



New Findings from Alxa Khoshut Mongolian Archives

An Introduction and Documentary Analysis Framework

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Abstract. The subordination process of Alxa Khoshut Mongolia to the Qing dynasty is really very difficult and complicated. There are 16 copies of the relevant archives in *the Study of 100 Valuable and Rare Mongolian Archives Arrangement of the Qing Dynasty*, among which 13 copies are the most up-to-date, direct, and original record of the above mentioned special historical process that had never been disclosed before, such as the Report from Jonon Erkhbaatar on Granting Royal Books and the Gold Seal, Dec.5, Kangxi 22nd year (Jan.21,1684), and the Report to Emperor Kangxi from Erdene Khoshunch on Confession of Crimes in Looting of the Borders, Oct.19, Kangxi 23rd year (Nov.25,1684). Thus, these new findings in the archives not only enable us to have new detailed historical facts of the subordination process of the Alxa Khoshut Mongolia's to the Qing dynasty, but also to clarify some ambiguous historical events that confused us for quite a long time ever before. And these new findings will open a new window to explore the ethnic relationship between the local ethnic region and the central government of the Qing dynasty in future.

Keywords: the Alxa Khoshut Mongolia · subordination · archives of Qing dynasty

1 Foreword

Alxa Mongolia was formed in the second half of the 17th century. In Kangxi 15th year (1676A.C.), Galdan, the leader of the Jungar tribe of Erut Mongolia, attacked his uncle Chuhur Ubashi and the leader Ochirt of Khoshut tribe successively. Chuhur Ubash was imprisoned and Ochirtu was killed. The enlarging of the Jungar forces led to a very special situation, that his old subordinates like Ochirtu and Chuhur Ubashi, who were unwilling to obey the rules of Galdan. Fled from the original nomadic land. Finally, they became the founding members of the later Alxa Khoshut Mongolia. Among these rest of tribes, the rest of the Khoshut tribe led by Heluoli, gradually became the main force of these scattered forces. After entering Alxa area, Heluoli contacted with Emperor Kangxi for many times, expressing his sincere wishes to be subordinated to the Qing dynasty. All the above details were revealed by the historical archives in the Study of

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100 Valuable and Rare Mongolian Archives Arrangement of the Qing Dynasty¹ written by Prof. Heilong. The analysis of these achieves has a positive significance both on the study of the relationship between central government of the Qing Dynasty and enhancing the national identity of the Chinese people.

2 The Introduction of the Mongolian Archives' Governance of the Qing Dynasty and the Rise of the Alxa Khoshut Mongolia

Professor Heilong of Dalian Minzu University had published his book, the Study of 100 Valuable and Rare Mongolian Archives Arrangement in the Qing Dynasty after spending ten years research. The selected archives from this book are in Mongolian, Tote, and Manchu language. All are selected from the two open published archives compilations such as 'Mongolian Archives Compilation of the Secretariat House of the Qing Dynasty' and 'Mongolian Hall Archives Compilation of the Qing Cabinet', the starting and ending time is from Chongde 3rd year (1638) to Kangxi 58th year (1719), including the royal order and books granted by the emperors of Qing dynasty to the leaders of every Mongolian tribe, and the letters in and from. Among the 156 copies of the archives, 52 copies are of Khalkha Mongolia, 16 copies are of Alxa Mongolia, and 88 copies is of Olot Mongolia. Professor Heilong has made the Latin translation, Chinese translation, collation, and annotation of the above archives, especially focusing on the Chinese translation of these archives. The publication of this book is not only comparable to rare treasures for scholars who don't understand Mongolian language, but also of great significance to promote the research of the history of the Qing dynasty and the national history of the Qing dynasty.

The selected archives in the Study of 100 Valuable and Rare Mongolian Archives Arrangement of the Qing Dynasty are all from The Mongolian Archives of the Cabinet of the Qing Dynasty. The Cabinet of the Qing Dynasty originated from the Study Room of the period of Nvzhen Nurhachi, in charge of the writing and translation of the royal documents. According to the historical records, the Manchu authority was using Mongolian as communication tool until the Manchu was created. In Manchu society only Mongolian language was known, and all the books were written in Mongolian. If they send letters to our country (ancient Korea), they first drawn it in Mongolian, then asked Chinese staff to translate it.² But the Mongolian archives at this period have not found yet. In 1629, Huangtaiji set up the Archives House, translating the documents, taking notes on political affairs for the purpose of recording the reliable history. In 1636, Huangtaiji united every Mongolian tribe in Monan, and changed the title of the country as the Great Qing. He reformed the administration system and enlarged the Archives House to three inner departments, like inner department of national history, inner department of Secretariat and inner department of Hongwen. According to the book 'the Record

¹ *The Study of 100 Valuable and Rare Mongolian Archives Arrangement of the Qing Dynasty* is the general achievement of the 2007 National Social Science Fund project chaired by Professor Heilong and was rated as excellent result through the project appraisal in 2015. Published in Science Press in 2019.

² Li Mindou: "Jianzhou Wenjianjian", Early Qing Dynasty Historical Materials Series, Shenyang: Department of History, Liaoning University, 1978, p. 44.

of Emperor Taizong of the Qing dynasty, the inner department of national history oversees the daily life service, orders, and collection of the emperor's document and works. When the Qing dynasty made Beijing as its capital in 1645, the administration system of Archives House was changed into new titles with Hanlinyuan at the beginning of the title. In 1658, the Archives House together with the three inner departments was changed into Cabinet. In 1661, Emperor Kangxi cancelled the Cabinet and restored the three inner departments. In 1670, Cabinet was restored again. Until 1911, responsible Cabinet was established in place of Cabinet. In 1670, Mongolia Branch was established under the Cabinet, in charge of translation Mongolian, Tibetan and Muslim and Russian documentations including some diplomatic documents. The importance of Mongolian translation was self-evident indeed. And during this period, the function of Cabinet was more completed and elaborate labor segment.

Throughout the history of the Qing dynasty, although the name of the cabinet has been changed one after another, but its main functions in the writing and translation of rules and regulations, documents and files have not been changed. Therefore, the Qing dynasty cabinet formed a large sum of various documents and archives, including a considerable number of Mongolian archives. The Qing dynasty gradually united the Mongol tribes over a long period of time with six emperors in power. In this process, the personnel and document exchanges between the Qing government and the Mongolian tribes were frequent, and the Mongolian language were widely used in documents. The drafting, translation and filing of some correspondence documents were almost all controlled by the cabinet, so a large number of Mongolian files were formed in the cabinet. The correspondents between the Qing emperors and the Mongol tribes were in Mongolian, and the Mongolian tribes also wrote in Mongolian for the Qing Emperor, that situation had been lasted in Monan Mongolia region until the 10th year of Tiancong (1636), in the Khalkha Mongolian region until the Duolunnor Alliance in the 30th year of the Kangxi (1691), in the Alxa Mongolian region until the administration authority was set up in the 36th year of Kangxi (1697), in the Qinghai Mongolian region until the administration authority was set up in the 3rd year of Yongzheng (1725), in the northwestern Mongolian region until Amuersana tribe was defeated in the 23rd year of Qianlong (1758).³ The termination time of the Mongolian correspondence between the Qing government and the Mongolian tribes was exactly the dividing line that the Mongolian tribes were successively united by the Qing dynasty, proving a clear historical development heritage from one side. The selected 16 copies of the Alxa Mongolian archives from the book 'The Study of 100 Valuable and Rare Mongolian Archives Arrangement in the Qing dynasty' reflects the difficult subordination process of the Alxa Khoshut Mongolia to the Qing dynasty, nearly for twenty years from Kangxi 16th year (1677) to Kangxi 36th year (1697) and the tragic history of the special Alxa Erut Mongolia through the detailed facts. All these valuable and rare Mongolia archives have been kept year after year, and it benefits from the good governance of the archives of the Qing dynasty from one generation to the other.

³ Li Baowen, "The Collection, Collation and Publication of Mongolian Archives in China's First Historical Archive", *Western Mongolia Forum*, No. 2, 2011, pp. 53-74.

3 The Analysis Framework of the Subordination Process of the Alxa Khushot Mongolia to the Qing Dynasty

After taking the power, Heluoli initially led his troops moving to the southeast from the north slope of the Tianshan mountain, in the present Gansu and Qinghai province. Shortly afterward, he moved back to the great grassland, depasturing around again. But it is not their destination. Their intention is moving to northern part of Qinghai. In 1678, Heluoli sent an envoy to the Jingni office, asking for refuging in Qinghai to avoid the chaos. Due to the blood relationship between Heluoli and Qinghai Khoshut Mongolia, Qinghai is also willing to unite with Heluoli. However, the Qing government did not support Heluoli moving to Qinghai via the mainland. Heluoli known Galdan will invade Qinghai, so he gave up the idea of moving to Qinghai, and on the one hand he sent envoys to tell Khoshut Taiji Dalaibaatar to be ready for the military defense. And on the other hand, he led troops to move to the north, near the Ejina River area. Very soon afterwards, Galdan really started invading Qinghai. But due to the past information by Heluoli, Qinghai Khoshut were well prepared in advance. And the Qing government immediately ordered the general Zhangyong and commander in chief, Sun Sike to consolidate the army and strictly protect them. And these precautions effectively stopped Galdan's ambitious of invading Qinghai.⁴ After moving to the Alxa area, Heluoli and his troops was embarrassed and hesitated in dealing with Galdan's troops, being afraid of Galdan's chasing and attacking. They often broke into the border line to plunder in order to survive, that seriously threatened the security of the border areas and became a major border trouble in the northwest of the Qing dynasty. At this time, the Qing dynasty was busy with the southern warfare. To avoid the conflict with Galdan, the Qing government adopted the passive defense strategy "⁵. The Qing government did not even know the situation of Alxa Mongolia, and mistakenly regarded it as a subordinate of the Dailaibaatar Taiji in Qinghai. So, the Qing government handle it to an the Dailaibaatar Taiji, and the Dailaibaatar Taiji made it clear that he would not intervene in the affairs of the Alxa Khoshut Mongolia. After Kangxi understood the origin of Alxa Khoshut Mongolia, he sent letters to Galdan twice. At that time, Galdan was busy with the implementation of his "near attack trick" and could not afford time to pay attention to the Alxa Khoshut Mongolia issue. He ignored the Qing government's request and did not reply for a long time.⁶ However, the Qing government was patiently waiting for the reply of Galdan. In 1682, the Qing government's envoy Qitater was sent to Jungar to negotiate on the Alxa Khoshut Mongolian issue. The final agreement was limited to the April (1685), requiring Galdan to take over Alxa Khoshut Mongolia as soon as possible. As time goes on, the Qing government was still waiting for the agreed time limit. But Heluoli had considered for a long time that although the vast uninhabited grassland north of the Helan Mountains providing good pastures, after all, they were only a weak force just like a sandwiched

⁴ Liang Lixia and Wang Xilong, "The Northwest War and the Alxa Mongols in the Early Qing Dynasty", *Chinese Frontier Historical Studies*, No. 3, 2006, p. 99–150.

⁵ Heilong: "On the Qing Government's Solution to the Mongolian Problem in Xitao", *Journal of Inner Mongolia University*, No. 5, 2006, pp. 13–17.

⁶ Heilong: "On the Qing Government's Solution to the Mongolian Problem in Xitao", *Journal of Inner Mongolia University*, No. 5, 2006, pp. 13–17.

located between Qing, Jungar and Khalkha and had not been able to establish normal relations with them for a long time, so there was no security guarantee. It was impossible to establish mutual trade links with the central China area, and their living situation had not been improved. The nobles of Alxa Khoshut Mongolia deeply felt that they could not continue to be like this. And they must look for dependence. The Jungar was their sworn enemy, and they can't join them. Khalkha Mongolia was divided and troublesome. Only the Qing government was the most ideal choice. Therefore, in 1638, Heluoli sent an envoy to the Qing government. On the 'Report from Jonon Erkhbaatar on Granting Royal Books and the Gold Seal' Dec. 5, Kangxi's 22nd year (Jan. 21, 1684)⁷, he asked for the Qing government to grant the "Gold seal", so as to control the tribe, eliminate the thieves, and begin to formally express his desire to subordinate to the Qing dynasty. Since the Qing dynasty and Jungar had already agreed on the Alxa Khoshut Mongolia issue, they rejected the request of Heluoli. At the same time, Alxa Khoshut Mongolian Handu Taiji, Erdene Khoshunch also sent envoys to the Qing government as well, apologizing on October 19, Kangxi 23th year, 'Letter of Confession from Tayiji Handu for the Looting Conducted by Erdene Khoshunch, on Oct. 19, Kangxi 23rd year⁸,' Report to Emperor Kangxi from Erdene Khoshunch on Confession of Crimes in Looting of the Borders on Oct. 19, Kangxi's 23rd year⁹ These two documents reflected the process of Handu Tayiji very specifically, stating that Erdene Khoshunch being defeated by Galdan and became poor. Handu Tayiji stated: "The fortune of our tribes would be declined, Galdan destroyed Chuhur Wubashi and his father Bandi. I was at the age of thirteen, courtiers Erdene Khoshunch helped me fleeing out. Obeying the edict of the Dalai Lama, he lived with the emperor's border area people in the territory of Ejine, regardless of the crimes that he had committed such as robbery and so on, and I would punish them. Now they had regretted, I hope the emperor may forgive them". Erdene Khoshunch said, "The two Tayiji officers are the uncle and brother of Galdan. They are innocent and Galdan wanted to kill them and did not respect our ancestor. How can we work with him, so I request your excellency emperor to forgive us. The emperor felt the sincerity of the Handu Tayiji and Erdene Khoshunch and accepted their gifts and forgive them accordingly.

The time limit is up, but Jungar not only didn't take over the west Mongolia, but also neglected to negotiate with the Qing government. During this period, Heluoli continued to send letters to Qing government, and in Letter of Request to Emperor Kangxi from Jonon Erkhbaatar Seeking for Protection, on Oct. 10, Kangxi 23rd year¹⁰, lambasting Jungar's intention of regarding west Mongolia as its subordinate. Heluoli also expressed his grievance that the emperor had put the Alxa Mongolia issue to Jungar authority. In his letter, he showed great respect to the emperor Kangxi, and praised him for his

⁷ Heilong: "The Study of 100 Valuable and Rare Mongolian Archives Arrangement of the Qing Dynasty", Science Press, 2019, pp. 218–220.

⁸ Heilong: "The Study of 100 Valuable and Rare Mongolian Archives Arrangement of the Qing Dynasty", Science Press, 2019, pp. 226–228.

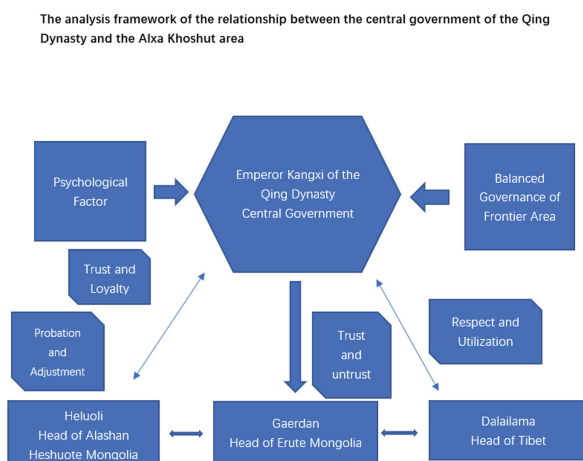
⁹ Heilong: "The Study of 100 Valuable and Rare Mongolian Archives Arrangement of the Qing Dynasty", Science Press, 2019, pp. 223–225.

¹⁰ Heilong: "The Study of 100 Valuable and Rare Mongolian Archives Arrangement of the Qing Dynasty", Science Press, 2019, pp. 220–223.

wonderful achievements, regarding emperor Kangxi as Sakyamuni, Manjusri, guanyin and even Genghis Khan as well. Much thought had been given in the words of the letter. Meanwhile, Heluoli also sent 18 horses, 9 camels as the gift to the emperor Kangxi. But the Qing government did not reply as before, the archives recorded that Jonon Erkhbaatar asked to grant the seal for many times in order to control the tribe, we did not approve his request.¹¹ Heluoli did not give up although he knew it was difficult. On Dec.12, Kangxi 24th year, Heluoli sent the Report from Junon Erkhbaatar on Failure of Appearance in front of the Throne and Request for Granting Royal Books and the Gold Seal¹², stating that his worries of the Jungar's invading, and could not meet the emperor for two years, and asked the Qing government to grant order and seal as soon as possible. His wish to be the subordinate of the Qing dynasty was so strong that he sent 45 horses to the emperor Kangxi, including his only beloved horse. From then on, the emperor Kangxi's attitude to the Alxa Khoshut changed obviously. The Qing government began to recognize the Alxa Khoshut as its subordinate but did not confirm the territory area to be controlled by written order until Dalailama sent letter the Qing government. In 1688, Jungar invaded Khalkha and confronted with the Qing government. Heluoli wanted to fight with Jungar but was rejected by the Qing government. The Qing government also stopped Heluoli's support to the Khalkha. And surprisingly, the Qing government sent Alani, the officer of the Frontier Affair House to the camp of Jungar, negotiating the Alxa Mongolia issue.

The Qing government thought that the Alxa Mongolia issue was discussed in the agreement with Dalailama could be conducted by only one side. And we did not confirm the area for the Alxa Mongolia and accept their subordinate to us. That meant the Alxa Mongolia was still under Jungar's control. Secondly, we stopped the Alxa Mongolia to support Khalkha, and did not want Jungar's confrontation with us.

The analysis framework of the relationship between the central government of the Qing Dynasty and the Alxa Khoshut area:



¹¹ Wenda: "The Strategies of the Peaceful Desert of the Dynasty", Volume 3, Kangxi 24th May.

¹² Heilong: "The Study of 100 Valuable and Rare Mongolian Archives Arrangement of the Qing Dynasty", Science Press, 2019, pp. 228–231.

The author hereby established an analysis framework to further study the significance of the mentioned Mongolian archives as shown above. In the psychological level, emperor Kangxi did not want to accept Heluoli as its subordinate, because he wanted to implement a balanced government mechanism in the west frontier area to strengthen the safety of the west frontier and acquired more benefits from Dalailama, Jungar, Alxa Mongolia and Khalkha. So, the Alxa Mongolia was just a quid pro quo of the Qing government at first. Emperor Kangxi respected Dalailama very much, because he wanted to utilize his status and influence as the religious leader. But Jungar did not keep consistent with the Qing government, they did not care for the concern from the Qing dynasty and went to the opposite side. Although the Qing government sacrificed the interest of the Alxa Mongolia, but Heluoli insisted to be subordinate to the Qing dynasty. Because only the Qing government was reliable and safe, no tribe would win the inter-tribe wars without the support of the Qing dynasty. On Mar. 27, Kangxi 31st year, he sent Letter of Request from Jonon Erkhbaatar on Stay in Alxa¹³, and on Dec. 30, Kangxi 31st year, he sent Letter of Request from Jonon Erkhbaatar on Return to Homeland Alxa¹⁴. In the above two letters, Heluoli continued to try to be admitted as the subordinate of the Qing dynasty. Until 1697, the Alxa Mongolia was formally admitted as the subordinate of the Qing dynasty. And the Qing government lost trust on Jungar tribe and wanted to kill Jungar. And from then on, during every northwest war, the Alxa Mongolia almost played an import part as the military knife and made a great contribution the Qing dynasty.

4 Conclusion

These 16 selected archives of Alxa khoshut Mongolia from ‘the Study of 100 Valuable and Rare Mongolian Archives Arrangement of the Qing Dynasty’, reflect the difficult process, the detailed tragic historical facts of Alxa Khoshut Mongolia’s subordination to the Qing dynasty from 1677 (the Kangxi Dynasty 17th year to 1697 (the Kangxi Dynasty 36th year) objectively and truthfully. Although there are 16 copies of the Alxa Khoshut d Mongolia’s archives selected in the book, but among these 16 copies of archives, only 13 copies of the Kangxi dynasty are the most up-to-date direct original record of the above mentioned special historical process, including the ‘Report from of Jonon Erkhbaatar on Granting Royal Books and the Gold Seal’ dated on the 5th day of Lunar December, Kangxi 22nd year, and the “Letter of Request to the Emperor Kangxi from Jonon Erkhbaatar, seeking for the Protection of the Kangxi Emperor” on October 19, Kangxi 23rd year, that are not found in other historical archives. All these archives not only enable us to have the bright new details of how the Alxa Khoshut Mongolia’s subordination to the Qing dynasty, but also to clarify some ambiguous historical events that confused us before. Therefore, these newly found archives also provide new evidence in furthering study the ethnic relationship between the local ethnic area and the central government of the Qing dynasty. Studying these historical archives can give us spiritual

¹³ Heilong: " The Study of 100 Valuable and Rare Mongolian Archives Arrangement of the Qing Dynasty", Science Press, 2019, pp. 240–242.

¹⁴ Heilong: " The Study of 100 Valuable and Rare Mongolian Archives Arrangement of the Qing Dynasty", Science Press, 2019, pp. 242–244.

motivation and make it more precious that today's national unity and ethnic unity are hard-won.

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