

Russia, Turkey, and Circassia in the 1640's

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I

In 1475 the Turks made a vigorous effort to extend their authority to the northern shores of the Black Sea; they invaded the Crimea. The Khan of the Crimean Tatars Mengli-Girey was forced to recognize the suzerainty of the Ottoman Sultan and became his vassal. The Turks occupied outright the important trading city of Kafa (modern Feodosia) as well as Kerč (on the strait of the same name) and Azov (at the mouth of the Don River). Kafa became the residence of a Turkish governor-general (begler- beg¹).

Mengli-Girey nevertheless kept lively diplomatic relations with Moscow. Besides, both before and after 1475 Moscow entertained prosperous commercial connections with the Crimea. The establishing of the Ottoman protectorate over the Crimea thus could not but bring Muscovy in contact with Turkey. At first, the relations between Muscovy and Turkey were friendly. Later on, a series of conflicts developed between Russia and Turkey. One of the areas, in which Russian and Turkish interests clashed, was Circassia.

The contacts between the Russians and the Circassians had old historical traditions behind them. In the 11-th and the first half of the 12th century a prosperous Russian principality, that of Tmutorokan', established itself on the Taman peninsula, that is close to Circassia²). Besides the Circassians, the Russians also entered into friendly relations with the Circassians' neighbors, the Alans (Ossetians, in Old Russian, Jasy³).

¹) G. V e r n a d s k y, *Russia at the Dawn of the Modern Age* (New Haven, 1959), pp. 68—69. (Subsequently quoted as *Russia at Dawn*); A. K r y m s k y, *Istoriya Tureččyny* (Kiev, 1924), pp. 102—103.

²) G. V e r n a d s k y, *Kievan Russia* (New Haven, 1948), pp. 64—69, 74—79, 357—359. (Subsequently quoted as *Kievan Russia*), Id., *The Origins of Russia* (Oxford, 1959), pp. 215—220, 298—299.

³) *Kievan Russia*, pp. 357—359; G. V e r n a d s k y and D. D z a n t y, „The Ossetian Tale of Iry Dada and Mstislav“, *Journal of American Folklore*, 69 (1956), pp. 217—219.

In the Russian chronicles of the Kievan period the Circassians are called Kosogi or Kasogi. The original name of the people was Kas. In the Russian language of the Mongol and post-Mongol periods we find another form of the name, Čerkasy (in modern Russian, Čerkesy; in Turkish, Çerkesler). The name Čerkasy is a compound one: Č e r - K a s , in Persian Č a h a r - K a s , i. e., „Four-Kas“ (Four Kas clans⁴).



⁴) G. Vernadsky, *The Mongols and Russia* (New Haven, 1953), p. 291; (hereafter quoted as *Mongols and Russia*); Id., *Russia at Dawn*, p. 249. Čahar in Persian means „four“.

Circassia did not constitute a unified state in the 16th and the 17th centuries. The Circassians were divided into a number of tribes and clans, each being more or less autonomous. The two strongest tribes among them were the Adyge who controlled the western part of the country adjacent to the Black Sea; and the Kabardians in the central part of the Northern Caucasus⁵). Kabarda was itself divided into two parts: Great Kabarda, west of the Terek River bend; and Little Kabarda, east of the bend (see map).

The social structure of both the Adyge and the Kabardians represented a mixture of the old patriarchal clan ways with the growing differentiation between the ruling class of princely aristocracy and the common people — peasants and fishermen. In the Adyge region a considerable part of the peasants were free and only part enserfed by the lords. In Kabarda most of the peasants had to perform corvée for the princes or to pay them taxes in kind. The princes also owned slaves, most of the latter being prisoners of war. A wealthy Kabardian prince would gather around himself a thousand or more retainers and control scores of peasant villages. A lesser lord had to satisfy himself with a few retainers and with half a dozen of villages. There was no firmly established hierarchy of princes. A ruler belonging to an old and especially esteemed clan was considered a senior prince. However, any lesser prince would act independently of the senior prince if he chose so.

It should be noted that in the 16th and the 17th centuries Kabardian language, fashions, music, dances, and folk songs became popular among the neighboring tribes and spread all over the Northern Caucasus.

As to the Circassians' neighbors, the Alans (Ossetians), they had been badly shattered during the Mongol period. A considerable number of them were conscripted into the Mongol armies and had to migrate to China⁶). Prior to the Mongol invasion the Alans had

⁵) On the history of the Circassians see A. N a m i t o k , *Origines des Circassiens* (Paris, 1939); Schora-Bekmurzin-Nogmow [Nogmov], bearbeitet von A. B e r g é , *Die Sagen und Lieder des Tscherkessen-Volks* (Leipzig, 1866) (subsequently quoted as Nogmov); Mirza B a l a , *Çerkesler, Islam Ansiklopedisi*, III (Istanbul, 1945), pp. 375—386; R. T r a k h o , *Čerkesy* (München, 1956) (hereafter quoted as Trakho); *Istorija Kabardy s drevnejšikh vremen do našikh dnei* (Moscow, 1957). (Subsequently quoted as *Istorija Kabardy*).

⁶) See G. V e r n a d s k y , *Problems of Ossetic and Russian Epos*, *American Slavic and East European Review*, Oct., 1959, pp. 290—293.

inhabited both the plains and the mountainous region in the central part of the Northern Caucasus. Now those of them who remained in the Caucasus were pushed by the Tatars and the Kabardians from the plains to the mountainous regions. Economically, the people of the plains and those of the mountains were mutually interdependent. The Kabardians needed for their cattle mountain pastures in the summertime, and the Ossetians, plains pastures in the wintertime. Since the Kabardians in the post-Mongol period were much stronger than the Ossetians, the Kabardian princes succeeded in gradually establishing their protectorate over the Ossetians.

A peculiar form of the ritual kinship ties between the Kabardian and the Ossetian noble families was provided by the so-called *atalyk* custom. A Kabardian prince would send his infant son to an Ossetian lord to be brought up in the old chivalry traditions of the mountaineers. The Ossetian fosterer (*atalyk*) took care of the boy until the latter's coming of age (sixteen or seventeen) and then returned him to the house of his parents with solemn ceremonies. After that the two families considered themselves associated in kinship, visited each other and arranged hunting parties together. The *atalyk* was from now on under the protection of the boy's father. The latter had in the *atalyk*'s person a faithful friend ready to promote his patron's influence among the Ossetians⁷⁾.

An ethnic element in the Circassian area apart from the others was represented by that group of Goths who had settled in Taman region and around it in the fourth century A. D. These Goths were known as the Gothi-Tetraxitae⁸⁾. In my opinion, the name Tetraxitae is a contraction of Tetrakasitae, i. e., "Four Kas [clans]⁹⁾". It is another form of the name Čerkas. Presumably, the name was given the Goths because they settled close to the „four Kas clans“. We may call them the Goth Circassians or the Circassians Goths. The remnants of the Gothi-Tetraxitae survived in the Taman region down to the late 15th century¹⁰⁾.

Around 1484 the Turks succeeded in subduing the Taman region and thus came close to the area of the old Gothic settlements as well

⁷⁾ Istorija Severo-Osetinskoj ASSR (Moscow, 1959), p. 107.

⁸⁾ R. L o e w e , Die Reste der Germanen am Schwarzen Meere (Halle, 1896), pp. 22—35. (Subsequently quoted as Loewe).

⁹⁾ G. V e r n a d s k y , The Riddle of the Gothi-Tetraxitae, SOF, XI (1952), pp. 281—283.

¹⁰⁾ L o e w e , pp. 38—70.

as to that of the Circassians¹¹). Subsequently, the remnants of the Gothi-Tetraxitae seem to have gradually merged with the Circassians.

After the seizure of Taman both the Ottoman Sultan and his vassal, the Khan of the Crimea, claimed suzerainty over all of the Circassian princes and demanded the latter's obedience to the Sultan. A number of Adyge princes proved ready to cooperate with the Turks. On the other hand, most of the Kabardian princes were reluctant to do so and eventually preferred to come to terms with Moscow.

In the course of the 16th century the Turks built several fortresses along the Caucasian coast of the Black Sea, such as Anapa, and Sukhum. The Turks aspired to the control of the whole northern Caucasus, which would enable them to penetrate to Astrakhan as well as to Derbend. In that way they would be in position to threaten the Russian control of the Lower Volga on the one hand, and to secure for their troops the passage to Persia via the Caspian Sea.

The Crimea Tatars in their turn tried to influence in their favor as many prominent Circassian clans as feasible. In this case again the atalyk custom played an important role. Many a Crimean Tatar Khan or grandee would send his son to a Circassian atalyk for training¹²).

Turning now to the Russian policies, in 1552 Tsar Ivan Groznyi ("the Dread" or "the Terrible") conquered Kazan. Four years later Astrakhan was likewise annexed to the Tsardom of Moscow. Moscow now obtained possession of the whole course of the Volga River as well as of the northern shore of the Caspian Sea. The exit from the Don River to the Sea of Azov was still barred to the Russians by the Turkish fortress of Azov. Nevertheless, the Russians were now in

¹¹) Loewe, pp. 38—43; Trakho, p. 18; Russia at Dawn, pp. 78—79. The Turkish historical compilation *Hasht Behisht*, written by Sultan Bayezid's order, contains the following information: „After the conquest of Kaffa, Kopa [Kuban] was still in the hands of the remaining Franks [i. e., Genoese], because of some natural obstacles (that prevented its conquest). Now [in 1479, according to Halil Inalcik] the Sultan sent there thirty ships under the governor of Koja-eli (Izmit, Nicomedia).“ See Halil Inalcik, „Mehmed the Conqueror (1432—1481) and his time“, *Speculum*, XXXV, No. 3 (July, 1960), p. 425. Apparently, this expedition constituted the opening move in the Turkish campaigns in the Kuban region. The conquest of the Taman Peninsula seems to have been completed by 1484.

¹²) N. A. Smirnov, *Politika Rossii na Kavkaze v XVI—XIX vekakh* (Moscow, 1958), pp. 23—24 (hereafter quoted as Smirnov).

position to get in contact with the peoples of the Northern Caucasus. It should be noted that the region of the lower Don (except Azov) was controlled not directly by the Moscow government but by the Don Cossacks who formed an independent military commune. On the Terek River another such commune came to being, that of the Terek Cossacks.

The conquest of Astrakhan by the Russians and their penetration into the Terek valley facilitated the establishment of close relations between the Russians and the Kabardians. In 1557 the envoys of two senior Kabardian princes, Temrjuk (Kemigorko) (son of Idar) and Tazrut, asked the Tsar for his protection. Four years later, Tsar Ivan married Temrjuk's daughter Kučenej (Gošanej) who was baptized and received the Christian name of Maria. In 1567 the Russians, as advised by Temrjuk, built a fortress on the right bank of Terek River at the influx of the Sunža River into the Terek River — Sunženskij Gorodok (Sunža Castle)¹³).

The establishing of the tsar's protectorate over some of the Kabardian princes could not but worry both the Sultan and the Crimean Khan. The Crimean grandees, as well as the emissaries of the Kazan and Astrakhan Tatars (who now were the Tsar's subjects) and the emigrés from the former Kazan and Astrakhan khanates kept urging the sultan to oust the Russians from Astrakhan and eventually from Kazan, assuring him that an anti-Russian uprising might be expected both in Kazan and Astrakhan in case the Turks showed their strength¹⁴). In 1569 the Turks launched an ambitious campaign against Astrakhan, which proved a failure¹⁵).

After the death of Tsar Ivan, the real administrator of the Muscovite government in the reign of Ivan's feeble minded son Fjodor (1584—1598), Boris Godunov (subsequently Fjodor's successor as

¹³) See Smirnov, pp. 26—29. In 1571, as a concession to Turkey, the tsar ordered Sunženskij Gorodok to be destroyed and abandoned (Istorija Kabardy, p. 43). It was restored in 1578 (Istorija Kabardy, p. 44, and Smirnov, p. 33). The Russians again abandoned Sunženskij Gorodok at the beginning of the Time of Trouble in 1605 (Smirnov, p. 47, and Istorija Kabardy, p. 46). In 1652 Sunženskij Gorodok was once more restored (Trakho, p. 26).

¹⁴) A. A. Novoselskij, *Bor'ba Moskovskogo Gosudarstva s Tatarami v pervoj polovine XVII veka* (Moscow and Leningrad, 1948), pp. 24—27 (hereafter quoted as Novoselskij).

¹⁵) Istorija Kabardy, p. 43; Nogmov, pp. 89—90; P. A. Sadikov, *Pokhod Tatar i Turok na Astrakhan v 1569 godu*, *Istoričeskiye Zapiski*, 22 (1947), pp. 132—166; Novoselskij, pp. 25—27.

tsar, 1598—1605), continued to strengthen Russian positions in the Caucasus. In July, 1588, the Kabardian prince Mamstrjuk (the late Temrjuk's son) and his associates pledged their loyalty to Tsar Fjodor. The latter issued a charter (*žalovannaja gramota*) to the Kabardian princes, promising to protect them against their enemies¹⁶). In this charter the tsar announced to the Kabardians that, in order to be in a better position to protect Kabarda, he had commanded a Russian fortress to be built on the left bank of the Terek River at its estuary. The fortress was built in the same year and a garrison of Russian soldiers (*strelcy*) and Terek Cossacks was quartered there. The new fortress was officially called Terskij Gorod (Terek Fortress) and became known informally as Terki.

The confirmation of the Russian protectorate over Kabarda and the building of Terskij Gorod greatly enhanced the tsar's prestige in the Caucasus. In 1603 the Georgian (Kakhetian) envoys asked Tsar Boris to send troops against the ruler of Tarki (see map), who harassed Kakhetia by his constant raids. The next year a Muscovite embassy was sent to Kakhetia for negotiations with the Georgians. The report of that embassy contains some information about the Kabardian-Ossetian relations. The Russian envoys were told in Terskij Gorod that the Tagaur Ossetians in the Daryal area revolted against their lord, the Kabardian prince Ajtek. The latter asked the vojevoda of Terek to intervene in his favor. Ajtek warned the Russians that if the Ossetians remained independent they might try to close the Daryal pass¹⁷).

II

The „Time of Trouble“ (1605—1613) weakened the Tsardom of Moscow both internally and internationally. However, with the help of the Don and the Terek Cossacks Moscow was able to keep control of Astrakhan as well as of a part of the Terek region. While the Crimean Tatars and the Great Nogays harassed Russian borderlands, it was fortunate for Russia that in that period a series of conflicts

¹⁶) Kabardino-Russkije otnošenija v XVI—XVIII vekakh. Dokumenty i materialy. 2 vols. (Moscow, 1957), Vol. I, documents No. 28 (pp. 50—51) and No. 29 (pp. 52—54). (Hereafter quoted as KRO, I).

¹⁷) Istorija Severo-Osetinskoj ASSR, pp. 105—106. The Tagaur Ossetians were one of the four main divisions of the Ossetians, the other three being Kurtat, Alagir, and Digor.

took place between Turkey and Persia (1603—1612 and later). Because of these Turkey had to concentrate her forces in Transcaucasia and was not in position to pay much attention to the events in the Northern Caucasus. The war between the sultan and the shah lasted until 1639.

By that time the relations between Muscovy and Turkey became strained owing to the seizure of Azov by the Don Cossacks (1637). In 1641 the Turks, supported by the Crimean Tatars, sent their troops to Azov in order to regain that fortress. The Cossacks, however, succeeded in defeating the Turkish-Tatar army. After that the Don Cossacks asked Tsar Mikhail to send his troops to Azov to help them to hold Azov against a new Turkish invasion which seemed imminent. The tsar convoked a National Assembly (*Z e m s k i j S o b o r*) to discuss the situation. The Sobor decided against sending troops to Azov since such action could be expected to result in a major war with Turkey, to which Moscow had not been prepared. The Don Cossacks had no alternative to evacuating Azov, which they did, the Turks reoccupying the city. While the immediate cause for a Turco-Russian conflict was thus eliminated, the Crimean Tatars conducted a series of devastating raids on Muscovy's borderlands. Some of these raids were made with Turkey's consent; others, on the Tatar's own initiative¹⁸).

As regards the situation in the Northern Caucasus, around the time of the temporary seizure of Azov by the Don Cossacks, a violent feud occurred in Kabarda between the sons of Prince Kudenet of the Idar clan and two influential princes of Great Kabarda, Aleguko Šeganukin and Khatažuko Kazyjev. The Russian vojevoda of Terskij Gorod intervened in this civil war and sent troops to support the Kudenetoviči (Kudenet's sons). In 1641 Aleguko and Khatažuko moved with their retainers across the Kuban River into the Adyge region and entered in negotiations with the Crimean Khan¹⁹). Two years later, however, both of them again switched allegiance and pledged loyalty to the tsar²⁰).

At that time the situation in the Northern Caucasus became ominous to the Russians because of the appearance of the Kalmyks in

¹⁸) *Novoselskij*, pp. 308—362.

¹⁹) *Istorija Kabardy*, p. 48. For Kabardian traditions concerning the princes Khatažuko and Aleguko as well as the inter-clan feuds in their period see *N o g m o v*, pp. 94—112.

²⁰) *K R O*, I, Documents No. 149 and No. 150, pp. 242—246.

the Lower Volga region. The Kalmyk drive represented the westernmost wave of the Oyrat-Kalmyk fan-like expansion from Džungaria in the first half of the 17th century²¹). In 1607 the Kalmyks appeared on the southern border of Siberia and for about three decades constituted a serious threat to the Russians there and in the Ural area. According to a Russian document, the Kalmyk armed forces south of the Siberian border in 1607 amounted to twelve „sans“, each san comprising 10,000 horsemen²²). These forces represented an association of several Kalmyk tribes and clans, each led by a prince called *t a j š a* (plural, *t a j š i*) in Russian sources²³).

²¹) The Oyrats, or Kalmyks, are the western branch of the Mongols. The name „Oyrat“ (Ojrat) is of Mongol origin; the name „Kalmyk“ is Turkic. On the history of the Kalmyks see Iakinf (Bičurin), *Istoričeskoje obozrenie Ojratov ili Kalmykov s XV stoletija do nastojaščego vremena* (St. Petersburg, 1834); G. F. Miller [Müller], *Istorija Sibiri*, I. A. Andrejev, ed. [2d Russian edition], vol. I—II (Moscow, 1937—1941) (vol. III not yet published); P. S. Pallas, *Sammlungen historischer Nachrichten über die Mongolischen Völkerschaften*, Bd. 2 (St. Petersburg, 1776—1801); A. M. Pozdnev, *Astrakhanskije Kalmyki i ikh otnošenija k Rossii do načala nunešnjego stoletija*, *Žurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveščeniija*, 244 (1886), pp. 140—170; J. F. Baddeley, *Russia, Mongolia, and China*. 2 vols. (London, 1919); W. Kotwicz, *Russkie arkhivnye dokumenty po snošeniju s ojratami v XVII i XVIII vekakh*, *Izvestija Rossijskoj Akademii Nauk*, 1919, pp. 793—797, 801—814; N. N. Palmov, *Očerki istorii kalmyckogo naroda za vremena ego prebyvanija v predelakh Rossii* (Astrakhan, 1922); Id., *Etjudi po istorii privolžskikh kalmykov*. 4 parts (Astrakhan, 1926—1929); B. Ja. Vladimircov, *Obščestvennyj stroj Mongolov* (Leningrad, 1934) (subsequently quoted as Vladimircov); Ch' i - Y ü W u, *Who were the Oirats?*, *The Yenching Journal of Social Studies*, III, No. 2 (August, 1941), pp. 174—219; S. K. Bogojavlenskij, *Materialy po istorii Kalmykov v pervoj polovine XVII veka*, *Istoričeskiye Zapiski*, 5 (1939), pp. 48—101 (hereafter quoted as Bogojavlenskij); B. Istokov, *Kalmyckoje pravo i tragedija malenkogo naroda* ([English title:] *Some Aspects of Kalmyk History and Society*) (New York, 1952). (mimeographed edition).

²²) *Materialy po istorii Russko-Mongolskikh otnošenij. Russko-Mongolskie otnošenija 1607—1636* (Moscow, 1959), p. 22 (Document No. 2, 1607). In terms of military organization the Kalmyk word *san* had the same value as the term *tümen* (Old Russian *t'ma*) in the Mongol Empire. It denoted an army division 10000 strong. On *tümen* (*t'ma*) see *Mongols and Russia*, pp. 28—29, 104—105, 215—219. Both N. N. Poppe and Johannes Rahder (whom I consulted in this matter), consider the Kalmyk *san* a loanword from Turkic. In Kazakh, *san* means „number“, „a large number“, „100000“.

²³) *Taiiji* and *taiishi* (in Vladimircov's transcription) are two forms of the Mongol title for „prince“, derived from the Chinese, see Vladimircov, pp. 74, 138, 141—143. The former (*taiiji*) was used for Čingis-Khan's descendants (Vladimircov, 144).

The Russian garrisons in Siberia and Baškiria were much weaker, numerically, than the Kalmyks. However, the Russians had the advantage of a centralized organization of their state and army, as well as of having more firearms than the Kalmyks. After unsuccessfully trying to break Russian defense lines in Siberia and Baškiria, one of the strongest Kalmyk tajši, Urljuk (Ho-Örlök) led his men to the Lower Volga region (around 1633). Before long the Kalmyks came close to Astrakhan. Under the Kalmyk pressure the horde of the Great Nogays moved from beyond the Volga to the steppes between the Lower Volga and the Don (1634).

A small part of the Nogays, however, joined the Kalmyks²⁴). On February 18, 1643, the Kalmyks attacked Astrakhan but were repulsed²⁵). Urljuk did not take part in this attack. He contemplated an even bolder move — to cross the Lower Volga in order to be able to penetrate into the Northern Caucasus. It seems certain that he entered in contact with the Turks in order to coordinate his attack with the planned Turkish offensive against the Russian possessions in the Caucasus. In December 1643 he crossed the Volga with no less than 20 000 horsemen under his command.

The Kalmyks divided their forces into two army groups. Urljuk himself attacked the Kabardians and the adjacent clans of the Little Nogays²⁶). Simultaneously Urljuk's grandson Erkej (Dajan-Erki), supported by the pro-Kalmyk Nogays dashed to Terskij Gorod. According to the Kalmyk strategic plan, Urljuk was to join Erkej after conquering the Kabardians. The plan miscarried; the Russian garrison of Terskij Gorod, supported by the Terek Cossacks, repulsed Erkej's attack (January 4, 1644). Meanwhile the Kabardians, supported by the Little Nogays, completely defeated Urljuk's army. Close to 10 000 Kalmyk horsemen were killed in the battle or taken prisoner. Less than 2000 escaped and fled to the steppes north of the Kuma River. Urljuk himself and three of his sons perished in the carnage. Two tajši were captured by the victors²⁷). Reminiscences of this battle survived in Kabardian epos²⁸). The immediate threat

²⁴) Novoselskij, pp. 223—228.

²⁵) Bogojavlenskij, pp. 79—80.

²⁶) The group of the Little Nogays separated from the main Nogay horde in the middle of the 16th century (Novoselskij, pp. 15—16). The Little Nogays established themselves in the steppes between Azov and Kabarda.

²⁷) KRO, I, No. 149, pp. 242—244. Cf. Bogojavlenskij, p. 82; Novoselskij, p. 360; Smirnov, pp. 50—51.

²⁸) Nogmov, pp. 63—79.

to the Russian possessions in the Northern Caucasus was thus averted. The situation remained dangerous, however, to both the Russians and the Kabardians. The Kalmyks, while weakened by their defeat were still very strong and could expect reinforcements from other groups of their people beyond the Volga.

Neither the Turks nor the Crimean Tatars abandoned their plans of conquering the Northern Caucasus. In March, 1644, two Kabardian princes — the above mentioned Aleguko and Khatažuko — reported to the Terek vojevoda M. P. Volynskij that the Crimean Tatars had been mobilized and might be expected to attack Kabarda any day. That attack did not materialize, but both the Kalmyks and the Tatars continued their efforts to swing over to their side at least part of the Kabardian princes²⁹). These efforts proved partly successful. In 1647 Aleguko and Khatažuko wrote to Tsar Aleksej that Prince Kazanali of Little Kabarda had joined the Kalmyks and together with them was preparing to attack the possessions of the Kabardians loyal to Russia³⁰). Aleguko and Khatažuko also reported that the sultan and the Crimean Khan kept sending emissaries to the Kabardian princes urging them to go over to the Turkish side and promising good rewards in case they did so³¹). In 1646 the Kalmyks captured the wife and children of Prince Šagin, Šagin himself then went to the Kalmyks, apparently intending to redeem his family from captivity. The next year the Kalmyks made another raid on the Kabardians and took Šagin along with them³²). Šagin succeeded in obtaining the bones of Urljuk and his sons killed by the Kabardians in the battle of 1644. (These bones had been kept by the Kabardians as war trophies).

Šagin decided to carry the bones to the Kalmyk headquarters, presumably as ransom for his family. On his way, however, he was seized by Russian soldiers who brought him, as well as Urljuk's and his sons' bones, to Astrakhan. There Šagin was put in prison. Aleguko and Khatažuko petitioned the tsar to pardon Šagin. The tsar agreed to release Šagin from imprisonment, but ordered him to stay in Astrakhan as a hostage (a m a n a t)³³).

²⁹) KRO, I, No. 150, p. 245.

³⁰) KRO, I, No. 178, p. 286.

³¹) KRO, I, No. 178, p. 287.

³²) KRO, I, *ibidem*.

³³) KRO, I, No. 185, pp. 294—295.

Concerning the Kabardian-Ossetian relations in this period, the Russian envoys, who went through Kabarda on their way to Imertia in 1650, reported that when they stayed with the Kabardian prince Anzorov, two representatives of the Digor Ossetians approached them and informed them that the Digor and Styr-Digor Ossetians were paying tribute to the princes Aleguko and Khatažuko. These Ossetian representatives assured the Russian envoys that in case the tsar should build a Russian fortress close to the mountains, all of the Ossetians would pledge allegiance to him and pay him the same tribute they had been paying to the Kabardian princes³⁴).

As regards the Russian-Kalmyk relations, Urljuk's bones were kept by the Russians in Astrakhan until at least 1649, after which they were given to the Kalmyks³⁵). Following that, the Kalmyks' attitude towards the Russians became less hostile, and the Kalmyk danger to Russia gradually subsided. On February 4, 1655, the leading tajši of the Volga Kalmyks pledged loyalty to Tsar Aleksej³⁶).

While the Turks and the Crimean Tatars failed to take advantage of the Kalmyk invasion of 1644, they continued their efforts of subduing Kabarda throughout the late 17th and most of the 18th centuries.

It was only after the annexation of the Crimea to Russia in 1783 and the conclusion of the Russo-Turkish treaty of Jasy (Iași) in 1792 that Russia could consider her position in the Northern Caucasus more secure. By signing the treaty of Jasy the Turks abandoned their claims on Kabarda.

Additional Note

I have just received (courtesy of Dr. A. Bormanshinov of Princeton University) Vol. I of the new publication of the Kalmyk Research Institute: Kalmykii Naučno-issledovatel'skij Institut jazyka, literatury i istorii pri Sovete Ministrov Kalmyckoj ASSR, Zapiski, vypusk I (Elista, 1960). This volume (pp. 49—83) contains a valuable article on the Russian-Kalmyk relations in the 1650's and 1660's: P. S. Preobraženskaja, Iz istorii russko-kalmyckikh otnošenij v 50—60—kh godakh XVII veka. Pr. states that it was only after the Kalmyk oath of 1655 that the Moscow government had decided to give Urljuk's bones (kept in Astrakhan) to his son Dajčin. However, for some unknown reasons, this was not done (Preobraženskaja, p. 63, note 1).

³⁴) Istorija Severo-Osetinskoj ASSR. p. 106. The Styr („Great“) Digorians lived „behind“ the Digorians (*ibidem*).

³⁵) Bogojavlenskij, p. 82.

³⁶) Polnoje Sobranie Zakonov Rossijskoj Imperii, I, No. 145, pp. 343—345.