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## Tynystan Arzybaiev

*Leading researcher at the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic  
B. Dzhangerchinov Institute of History, Archeology and Ethnology  
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan  
e-mail: arsybaevt@mail.ru*

### **KYRGYZ STRUGGLE WITH NEIGHBORING PEOPLE AGAINST THE OIRAT-DZUNGARIAN CONQUERORS (XIV-XVIII CENTURIES)**

**Abstract.** The article examines the process of struggle between the Kyrgyz and other people against the invasion of the Oirat-Dzungars. As the Oirat-Dzungarian raids into Central Asia became more and more fierce, they gained strength. The alliance of the local nomadic people against the enemy has strengthened. Most important data about the history of relations between the Kyrgyz and neighboring people of the XIV-XVII centuries was presented by prominent scientists involved in the military campaign of the Oirats-Dzungars in Central Asia. The main reason for the migration of the Oirat tribes to the west has also been identified. One of the important obstacles to the study of ancient and medieval history is undoubtedly related to the lack of new documentary evidence. But despite this, the emergence of scientific papers created with a broad and comprehensive mindset around the same historical addresses that are known to most of us shows that there are many eager researchers trying to restore the primary sources of the history of indigenous peoples.

**Keywords:** *nomads, political, struggle, Oirats-Dzungars, information, historical sources.*

**Тыныстан Арзыбаев**

## **ҚЫРҒЫЗДАРДЫҢ КӨРШІ ХАЛЫҚТАРМЕН ОЙРАТ-ЖОҢҒАР ЖАУЛАП АЛУШЫЛАРЫНА ҚАРСЫ КҮРЕСІ (XIV-XVIII ҒҒ.)**

**Аңдатпа.** Мақалада қырғыздардың басқа халықтармен ойрат жоңғарлардың шапқыншылығына қарсы күрес процесі қарастырылады. Ойрат жоңғарлардың Орталық Азияға жасаған шабуылдары күшейе түскендіктен жергілікті көшпелі халықтардың жауға қарсы одағы нығай түсті. Қырғыздардың XIV-XVII ғасырлардағы көрші халықтармен қарым-қатынасы мен ойрат-жоңғарлардың Орталық Азияға әскери жорығы туралы аса маңызды зерттеулерді көрнекті ғалымдар ұсынды. Ойрат тайпаларының батысқа қоныс аударуының негізгі себебі де анықталды. Ежелгі және ортағасырлық тарихты зерттеудің басты кедергілерінің бірі, сөзсіз, жаңа деректі деректердің болмауына байланысты. Бірақ соған қарамастан, көпшілігімізге белгілі тарихи мекен-жайлардың айналасында кең және жан-жақты ойлаумен жасалған ғылыми жұмыстардың пайда болуы жергілікті тарихтың бастапқы көздерін қалпына келтіруге тырысатын көптеген ынталы зерттеушілер бар екенін көрсетеді.

**Түйін сөздер:** көшпенділер, саясат, күрес, Ойрат- Жоңғарлар, ақпарат, тарихи деректер.

**Тыныстан Арзыбаев**

## **БОРЬБА КЫРГЫЗОВ С СОСЕДНИМИ НАРОДАМИ ПРОТИВ ОЙРАТ ДЖУНГАРСКИХ ЗАВОЕВАТЕЛЕЙ (XIV-XVIII ВВ.)**

**Аннотация.** В статье рассматривается процесс борьбы кыргызов с другими народами против нашествия ойрат-джунгаров. Так как набеги ойрат-джунгаров на Центральную Азию становились все более ожесточенными, набирали силу. Союз местных кочевых народов против врага усилился. Весьма важные сведения об истории взаимоотношении кыргызов с соседними народами XIV-XVII в.в. были представлены выдающимися учеными занимающихся историей военной кампании ойратов-джунгар в Центральную Азию. Также определена основная причина миграции ойратских племен на запад. Одно из главных препятствий на пути изучения древней и средневековой истории, несомненно, связано с отсутствием новых документальных данных. Но, несмотря на это, появление научных работ, созданных с широким и всеобъемлющим

мышлением вокруг тех же исторических адресов, которые известны большинству из нас, показывает, что существует немало нетерпеливых исследователей, пытающихся восстановить первоисточники истории коренных народов.

**Ключевые слова:** кочевники, политика, борьба, ойраты-джунгары, информация, исторические источники.

## INTRODUCTION

If we do not study, update, and supplement our recent history—not events from thousands of years ago, but those from our more recent past—we may soon find ourselves at a disadvantage. In this regard, we can learn from our neighbors. Without even mentioning Chinese historians, if we compare the current level of historical research in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan—where history is studied as a whole—we see that while they actively publish works on their historical heritage, we struggle to analyze our past and connect it with newly emerging sources.

One of the key topics we will discuss here is the relationship between the Kyrgyz people and neighboring nations during the Middle Ages. Prominent scholars such as V. Bartold, Ch. Valikhanov, historian B. Soltonev, and historian-ethnographer S. Abramzon, among others, have studied this topic in great depth. It would be unfair to overlook their significant contributions, especially considering their pioneering efforts in scientifically analyzing Kyrgyz-Kazakh relations and identifying the root causes of conflicts between these two nations. However, some of their conclusions contain inaccuracies. Since these misinterpretations have not yet been fully addressed, later historians have continued to rely solely on their findings, overlooking many newly discovered facts. As a result, many historical events concerning these two nations remain unclear. Numerous historical sources have been disregarded, left unexamined, or underutilized. It is crucial to verify them by cross-checking with other historical records.

## RESEARCH METHODS

During the research, the main focus was on the content analysis method, which was used to compare data from various key historical sources to determine the origin of the Oirat confederation. A comprehensive analysis of the narratives on this topic made it possible to clarify the course and direction of the resistance of the Kazakhs and Kyrgyz against the Oirat-Dzungars. All this made it possible to consider this issue from a new perspective, which

corresponds to the principles of historicism, scientific-historical and historiographical analysis.

## RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The increasing ambitions and military campaigns of the Oirats-Dzungars in Central Asia have been a subject of considerable scholarly debate. One focus of research has been the etymology of the term «Oirat». Some sources refer to them as «Derben-Oirat», meaning «The four confederated Oirat groups». According to N. Bichurin, by the late 14th century, the «Choros», «Khoshut», and «Torgut» tribes were nomadic in the Dzungarian region. These groups united into a confederation under the leadership of Choros Mahmud. Later, a faction of the Choros tribe known as the Derbent split off, forming a four-tribe coalition. From the mid-15th century onward, this confederation became known as «Derben-Oirat» (Iakinf Bichurin 1834, 2).

V. Bartold argued that the Oirat confederation emerged in the late 16th century. Unlike N. Bichurin, he maintained that from the very beginning, the confederation consisted of four, not three, main groups: Choros, Khoshut, Torgut, and Khoit (Barthold, 1943, 72).

Supporting Bartold's perspective, V. Ryazonovsky also differed from both him and N. Bichurin, viewing the Oirat confederation not as a simple union of related clans but as a broader tribal alliance that included the Choros, Khoshut, Torgut, and others (Saparaaliev and Ploskikh 1995, 39).

K. Kostenkov, who spent many years living among the Kalmyks along the Volga River and studying historical developments, proposed that the Oirat confederation was already established by the late 14th century. He suggested that its composition evolved over time: initially, it included the Choros, Khoit, and Khoshut tribes, with the Torguts joining later. Eventually, this coalition became known as the «Four Oirat Confederation» or «Derben-Oirat» (Asanov 2007, 11). However, academician S. Kozin held a different view. Unlike the previously mentioned scholars, he argued that the Oirat confederation had existed since the time of Genghis Khan, when it was part of his empire under the name «United Four Khanates» (Kostenkov 1817, 2).

British scholar G. Howorth, a specialist in Mongolian studies, also considered the «Derben-Oirats» an independent entity. He suggested that they were four autonomous military groups that emerged during the medieval period. Furthermore, he noted that the term «Derben-Oirats» was later interpreted by the English and the French in the context of the Crimean War as a military alliance (Iakinf Bichurin 1834, 2).

As evident from these scholarly perspectives, the term «Derben-Oirats» consistently refers to a coalition of four Oirat groups. However, disagreements exist regarding the exact composition and socio-economic roles of its members. Some scholars argue that the Choros, Khoshut, and Torgut tribes were under feudal rule, while others suggest that some groups were loosely affiliated Mongol clans identified by ethnonym rather than strict political organization (Iakinf Bichurin 1834, 2).

According to Dorzhi Banzarov, the term «Derben-Oirats» originated during the reign of Genghis Khan when all Mongol peoples were organized into «tumens» (divisions of 10,000 warriors), with the Oirats forming four such divisions. Based on this established historical fact, «Derben-Oirats» directly translates to «Four Oirat Tumens». The origins of this grouping were not merely formal, but rather an organic structure within what was described as a «forest people» (Banzarov 1849, 25). Banzarov and Rashid al-Din further emphasized that the Oirats were often referred to as «forest people» due to their geographic and environmental circumstances.

V. Uspensky, after studying various Chinese historical sources, concluded that there were contradictions and inconsistencies in the records. Some sources suggest that the Oirats were originally under the rule of the Ming Dynasty before being divided into four groups—Khoshuts, Jungars, Derbents, and Torguts—each led by its own khan. Additionally, there was a subgroup of Khoits that emerged from within the Derbents (Chimitdorzhiev 2012, 127-128).

Like V. Uspensky, E. Bretschneider rejected the idea that the «Four Oirat Confederation» (union) was formed at the end of the 16th century. Based on his analysis of key sources, particularly the Ming Shilu records, he argued that the Oirats began to present themselves as a unified people only after being expelled from Chinese-controlled territories in Jungaria by Mongol invaders. During this period, they were under the rule of a Yuan military commander, Mönke Temür. Only after Mönke Temür's death did the Oirats split into three groups, each led by a different leader: Mahamu, Taiping, and Batu-Bolot. Despite this division, all three factions maintained good relations with the Ming dynasty and enjoyed a degree of autonomous governance (Iakinf Bichurin 1834, 2).

Various scholars have analyzed the reasons behind these events, suggesting that the Oirats sought to consolidate their power in opposition to the Eastern Mongols, aiming to dominate all Mongol territories and continue the imperial policies of the Chinggisid dynasty. For instance, N. Bichurin

argued that the establishment of the Oirat confederation was primarily a response to internal competition among its leaders. Initially comprising three groups, it later expanded to four as the Oirats successfully strengthened their position against the Eastern Mongols. The Choros Oirats, led by Toghon (1418–1440) and later by Esen (1440–1455, or 1456 according to some sources), emerged victorious in this struggle, placing themselves at the head of the Mongol realm. However, following Esen's death, Oirat power declined, and their brief yet significant dominance in history came to an end (Iakin Bichurin 1834, 2).

A similar perspective was expressed by Sarzhan uulu Kurmanaly (1910–1915) and Kurmanaly uulu Ysmail (1950), who documented the history of the Kyrgyz and left behind manuscript records. According to their writings, during the period of Oirat-Dzungar expansion, the Oirat tribe split from the Mongols and divided into two branches: the Barungar («right wing») and the Jungar («left wing»). In 1399, the Dzungar state was formed as the left wing of the Western Mongols. The leader of this state, Taisha Esen, rose to power and continued to strengthen his rule until his death in battle against the Chinese in 1455. His successor, Aman Sanja, struggled to maintain the state's stability. In 1472, he launched an unsuccessful military campaign against Moghulistan, where he was defeated by Yunus Khan's forces and subsequently killed. This marked a period of decline for the Oirats, who remained in disarray for many years.

Later, a leader named Botor emerged, uniting the Kalmyks once more, but he passed away in 1658. His successor, Taisha Senge, provided strong leadership and further consolidated the state. After Senge's death in 1683, his government continued to expand under Boldon-Boshoktu, who led several military campaigns. Eventually, Khungtaiji Tsewang Rabdan assumed power, overseeing a period of Oirat dominance. Under his rule (1697–1723), the Kalmyks launched successful campaigns against the Northern Kyrgyz, bringing them under their control (Abasov 2015, 23).

The Oirat-Dzungars, who lived near the Chinese border, sought to satisfy their needs by turning westward in trade and agriculture. In this situation, their natural partners could only be East Turkestan and Central Asia. However, due to ethnic, religious, and linguistic differences, the Kalmyks remained distinct from the people living in these regions.

Shortly after Esen Khan's death, the Kalmyks sent envoys to the Timurid Sultan Abu Sa'id in Herat in 1459 to establish peaceful trade agreements, but they failed to achieve any concrete results. According to the historian Hasan Rumlu, «In these years (1464-1465), the infidel Kalmyks invaded and

plundered Abu Sa'id's lands. They seized all the hidden treasures, took many people captive, and returned». The Sultan's troops later caught up with the Kalmyk forces and completely annihilated them.

After suffering heavy losses, the eastern and northwestern Kalmyks were unable to recover militarily or diplomatically. As a result, their leaders shifted their focus to capturing the Hami region, a crucial hub linking the West with China via trade routes. However, the Kalmyks faced resistance from both China and Moghulistan in this area (Grum-Grzhimailo 1899, 639).

The struggle for Hami was a three-way conflict that lasted throughout the 15th and 16th centuries. The Kalmyks' main adversaries in the region were the rulers of the Moghul state, particularly in areas like Chalish and Turpan (Soltonoyev 1930, 47).

Previously, the Kyrgyz of East Turkestan and Tian Shan had been under the rule of the Turkic emirs of Central Asia and were part of the Moghulistan state. The Oirats (Kalmyks) had conducted several raids on Moghulistan. After the collapse of the Golden Horde, the eastern territories, from the Ural region to the lower Syr Darya, came under the control of the Uzbek confederation in the 15th century. This confederation was composed mainly of nomads, including Kazakh tribes.

A new political formation, consisting of migrants, emerged, leading to the creation of the Kazakh army. The Kazakhs, upon arriving in Zhetysu, established strong economic and political ties with the Kyrgyz. At that time, the Kyrgyz were one of the most well-organized and united groups within Moghulistan. The Kyrgyz, alongside various other Turkic-speaking tribes, formed a cohesive political entity. By the 16th century, the Kyrgyz had established themselves as an independent state, incorporating diverse ethnic groups under its rule.

The Western Mongols, known in Turkic as «Kalmyks» and in Chinese as «Ölöt» (Elët), were originally called the Oirats before later becoming known as the Dzungars. As mentioned earlier, after the collapse of the first united Oirat state, Esen Khan was forced to change the direction of his foreign policy in the mid-15th century. Some researchers have noted that during this period, Oirat rulers aimed to restore the empire of Genghis Khan and gradually expand their influence over neighboring regions.

At that time, Esen Khan had powerful and energetic military leaders from the Choros lineage of the Oirats, including Togoön and Esen himself. Scholars such as N. Bichurin, A. Pozdneev, N. Veselovsky, and S. Kozin supported this perspective. One of the earliest researchers described the situation as follows: «A time had come (i.e., until the late 16th century under Esen's rule)

when, after a long period of inactivity, the Oirats awakened and realized their newfound strength. However, lacking the wisdom and foresight to restore their former glory, their individual efforts led to no significant results. Khara-Khula Khan, the Oirat leader, desired a strong and unified state, but the tribal chiefs preferred independent rule, which ultimately prevailed» (Iakin Bichurin 1834, 27).

During this period, the internal political conflicts between the Bukhara Khanate and the rulers of Tashkent led to a shift in alliances. In 1625, after several years of tension, Tursun Khan, with the support of Yesim Khan, altered his policy and waged war against Imamquli Khan of Bukhara. At the same time, Tursun Khan made a peace agreement with the Kalmyks, though it was not long-lasting. When the war between the Bukhara Khanate and the Kazakh sultans temporarily ceased, Tursun Khan and Yesim Khan formed a joint military campaign against the Kalmyks.

The combined forces of the Kazakh sultans launched an offensive under the leadership of Yesim Khan between 1626 and 1627, while Tursun Khan remained in Tashkent (Omorov 1996, 212-213). During this period, Yesim Khan led a joint Kazakh-Kyrgyz campaign against the nomadic Kalmyks. As a result, many Kalmyk communities were forced to migrate to Siberia.

However, despite the military strength of the Kazakh-Kyrgyz alliance, internal conflicts and pressure from the Ashtarkhanids led the Kalmyk feudal lords to resume their raids into Kazakh and Kyrgyz territories. During one such battle against the Kalmyks, a prominent commander of the Ark Kyrgyz, Manap Bi, fought alongside Yesim Khan. In the battle near the Ili River, Manap Bi was killed (Tenishev 1997, 101).

Throughout the 17th century, the Oirat-Kalmyk forces continued their relentless raids on Kyrgyz lands. At that time, Yesim Khan, recognized as a strong leader of both the Kazakh and Kyrgyz tribes, successfully resisted the Kalmyk invaders, striking back against their aggression.

In historical events, there are also similarities with traditional narratives. It is said that «the alliance between Yesim Khan and Tursun Khan was founded on deception» (Isakov 2012, 451). According to Mahmud ibn Wali's precise account and Abulgazi's statements, the historical oral traditions about Yesim Khan confirm that «the friendship agreement between Tursun Khan and Yesim Khan was based on deception and hypocrisy».

Mahmud ibn Wali states that «before Yesim Khan (in 1626-1627) launched his raids on the Kalmyk tribes, they had not shown enmity toward each other beyond ordinary betrayals. However, once these events began, Yesim Khan gathered an army from the Alachin tribe under his command,

incorporating warriors from the Kyrgyz and Katagan clans—who were Tursun Khan’s supporters—to form a joint campaign. After Yesim Khan set out on his expedition, Tursun Khan, having long awaited an opportune moment, sent his troops to plunder Yesim Khan’s people, seizing their livestock, property, and even women».

According to Kyrgyz oral tradition, news reached Yesim Khan that a Kalmyk leader named Ajaan had arrived with a large army on the eastern shores of Issyk-Kul, attempting to exterminate the entire Kyrgyz population. Upon hearing this, Yesim Khan decided to hold a feast, inviting prominent figures and planning to discuss forming a coalition against Ajaan. He also invited Tursun Khan, intending to propose a joint campaign and share the spoils of war. However, when Tursun Khan refused to attend, Yesim Khan led his forces alone, attacked the Kalmyks, and returned victorious with significant spoils. On his way back, he learned that, during his absence, Tursun Khan had taken advantage of the situation, raiding Yesim Khan’s people, looting their possessions, and abducting their women.

According to Mahmud ibn Wali, upon hearing of Yesim Khan’s return, Tursun Khan decided to eliminate him once and for all and set out with his army to confront him. The two forces clashed near Sairam, engaging in a fierce battle. Tursun Khan’s forces suffered heavy losses, and he was ultimately beheaded, with his head sent to Imamquli Khan. In recognition of his victory, Yesim Khan was appointed by Imamquli Khan as the governor of Tashkent, Turkestan, and the surrounding regions.

As noted in Abulgazi’s records, the Katagans, Tursun Khan’s own tribe, faced severe devastation under Yesim Khan. Many of the surviving Katagans fled to Afghanistan, while others integrated into Kyrgyz tribes, eventually becoming part of the Kyrgyz people (Goryacheva, Mokrynin, Masson and others 1984. 451).

Traditional oral accounts also mention that Yesim Khan gathered Uzbek, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and other peoples, calling for unity and peaceful coexistence. He then led his forces in a campaign to capture Kazan (Zakirov. 2013, 90). Ultimately, the struggle against the Dzungars in Central and Inner Asia led to internal conflicts, tribal divisions, and fragmentation, impacting neighboring states like the Bukhara and Tashkent Khanates. Kyrgyz oral traditions provide valuable insights into these historical events, as Kyrgyz tribes played an active role in the internal strife of the Kalmyks. Yesim Khan led the Kazakh and Kyrgyz resistance against the Kalmyks for seven years.

In 1630, under the leadership of Ho-Urluk from the Torgut tribe, six sons and fifty thousand households migrated towards the Ural region and then

moved further through the Kazakh steppes to the banks of the Yaik (Ural) River. Initially, Ho-Urluk settled between the Irgiz and Tobol rivers, while his eldest son, Daichin, stopped along the upper course of the Yaik, Irgiz, and Tobol rivers, waging war against the Nogai Tatars to seize the steppe lands of the Volga region. The Great Nogai Horde had already almost ceased to exist. Most of the Nogai Ulus had become part of the Kazakh Khanate, while others were forced to migrate to the Crimean Khanate. The Nogai Horde of the Volga and Ural regions had fallen under Russian control as serfs (Bezertinov 2001,388).

The primary reason for the western migration of the Oirat tribes was economic. They sought to settle in unoccupied lands and gain access to the vast pastures of East Turkestan and Central Asia. This posed a threat to the Kazakh and Kyrgyz peoples, as well as to the Bukhara Khanate and the Moghul state, leading to continuous conflicts. These continuous wars took place in the first quarter of the 17th century, and overall, the advantage was on the side of the Kyrgyz and Kazakhs. However, in the early 1630s, the Kalmyks gained dominance, which was linked to the formation of the Dzungar Khanate (Omorov. 1996, 214-215).

One of the most significant events took place during the rule of Baatyr-Khongtaiji. In September 1640, a kurultai of khans and rulers was held in the territory of the Dzungar Khanate in the Tarbagatai region. At the meeting, Khalkha's Zasagtu Khan Subod and Tusheetu Khan Gombodon were nominated; the aging Tsetsen Khan Sholoi sent his two sons in his place, and other Khalkha rulers were also present. From Kokonor, Gush-Khan arrived with several sons and relatives. Ho-Urluk participated with his sons from the Volga region. Numerous rulers from the Dzungar Khanate and several feudal lords from the church also attended the kurultai. However, the feudal rulers of Southern Mongolia did not participate, as they were formally considered Mongols but were actually under the rule of the Manchu emperor at that time.

Although the Mongol and Oirat «Sacred Chronicles» did not mention this kurultai, brief information about it was recorded in the biography of Zaya Pandita. In September 1640, the «chulgan» («kurultai») took place, bringing together seven military units (mostly Khalkhas) and the Four Oirats. Participants included Zasagtu Khan, «hoyor-taiji» (Oirat rulers Ochirtu-Tsetsen Khan and Baatyr-Khongtaiji), and others.

As is well known, during the chulgan, several rules were adopted, and the «Mongol-Oirat Law» («Tsaajin Bichig») was established. The participants solemnly swore to strictly follow the adopted rules. The only surviving copy of the Mongol-Oirat Law was preserved in the Kalmyk Khanate on the

Volga, later translated into Russian and published. Its main goals were: to regulate relations among the feudal lords and eliminate internal conflicts; to unite forces and provide mutual assistance in case of external threats; to strengthen the discipline of feudal lords, khans, rulers, and the people.

Despite numerous clashes, temporary military campaigns were occasionally formed between the neighboring tribes—Kalmyks, Kyrgyz, and Kazakhs—due to periodic military interactions. In Dzungaria, in the territories controlled by the Oirats, Baatyr Khungtaiji organized a council of nobles and rulers, including representatives of the Khalkha, Kokonor, and Volga Kalmyks, with defined powers. One of the main objectives of the law (Tsaajin Bichig), established at the kurultai held in Tarbagatai within the Dzungar Khanate, was to carry out military campaigns.

When Baatyr Khungtaiji's troops advanced towards Tashkent and Turkestan, Kazakh Sultan Zhangir was not alone. He was reinforced by a large army led by Bukhara's Jalantos Atalyk. In battle, the Kalmyks suffered heavy losses and were forced to retreat. However, despite significant casualties, Baatyr Khungtaiji managed to maintain control over the territories he had seized (Omorov 1996, 214–215).

In 1640, Jalantos' army, under his command, defeated the Dzungar forces that had invaded Kazakh and nomadic Uzbek lands. Following this battle, Jalantos attained the rank of «Mingbashi» (leader of ten thousand warriors). The Dzungar raids continued, with their forces pillaging the inhabitants of Jetisu. Kazakhs received reinforcements from Samarkand when Jalantos arrived with a well-armed army of 30,000 warriors, preventing Baatyr Khungtaiji from seizing Jetisu.

In 1643, as Kazakh Khan Zhangir was engaged in a fierce battle against the Kalmyks in Orbulaq, Jalantos Batyr arrived to support him. To secure victory in this battle and determine the war's outcome, 20,000 soldiers were sufficient.

In 1643, a powerful Oirat army, reaching 50,000 warriors, invaded Kyrgyz and Kazakh lands, looting and advancing deep into Central Asia. The Kyrgyz and Kazakhs fiercely resisted for a year, managing to counter the Kalmyk offensive. Eventually, Kazakh Sultan Zhangir, together with reinforcements from Jalantos of Samarkand, delivered a decisive blow to the Oirats, forcing them to retreat (Osmonov 2014, 190).

Zhangir Sultan, the son of Esim Khan, led the Central Asian peoples' resistance against the Oirats for nearly twenty years (Bezertinov 2001, 340). In two clashes between the winter of 1643 and the spring of 1644, the

Kyrgyz, Kazakhs, and Uzbeks defeated the Oirats. Baatyr Khungtaiji, having lost around 10,000 warriors, was forced to retreat with 40,000 troops (Kudaiberdy-uly 1990, 52).

Between 1635 and 1650, the Oirat-Dzungars established khanates in the territories they had conquered. In Russia, the Kalmyk-Khoshut Khanate was centered in the Volga region, while the Western Mongol Khanate was formed in present-day Qinghai, Uyghur lands, and the Kukunor Khanate was founded in Tibet. During this period, numerous Buddhist temples began to appear in areas controlled by the Oirat-Dzungars.

In the 17th century, the influence of the Oirats extended beyond their own people, affecting various Central and East Asian nations. This period was closely linked to Galdan, the son of Baatyr Khungtaiji, and his brother Senge. Galdan played a significant role in the historical conflicts involving Tibetan religious leaders, influential figures within the Dzungar Khanate, the Halha Mongols, the Kukunor region, the Qing Dynasty of China, and the Russian state. Notable conflicts included the 1688 war against the Halha feudal lords and the wars with the Qing Dynasty from 1690 to 1697. During this time, the Oirats also took control of East Turkestan. After conquering Halha in 1688, the Qing government attempted to negotiate peace with Galdan. However, he rejected the peace offer. When he invaded Chinese territory, he forced Emperor Xuanye to take up arms. This marked the beginning of the Manchu-Oirat War, which ultimately ended in Galdan's defeat and his eventual suicide (Zlatkin 1983, 152–153).

O. V. Bronin notes that in the 1790s, the Kyrgyz restored their taxation system over the population of the Upper Yenisei region (Kyshtyms) (Bronin 2002, 55). Between 1694 and 1697, the Yenisei Kyrgyz conducted military campaigns, laying siege to the Russian fortress of Tomsk and launching annual raids on Russian settlements. Until 1700, the Kyshtyms of Kachin, Kamassin, Kansky, Sashai, Baykotov, and Meles volosts paid tribute to the Kyrgyz, even though they were formally part of the Tomsk and Krasnoyarsk districts.

Seeking to consolidate his power, Tseven Rabdan decided to put an end to the century-long Kyrgyz-Russian conflicts. In January 1701, he sent Abdul-Erke Zaisan as an envoy to the Moscow Tsar via the Tobolsk fortress. The Dzungar Khan sought negotiations with the Russians to address military and political issues involving the resurgent Mongols, the Kazakh hordes, and the Qing Dynasty of China.

G. F. Miller considered this event to have been «pre-decided», viewing it as a result of negotiations between Russia and the Dzungar Khanate. According to some sources, the Kyrgyz beks were aware of the planned action in advance. Since the Kyrgyz had reached an agreement with the Dzungar khan Khuntaiji, they did not resist the Dzungars (Ryazanovsky 1931, 127).

The death of Galdan plunged the Dzungar Khanate into instability, and his successors failed to establish strong ties with Russia and the Kazakhs in the northwest. The third phase (1701–1717) marked the beginning of Russian expansion in the early 18th century. The upper reaches of the Yenisei, along with the entire Irtysh region, were annexed by Russia, and Russian settlements began to appear. The Irtysh region remained under the control of Kara Ural, while the lower tributaries of the Omi and Irtysh rivers stretched approximately 60 kilometers. In 1701, there were no Russian settlements in the upper Yenisei basin, south of Krasnoyarsk.

The Oirat pressure played a significant role in the Russian expansion. The first clashes between the Russian state and the Dzungars emerged, gradually intensifying into a full-scale conflict, which became one of the key confrontations in 18th-century Russian-Oirat history (Zlatkin 1983, 217–218).

During this period, the situation of the Siberian Kyrgyz was unstable. In the early 18th century, amidst political tensions under the rule of the Dzungar Khuntaiji Tsewang Rabdan, the region faced military threats from both China and Russia. Concerned about these threats, the Dzungars sought to relocate their center of power to the southern Siberian region near the Emel-Gol (Alakol) river, moving Kyrgyz, Teleuts, and Manguts to these areas.

In 1701, the Dzungar Khanate sent envoys to Moscow. In his written address, Tsewang Rabdan noted that disputes over territory had arisen between the Dzungars and Russia. He accused Russian authorities of deceiving the Kyrgyz and Kalmyks (Yenisei Kyrgyz), taking their lands, and expanding Russian rule. In response, Peter I instructed the governors of Tomsk, Krasnoyarsk, and Kuznetsk to «pacify the Kyrgyz people, even through military means».

Between 1701 and 1702, several Russian military campaigns were launched against the Kyrgyz. To resolve the situation, Tsewang Rabdan sent his nephew Aba Zaisan with a military contingent to the Khongoroi, instructing him to «reconcile the Tomsk, Kuznetsk, and Kyzyl-Jar rulers with the Kyrgyz». However, Aba failed to achieve reconciliation.

In December 1702, Khuntaiji sent his trusted official Aranjamun to negotiate with the Russian authorities. The meeting took place in the

settlement of Aba Zaisan, near the Ninya River, where discussions were held with the local Russian administration.

At the beginning of the 18th century, during the rule of the Dzungar khuntaiji Tsewang Rabdan (1697–1727), amidst a complex political situation in Central Asia, he attempted to implement his strategic plan to keep the Chinese under his control (Abasov 2015, 223).

During the Dzungar Khanate, the continuous conflicts among the three nations—Russians, Kyrgyz, and Kazakhs—should not overlook the political acumen of Dzungar Khan Galdan Tseren. At that time, he strategically countered Russian policies, prioritizing the subjugation of the Kyrgyz and Kazakhs under the Dzungar Khanate. Initially, Galdan Tseren established Dzungar rule over the lands conquered from the Kazakhs but refrained from killing the prominent Kazakh warriors. His foresight anticipated future internal conflicts and challenges in governance.

Kazakh leader Abylai continued negotiations with other khans and beys. In autumn (1742), near the Orsk fortress, a meeting took place between the Kazakhs and Russians. Present at the meeting were Kazakh Khan Abulkhair, his sons Yeraly, Janibek, and Derbishaly-Shakshak batyr. Additionally, Abylai, along with his younger brother Sultanbek, met with Dzungar envoys Kashka and Baran.

During these negotiations, the Russian representatives, realizing the Dzungars' intention to draw the Kazakhs closer, could not conceal their imperial ambitions. After the discussions, Karl Miller and other envoys were planned to be sent to the Dzungar khuntaiji (Tenishev 1997, 123).

At the same time, the Oirat-Dzungar state found itself engaged in a three-front war: against the Russians, the Chinese, and the Kyrgyz-Kazakhs. Their ultimate goal was to exert dominance over the territories they controlled. The Oirat-Dzungar Khanate did not allow the conquered peoples to live freely or independently.

However, through wise policy of the rulers and national batyrs in these regions, the unification of numerous tribal groups into a mighty force began. The nomadic people continued their struggle for independence against the Oirat Dzungars for a long period. From the reign of Batyr-khuntaiji, Tsevan-Rabdan and Galdan-Tseren to the last rulers of Davachi and Amursana, they were weak and as a result could not resist feudal arbitrariness and local separatism.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, it can be noted that the expansionist policy looked at the Central Asian lands as a convenient object for conquest. Regarding the struggle of Central Asia with the Dzungarian Khanate, the fall of the Dzungarian Khanate made life easier for the inhabitants of Central Asia.

Real historical facts and sources irrefutably show that the general patterns of tragic events in Central Asia of the XIV-XVIII centuries ended with the defeat of the Dzungarian Khanate.

Thanks to the joint perseverance and wise leadership of the people's batyrs in the political struggle, the Dzungarian Khanate collapsed, and the peoples of Central Asia were able to gain independence.

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