christian duty.

While receiving financial means for missionary activities priests traditionally gave a receipt for money received where key expenses items were "for carriage", "for the journey", "to guiding Samoyed <...>", «to settled Samoyed <...>» and so on and so forth. The title of priest's Petr Zuev report can be demonstrated as an example: "Report about income, expenses and the rest of the money, assignments of The House of state properties to Bolshezemelskii-Kolvin Priest for departures across tundra to preach The Word of God to nomadic Samoyeds in 1857".

It is noteworthy that despite the baptism Samoyeds continued isolating themselves from peasants, in case № 67 [19] about transferring lake Kosma to the possession of church it is noted that christened Samoyeds give their consent to it, put their stamps, but point out the fact that they do not want to see peasants near the fisheries but commit themselves to give 1/10 of the catch to the church.

Church in its attempt to expand its influence and ensure the growth in flock numbers had an especially positive

attitude to inter-ethnic marriages between "inorodtsy" and christened population of the Empire. In case № 51 [20] about Komi people encouragement to marry Nenets women you can get acquainted with the letter of George – Arkhangelsk and Kolmogory Bishop to the Main state properties manager Semen Stepanovich Nikiforov. In it Most Reverend Vladyko tells about Nents men marrying Zyrians (Komi) women that have already built nine houses, raise children and notes that it was not observed before. There is an opinion that it is expedient to unite Zyrians and Samoyeds into one people – "Zyrianosamoyeds". It is noticed that Zyrians have never married Samoyeds women before. At the same time a privilege or allowance for settling the houses of inter-ethnic couples at Samoyeds parish is solicited for. In the case Zyrians are considered a settled people that can further disseminate Christian Faith among Samoyeds.

IV. CONCLUSION

Ethnopolitical processes connected to the issues of indigenous peoples governing in Arkhangelsk Governorate applied, first of all, economic activity of traditional trades in which the government saw the basis for promotion of its interests and getting material benefits. Government's intervention into all other matters connected with language and culture of "inorodtsy" was punctual and delicate to the maximum extent, the government tried to pursue a policy of gradual cultural assimilation owing to more large-scale ethnic groups (Russians and Zyrians) developing new lands.

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