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**HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE OF KALMYKS,
THEIR ANCESTORS, OIRATS**

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Abstract

The article deals with the features of the historical and cultural heritage of the Kalmyks and their ancestral ethnos Oirats separated and found themselves in different states and in different territories due to historical events. However, there is not enough detailed research of the objects of historical and cultural heritage of the Dzungars in Oriental studies. In this work, the authors explore their unique material heritage, preserved to this day in China. In addition, the study focuses on the partially preserved Oirat structures and rock paintings in Kazakhstan, the Oirat guns and paintings available in Russia. The analysis of the studied material represents the specific features of the objects of material culture created by the Dzungars and appeared as a result of interaction and mutual influence with neighbouring ethnic groups. The data show that the Dzungars have adopted the skills of fields cultivation from the settled Uyghurs, so in Kazakhstan, there are famous "Kalmyk irrigation ditches". The Uyghurs, in return, domesticated the manufacture of such household items as debiskers, durbeldzhins from the Dzungars. The Russian fugitive craftsmen had the impact on the development of this process. In this regard, the authors propose a classification of the material heritage of Dzungars (Oirats), found among various peoples in different nations, coming to the conclusion that the Oirats – the ancestors of the Kalmyks, were involved in the processes of globalization in the XVII - XVIII centuries and have become a part of world history.

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1. Introduction

Kalmykia is a multi-ethnic Republic where the main ethnic groups are Kalmyks and Russians. 12.4% of the population of Kalmykia are small ethnic groups. In the region, under the influence of political and cultural transformations taking place in Russia since the late 1980s, there has been an increase in national consciousness, a conscious attitude of the representatives of different nations to their ethnic identification, which is directly related to the history of the Oirats. In the late Middle Ages and early Modern times, the Oirats played an important role not only in the history of Central Asia, but they also made a significant contribution to the establishment and development of the relations between many ethnic groups and powerful empires: the Chinese empires of the Ming and Qing dynasties and the Russian Empire. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, a research team of scientists and the representatives of creative communities organized the trips to China and Mongolia. The scientific expeditions, field works, scientific and cultural events resulted from their efforts (Ochirov, 2012).

In the above-mentioned period of the Middle Ages and the beginning of Modern times, the vast territory of Eurasia had three Oirat ethno-political formations. They are Kalmyk, Dzungar and Khoshut khanates, whose descendants now live in the territory of the three states – Russia, China and Mongolia. The authors attempted to study the historical and cultural heritage of the Kalmyks and Oirats, as well as the Dzungar khanate, which stopped its existence in the middle of the XVIII century, the material heritage of which is a part of the Chengdu Complex in China that is in the UNESCO world heritage list. In the context of the modern trends in the development of the society and with the processes of globalization, the authors believe that, guided by the rules of the Convention on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage, it is necessary to actively establish the international cooperation for the purposes of preservation and study of monuments, and of the rapprochement of nations. In recent years, the relations of the Republic of Kalmykia with Mongolia and China have been significantly strengthened; there is an exchange of delegations, tourist groups, joint festivals, etc.

2. Problem Statement

In historical retrospect, the Republic of Kalmykia is a relatively compact historical and cultural area. The Kalmyks belong to the Western Mongolian or Oirat peoples who profess Buddhism brought from Tibet more than 400 years ago, migrated to the Russian state and voluntarily joined it (Dyakieva, 2018). Now, the Republic of Kalmykia is one of the unique regions of the Russian Federation, where the Kalmyks live. They are the carriers of nomadic culture, the only Mongolian people in Europe, professing Buddhism (Lizhiev & Ochirova, 2017). The ancestors of the Kalmyks came from Central Asia, which has long been considered a crossroads of civilizations. In this regard, the Dzungar khanate, the material culture of which has not been studied and was almost forgotten is of particular interest. In a short period (less than 15 years) the khanate fell into decline in the highest degree due to the political, demographic and cultural relations. When it disappeared from the political map, its main ethnic group – Dzungars (Oirats), which inhabited it, suffered irreparable losses, cultural achievements were mainly destroyed and looted by the invaders. This is clearly seen in the absence of Dzungarian historical artifacts written in the Oirat Language. Despite the historically valid facts that the establishments were present in Central Asia, in the fundamental works on the history of the Oirats, the main attention of researchers focuses on the study of the political life of one

of the Oirat ethno-political formations in the Dzungar khanate and its relations with neighbouring states and nations (Perdue, 2005), as well as on the role of individuals (Sanchirov, 1987; Kychanov, 1999) on the events of the XVII–XVIII centuries, and on the problems of historiography (Kukeev, 2012). Therefore, the authors of this work put forward the aim of the study to summarize the available information about the original material heritage of the Oirats, which had no previous precedents in the nomads of the studied region (the use of cartography, the use of coins), or had only a small distribution (the presence of specific structures, gunpowder mining, blacksmithing).

3. Research Questions

Due to the increased awareness of the need to preserve cultural and historical heritage, the government of many countries unite their efforts in order to study and to protect the heritage sites. The cultural policy has been in accordance with these purposes since the 1960s. UNESCO is at the forefront in changing the cultural paradigm of consciousness from national to global. In our opinion, an important place in the historical and cultural heritage of the Kalmyks and Oirats should belong to the material heritage of the Oirats, among which a number of ancient constructions stand out. Speaking of buildings, it should be noted that most of the Oirat sedentary settlements of that time (both fortress towns and religious buildings) took place in the territory of the Dzungarian khanate (now it is XUAR in China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan) by not in the Volga Region and in Kukuinor. The written reports of the Russian envoys, who witnessed the life of Oirats as their guests say that the two facilities (Ablain-kit" and Erdeni-Batur-huntaydzhi) in Kobuksar had a detailed description in the pre-revolution and the later scientific papers. For our part, we do not retell the known data about these structures, but we will add the assumption that their similarity and the same type of architecture can be explained by a certain style of construction typical of the engineers created these structures, who, on ethnic grounds, probably, were the Tibetans, not Chinese.

4. Purpose of the Study

The preservation, restoration and promotion of cultural and historical heritage in Kalmykia are considered as one of the essential aspects of the overall planning at the national and municipal levels. The preservation and restoration of cultural and historical heritage is included in the complex of urban planning and environmental problems. Accordingly, the Oirat constructions of the XVIII century, which has not survived in its original form, attract the researchers. We are talking about the two temples built along the Ili river. On the north bank of this river, the Temple of Kuldzha is located (in Mongolian, it is called Gulz, also known as Altn deevrte sume, literary meaning "the temple with the golden roof"). On the south bank of the river, there is Khainuk Temple (a.k.a. Mengn deevrte sume that means «the temple with the silver roof"). Both temples probably vanished after the Dzungarian state disappeared. However, a copy of one of these structures, namely the temple of Gulz, was rebuilt in 1764 In the complex of Imperial summer palaces in Chengdu, and was called in Chinese "Anyuan-Miao" (安远庙"the temple, pacifying remote areas"). Chengdu is now located three hundred kilometers from Beijing, in the North-West of Hebei province. In 1703, the Qing Emperor Kangxi (1662-1723) ordered to build a summer residence in the mountain valley north of the capital, called "the mountain refuge from the summer heat", and in the second half of the 18th

century under Emperor Qianlong (1735-1795), the city reached its peak. In 1994, the complex, along with other Buddhist monuments of Chengdu, is listed as a UNESCO world heritage site. Within this complex, there is a copy of the Oirat temple Guls, which is now located on the Eastern Bank of the river Ule and covers an area of 0.5 km in circumference with the gates facing each cardinal direction that was inside the main building of the temple. The Pudu-hole (普度殿) is a three-storey building with two canopy tops of the roof, covered with polished black tiles (Chayet, 2004).

5. Research Methods

The methodology of this research consists in the use of information from the works of modern domestic and foreign historiography, methods of interpretation of traditional texts and formal logical tools, system analysis of the scientific hypotheses under study.

6. Findings

The colour of the tiles of Oirat buildings has never been black and perhaps this is the evidence of one of the differences of the temple erected by the Manchus in Chengdu and the temple, which was located in the heart of the Dzungarian khanate. It is unusual that the settled construction of the Oirat were not only religious buildings. There were many other buildings, referred to as "shibe". Renat map for the localization of Oirat sedentary structures, for the purpose of subsequent archaeological excavations can serve as a promising direction for the study of the further Oirat heritage. Thus, by the middle of the XVIII century, Oirats had already developed a certain tradition of cartography. The first information about this becomes known to science thanks to the captive Swedish officer Johann Gustav Renat¹, who brought to his homeland a map of the Dzungarian Khan Galdan-Tseren, now stored in the University library of Uppsala. A remarkable feature of the Oirat maps is that they are oriented to the South, because in the Mongolian tradition everything looks to the South. From here, the West becomes the right side (Barun), and the East – the left (zyun).

One of these two maps appears to be the original Oirat map, written directly by Galdan-Tseren, and the second is a copy of a map captured from the Manchu – Chinese in Barkul or Turpan. These were the first Mongolian maps in Central Asia, and experts estimate them to be more accurate and detailed than all those that were compiled by the Russians or the Chinese during the XVIII century. Although the researchers have varied opinions about the degree of Chinese and Russian influence on them, they were unique hybrid cultural objects combining Swedish cartographic methods, Chinese forms, and Mongolian local knowledge. They demonstrate the importance of mapping to military planners and the extremely accurate information that their compilers could extract from the survey of local residents.

It is likely that the maps by Renat were the first Mongolian maps in the steppe produced by the Mongolian people since the Yuan dynasty. Although there is no grid in the Oirat maps, they are drawn as close to the scale as possible and the relative positions of the landscape features are accurate. At the same time, they do not follow the model of the Chinese and Russian maps. Their disadvantage is in one not

¹ Renat was first captured by Russian troops at Poltava during the Northern war and exiled to Siberia. There he was captured by the Dzungars, and he spent 17 years with them and returned to Sweden in 1734.

surprising feature that they had not been previously marked to define the national borders, and they had no lines of latitude and longitude as well as the clearer structure. These maps, along with the evidence of agricultural development (active development of the so-called "Kalmyk" ditches in Kazakhstan based on the experience of the Uighur farmers), military actions (production of weapons, guns, gunpowder), and industrial improvement (the presence of copper-smelting plants, coinage, etc.), indicate that Galdan-Tseren was busy with the attempt of state building, which was similar to the analogue efforts of his great neighbours, the Russian Empire and the Qing Empire.

The first of all Oirats to cast coins was Galdan-Boshoktu-Khan, who introduced them into circulation in the east of Turkestan under the name of "pul". Using "Dzungarian pul", the Oirats exacted tribute, which was at the rate of 1 Tanga per soul to be paid annually, and this amount was constant from the period of Galdan. It remained the same under Tsevan-Rabdan (1697-1727) and totaled 100 thousand Tangas annually.

The name "pul" (the Chinese sources give it as "pu-er" 普尔) was in the monetary system of Xinjiang until the end of XIX century (Belyaev, Nastich). The prototype of these coins are considered to be the pul of the Yarkend khanate, having a vernacular nomination of "horse hoof" (m-ti-bi 马蹄币). According to the "Xiyui of tuchzhi" 西域图志 (tsa 卷35), Dzungarian pul during the reign of Tsevan-Rabdan (1697-1727) and Galdan-Tseren (1727-1745) was made of red copper. After the destruction of the Dzungar khanate, the Manchus proceeded to the seizure of the Dzungarian coins and replacing them with the actual Qing currency, but actively applying the Dzungarian experience of coining.

Casting and minting coins required copper, which the Oirats were extracted from the copper mine. In addition to copper, mining and smelting of other precious metals was carried out, in which fluent Russian craftsmen were engaged who lived in Dzungaria (craftsmen of Kolyvan plant, natives of Tomsk, Tara, Krasnoyarsk). They also set up small enterprises for smelting copper, silver and gold. Thus, the advanced technologies of that time were developing in the Dzungar khanate, which was located in the center of the nomadic Central Asian region, and thanks to the centralized power, this area of economic activity could flourish by attracting the representatives of settled peoples. However, as we know, this did not happen, because the internecine struggle, the invasion from the outside and the defeat in the war with the Manchus led to the end of the state. However, the original material and spiritual culture of the Oirats remained to enrich our civilization.

7. Conclusion

The study of the historical and cultural heritage of the ancestors of the Kalmyks - Oirats allows us to note the following specific features of the preserved material objects. First, the material culture of the Oirats experienced a certain rise by the middle of the XVIII century, as evidenced by the development of sedentary structures, development and extraction of precious metals, as well as the introduction of cartography, which is regarded as an international advanced phenomenon in the XVIII century. Second, the Oirat heritage itself is characterized by mutual influence (a special kind of architecture of sedentary structures due to the influence of Tibet). Oirats took over from the sedentary Uighurs skills of cultivation of fields: for example, "Kalmyk irrigation ditches" known in Kazakhstan, and the Uighur population, taking

over from the Dzungars the items of Oirat life, began to produce debiskers, durbeldzhyns, etc. The Russian craftsmen also had a certain impact on the development of production providing the exchange of experience. Third, the legacy of the Oirats was reflected in the material objects competing with them of the Manchu Qing dynasty and was expressed in the following: 1) the Oirats, setting a precedent, shared their experience with the Qing administration created by the Qing in Xinjiang. 新疆 (use of Qing coins and official seals in Eastern Turkestan in modern times followed the same path that the Oirat, laid in the XVIII century); 2) the Oirat (Jungar) were endowed with negative and untrue properties as the multilingual Qing steles, addressed to different audiences, reported. In the history of Central Asia, the participants of which were the Manchus, Oirats and Kazakhs there existed a noticeable similarity in many phenomena of their social structure, military affairs and politics.

Thus, the Qing and Oirat societies, although similar, had different origins. Advanced technologies had the traces of Western influence on both the Qing and the Oirats, but the origin of the sources of influence was different. While the Qing in cartography and weapons business was characterized by the influence of the Jesuits, who had their geographical location in the South of Europe, the Dzungars were influenced by the Northern European engineering traditions (a Swede named Renat) in cartography, and the Russian traditions of mining and gun production. Encouraging the development of advanced technologies, the Dzungarian ruling elite of the clan "tsoros" was partly a consequence of the existing competition with the Kalmyk omok "makhchin-kerat", as they, in turn, tried to introduce all new advanced, borrowing them outside the far East and Central Asian civilizations. This testified to the processes of globalization and the role of objects of material culture in modern science.

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