

## **POLICIES OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND MOSCOW TOWARDS THE NOGAIS IN THE 16<sup>TH</sup> AND 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES**

*Mehmet ALPARGU\**

### **ÖZET**

Altın Orda emirlerinden olan Nogay'a nispet edilen Nogay Ordası XVI. ve XVII. yüzyıllarda Hazar ile Karadeniz'in kuzeyinde oldukça etkin bir siyasi yapı oluşturmuştur. Orda, Osmanlı Devleti ve Rusya ile ilişki kurduğu gibi Astrahan ve Kazan Hanlıklarını da etkilemiştir. Ne var ki, Moğol asıllı Kalmuklar bu devletin birliğini yıkmışlar ve halkının dağılmasına yol açmışlardır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Nogay Orda, Osmanlı Devleti, Rusya, Yamgurci

### **16. ve 17. YÜZYILLARDA OSMANLI İMPARATORLUĞU VE MOSKOVA'NIN NOGAYLARA YÖNELİK POLİTİKALARI**

### **ABSTRACT**

The Nogai Horde, whose administrators were the descendents of Edige who is the important emirs of the Golden Horde, established a pre-eminent political entity in the north of Caspian and Black Sea regions in the XVIth and XVIIth centuries. This Horde established relations with the Ottoman and Russian Empires. In addition to this, the horde affected the Khanate of Astrakhan and Qazan. However, Kalmuks broke this state union, and caused her people to scatter.

**Key Words:** Nogai Horde, Ottoman Empire, Russia, Yamghurci

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\* Prof. Dr., Sakarya University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Department of History.  
e-mail: alpargu@sakarya.edu.tr.

**Subtitles:**

- 1- “The Changes in the Nogai Horde and Its Dissolution”
- 2- “The Nogai Horde and New Problems in 17<sup>th</sup> Century”
- 3- “The Assaults of Kalmuks and the Nogai Horde”
- 4- “Conclusion”

At the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Nogai Horde became an independent political entity by its own statecraft, armed forces and land. At the very beginning of this century, the chief of the Nogai Horde was Musa Mirza. Like all the other Nogai *mirzas*, he was descended from Edige. By the time of Musa Mirza, the Nogai Horde had been established in place of Manghit Yurt. Although Musa Mirza and his successors experienced significant troubles in terms of the establishment of central authority in particular, and although the Nogai clans continued to live under the administration of various mirzas, they preserved this horde and brought it into a leading political power of Eastern Europe and the Dasht-i Qipchaq.<sup>1</sup> Musa Mirza died in 1502. After his death, Yamghurci became headman. In 1505, Muhammad Amin, the khan of the Khanate of Qazan, together with 40.000 Qazan soldiers and 20.000 Nogai soldiers, made raids on Moscow territory.<sup>2</sup>

After the death of Yamghurci in about 1505, the top administration changed hands with Seyid Ahmad (Saydak Mirza). In 1509, Muhammad Gerai crushed Agish, Ahmad Ali and the Seydak Mirzas of Nogai who were engaged in a confederation with Astrakhanid Abdalkarim Khan because of their attacks against him. Agish was the son of Yamghurci. Allying with Sheikh Mamai, Muhammad Gerai of Crimea attacked the khan of Astrakhan and deposed him in 1522. One of the most important events of this period was the killing of Mehmed Gerai Khan by the Nogais returning from the Astrakhan expedition.<sup>3</sup> Moscow got

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<sup>1</sup> Vadim V. Trepavlov, **The Formation and Early History of the Manghit Yurt** (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University, 2001), p 33.

<sup>2</sup> Henry H. Howorth, **History of Mongols, From the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century**, vol: IV, part II, (London: Burt Franklin, 1880), p 1030.

<sup>3</sup> Muzeffer Ürekli, **Kırım Hanlığı'nın Kuruluşu ve Osmanlı Himayesinde Yükselişi**, (Ankara: Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1989), p 27; İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, **Osmanlı Tarihi**, vol: II, (Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 1964), p 424.

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rid of an important enemy by the murder of Mehmed Gerai Khan.<sup>4</sup> Again in this period, the Nogais interfered with the internal struggles of Crimea. When Saadat Gerai Khan was in power, his brother Islam Gerai rebelled against him and began to fight to take over the throne. Upon this, a civil war broke out in the Khanate of Crimea. Islam Gerai was pre-eminently supported by *urugs* in the Dasht-i Qipchaq, and among them, the Nogais came into forefront.<sup>5</sup> One of the important issues of the time of Saheb Gerai Khan (1532-1551) was keeping the Nogais under control.<sup>6</sup> In May 1535, Mirza Saydak sent envoys Tik Duvan and Koshdavlat to the great prince to complain about the Tatar bandits. In this period, the Nogais were trying to establish hegemony over Astrakhan.<sup>7</sup> In one of his letters, Saydak was proud to mention this. Again, in a document dating to 1535, it is noticed that Nogai Mirza Seydak said the following to the Russian Grand Duke Ivan Vasilievich: "The Qazak Tsar Khodza Mehmed was living with fifteen sons with us."<sup>8</sup> Saydak Mirza established relations with the Russians, which some Nogai princes were not pleased about.<sup>9</sup> After his death in the beginning of 1540, Sheikh Mamai, the brother of Musa, ascended to power in his place. The Qazan khan Safa Gerai, whose mother was a Nogai princess, was married to the sister of Mamai. He took 30.000 auxiliary troops from Mamai for the internal struggles in the Khanate of Qazan which were commanded by his elder son. After a very short time, Safa Gerai was dethroned and the sister of Mamai returned to her fatherland. Safa Gerai was followed by a young man whose name was Djan Ali, and in this context we know that a mission composed of some of the eminent people of Qazan was sent to Moscow to permit Djan Ali to marry the daughter of Nogai Mirza Youssof.

At that time, Youssof was the most powerful mirza among the Nogais. Thus, peace would be taken under the assurance by this horde. The Russian Tsar permitted this marriage. Youssof was the younger brother of Mamai. As mentioned before after his death in a rebellion in 1535, Suyunbike, the sister of

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<sup>4</sup> Akdes Nimet Kurat, **IV-XVIII. Yüzyillarda Karadeniz Kuzeyindeki Türk Kavimleri ve Devletleri**, (Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 1972), p 231.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p 232.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p 234.

<sup>7</sup> Howorth, op cit, Ref 2, p 1032.

<sup>8</sup> T. I., Sultanov, **Kochevye Plemena Priaralia v XV-XVII vv.: (Voprosy Ètnicheskoi i Sotsialnoi Istorii)**, (Moskva: "Nauka", Glav. red. Vostochnoi lit-ry, 1982), p 118.

<sup>9</sup> I. Kh. Kalmykov, R. Kh. Kereitov, A. I. M. Sikaliev, **Nogaitsy: Istoriko-Etnograficheski Ocherk, Otvetstvennyi**, redaktor I. A. S. Smirnova, (Cherkessk: Stavropolskoe knizhnoe izd-vo, Karachaevo-Cherkesskoe otd-nie, 1988), p 22.

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Youssof Mirza who was married to Djan Ali, then married Safa Gerai who was called from Crimea.

In this period, the Nogais continued their activities over a vast region. Their borders can be defined as follows: in the west their boundary was limited to the lower plains by the left bank of the Volga which was called the Nogai Realm or the Nogai Border. The Nogai Horde acquired the lower basin of the Volga River after the dissolution of the Golden Horde. Their northeast limits passed through the Irtish River and its branches. Their neighbour in this direction was the Khanate of Sibir. The Nogais wandered with their flocks over the land between the rivers of Yaik and Tuman. The eastern frontier of the horde followed the River Emba to the Aral Sea. The wandering lands of the Nogais reached beyond the Volga and Yaik Rivers, the Aral Sea and Irtish River including the North Caucasian Steppes. It is seen that the Nogais lived a full nomadic life in this vast region.<sup>10</sup>

#### **THE CHANGES IN THE NOGAI HORDE AND ITS DISSOLUTION**

Certain events of the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century determined the future of the Nogai Horde. The first was the dissolution of the Nogai Horde as a result of internal strife; the second was the Russian occupation of Qazan and Astrakhan. These events brought in their train a process which caused immense Russian intervention with the Nogais' internal affairs. For the powers which struggled for the competition and hegemony over the region, the three city-citadels were essential. The first was Azak, the key to the western Caucasus on the Don estuary; the second was Derbend, and the third was Astrakhan situated on the Volga delta. Astrakhan's importance came from its key position on the lower Volga and being an outlet to Turkestan and the Caucasus.<sup>11</sup> Genuinely, even if the struggle between

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<sup>10</sup> Sakinat Shikhamedovna Gadzhieva, **Material'na'ïa Kul'tura Nogai't'sev v XIX-nachale XX v.**, (Moskva: Nauka, 1976), p 16.

<sup>11</sup> Alexandre Bennigsen et Chantal Lemerrier-Quelquejay, "La Poussée Vers les Mers Chaudes et la Barrière du Caucase la Rivalité Ottomane-Muscovite dans la Seconde Moitié du XVI<sup>e</sup> Siècle", **Journal of Turkish Studies**, vol 10, 1986, p 16. The control of the River Volga provided two important advantages commercially and strategically. Traders wanted to increase commercial activities with Iran, Central Asia and India. The river was an outlet to exotic lands for the Russians. In addition to this, it was a complicated frontier for nomads to pass to the other side of the river. The supervision of the river gave advantages to struggle against the eastern enemies for the Russians. See, Alton S. Donnelly, **The Russian Conquest of Bashkiria, 1552-1740: A Case Study in Imperialism**, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p 13.

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İsmail Mirza and Youssof Mirza can be regarded as internal economic and political strife, it is true that Moscow and the Khanate of Crimea under the patronage of the Ottoman Empire had an intention to interfere with the Nogai matter and profit from this internal strife. Youssof and İsmail Mirzas who intended to approach Moscow or the Ottoman Empire benefited greatly from the position of their administrative regions.<sup>12</sup> When these policies were made, Moscow followed a more realistic policy in terms of the benefits of her country and communities. In this respect, it is doubtless that Moscow's relation, which was aimed as the protection from the Nogais, was the direction of a wider policy. Indeed, the Russian policymakers considered the Nogais to be harmful for them while specifying their enemies, and they notified such hazards as political testament when they recorded them.<sup>13</sup>

The struggle between İsmail Mirza and Youssof Mirza was the critical point of the Nogai Horde. After the elimination of Youssof Mirza by İsmail Mirza, the Nogais entered into a dissolution process, and as a result of migrations, the Small Horde was established by Kadi Mirza in the Caucasus. This horde, limited between Azak and Kabarda, was bound to the Ottoman Empire in spite of the Russians proposals. The Russians complained about them being Tatar plunderers, especially because of their activities near Azak. The reason was Moscow's decrease of ascendance in the vicinity of Azak and also the emigrants who had escaped from the Great Horde to take refuge with this horde. In addition, the lands belonging to Moscow were plundered from time to time by the Small Horde. In the period when the sons of Sheikh Mamai in power, there was not only

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<sup>12</sup> There are some researchers who connect the entrance of discontent people to the protection of Crimea with the policies of İsmail Mirza, or more correctly, the migration movements of the people who escaped from the administration of İsmail Mirza in 1557 and 1558 to famine which occurred in that period. Besides, in that period it is expressed that there was a close friendship between Ivan IV and İsmail Mirza, and also mentioned that Ivan IV treated him as an ally and trusted him in Nogai matters. See, Kalmykov, op cit Ref 9 pp 25-26. It seems that such expressions are a reflection of Soviet historiography. It is possible that such relations between Russia and the Nogais are imaginary assumptions.

<sup>13</sup> A document pertaining to the period of Tsar Boris presents a list which gives all the enemies of Ivan IV. The Ottoman Sultan, khan of Crimea, the Great Nogai Horde, Ulus of Kadi Mirza, Daghestanians, Kumuks, the people of Qazan and Siberia are included in the list as the enemies. See A. A. Novoselskiĭ, **Bor'ba Moskovskogo Gosudarstva s Tatarami v Pervoi Polovine XVII Veka**, (Moskva: Izd-vo Akademii nauk SSSR, 1948), p 32.

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this horde, but also the Alti-Uli (Six Youth) Horde which was near the Aral Sea and had established relations with the Khanates of Khiva and Bukhara.<sup>14</sup>

It became a matter for Russia to control the nomads in order to protect her southern boundaries and to blockade the nomads' movements. In this respect, Moscow regarded Astrakhan as a base and this centre was used by the Russians to provide security against the Nogais and to intervene with their internal matters.

In reality, it did not give an advantage for the Russians, who from time to time wanted oaths of loyalty from the Nogai Mirzas. The Nogai chiefs were not willing to do so because they thought that such a loyalty would cause some dangerous results in terms of internal and external politics, unless it was economically profitable. Moreover, the fragile structure of the Nogai Horde and the lack of guarantee of the loyalty of some family lines to the horde leaders made complete submission difficult. It was also important for Moscow that there was no powerful state or khanate with which to make a reliable agreement. From time to time, the mirzas rebelled against the administration of the Great Nogai Horde for various reasons, and although the Nogais promised not to assault Moscow territory, some mirzas did not abandon the idea of attacking the frontier regions. To prevent such kind of actions, it was necessary for Moscow to calm down these mirzas, which was only possible by giving a tribute under the title of "gift". While Moscow did not give this "gift", the reactions of the Mirza became severe. The holding in pledge of the sons of Nogai Mirzas by Moscow paved the way to some interesting results. For example, because the descendants of Youssof Mirza and Urus Mirza were brought up in Moscow, Russians did not have the opportunity to intervene with the Nogais' internal affairs when these sons returned to their homeland as rulers. However, the Nogais who converted to Christianity took up some important offices within the Russian armed forces and court.

Some religious matters carried importance for the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan, who was at the same time the caliph of Muslims all over the world, gave importance to the developments in the security of the pilgrimage roads (the roads bound to Mecca and Medina). The Ottoman Sultan, who was anxious about the activities of the Nogais in this field, drew the attention of the relevant people. It seems that the transactions of the Great Nogai Horde under the hegemony of the Ottoman Empire caused uneasiness among the pilgrims.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> I. Kh. Kalmykov, R. Kh. Kereitov, A. I. M. Sikaliyev, op cit Ref 9, p 26.

<sup>15</sup> In a hukum (the Ottoman imperial jurisdiction) written to the Beg of Azak, it is mentioned that the pilgrims who came from Samarkand, Bukhara and Mawara al-Nahr were down

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After the death of Ismail, in his place his elder son Tin Ahmad (1563-1578), his younger one Urus (1578-1590) and lastly Urmambet (1590-1600) succeeded each other. In the time of their reigns, there were some signs of a decrease the importance of the Nogais in the view of Moscow.<sup>16</sup> The efforts of Tin Ahmad and Urus to leave Moscow seemed to increase the alternatives of a desire for autonomy. Urus explained that they did not want to ruin their future living peacefully with Moscow. However, the Nogais also experienced some difficulties in the relations with the Khanate of Crimea. They claimed not to have been treated well by the Khan of Crimea and complained frequently about the limitation of their migration areas.<sup>17</sup> The Nogais wanted to be tied by only one side, which is why everyone who came to power attempted to establish diplomatic relations with the Khanate of Crimea or Moscow. In the last years of Ismail's reign in particular, the establishment of an administrative system which was bound to Moscow was met with reaction by some mirzas causing abstraction from the Islamic world. The dissolution of the horde could not possibly be considered by Tin Ahmad and Urus Mirza. In addition to this, Tin Ahmad did not want to live another economic adventure, and did not find it rational to enter the hegemony of the Khanate of Crimea, or more correctly of the Ottoman Empire, if it was not more profitable than Moscow's protection.<sup>18</sup> The relations between the Nogais and the Cossacks were also in tense. According to a Russian ambassador's report, in 1552 the Nogais who feared the Cossacks did not want to come to Moscow during the period of horse trade.<sup>19</sup> Moscow threatened the Nogais by mentioning the use of Astrakhan, Volga, Don, and Qazan, Misher Cossacks. When the assaults of the Cossacks, who were the military power of the Russians, increased, Urus Mirza firstly wanted protection from Crimea and then turned to the Ottoman

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in the dumps because of the abuses of Yahshi Saat Mirza and other mirzas in Azak landing. That is way it is important to admonish them, if they turned a deaf ear to advices, they had to punish in appropriate way. See. **Belgelerle Osmanlı-Türkistan İlişkileri: XVI-XX. Yüzyıllar**, ed. by Cevat Ekinci and Kemal Gurulkan (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 2004), p 3.

<sup>16</sup> Kalmykov, op cit, Ref 9, p 27.

<sup>17</sup> B. B. Kochekaev, **Nogaïsko-Russkie Otnosheniia v XV-XVIII vv.**, (Alma-Ata: Izd-vo "Nauka" Kazakhskoï SSR, 1988), p 109.

<sup>18</sup> V. V. Trepavlov, **İstori'î'a Nogaïskoi Ordy**, (Moskva: Izdatel'ska'î'a firma "Vostochna'î'a literatura" RAN, 2002), p 353

<sup>19</sup> Alexandre Bennigsen et Gilles Veinstein, "La Grande Horde Nogai et le Commerce des Steppes Pontiques (fin XV<sup>e</sup> siècle-1560)", **Türkiye'nin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Tarihi, 1071-1920: "Birinci Uluslararası Türkiye'nin Sosyal ve Ekonomik Tarihi Kongresi" Tebliğleri**, ed. By Osman Okyar and Halil Inalcik, (Ankara: METEKSAN, 1980), p 51.

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Sultan for the same request. However, when this proposal was refused, he had to submit to Moscow.<sup>20</sup>

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the commercial advantages obtained from the Nogais by Moscow who had made efforts not to establish organic ties between the Ottoman Empire and the Nogais or to pay tribute to the Nogai mirzas under the title of “gift”, showed important steps on account of Moscow. However, the fact that Moscow’s did not give the assistance expected in this matter was because she understood the situation in the region well and had learnt to benefit from the Nogais well in better conditions. In this light, the economical support of the Nogais, who were recorded in Turkish sources particularly as being numerous, was difficult and their economy, based largely on stockbreeding, had a tendency to suffer because of animal disease and other natural conditions. This is why it was a problem for Moscow to support their economy. It could be that such support was not related to the strategy followed by Moscow in the region, but was a positive indication that the Moscow’s analyses of utility and cost would be affirmative.

The Nogais, who would have to follow an effective attack and plunder policy in a wider region to get new pasture areas, moved as different groups in the wide steppe field in the north of the Black Sea in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century. It seems that this drew the attention of both Moscow and the Ottoman administrators towards the Nogais. The possibility of such kinds of Nogai movements, which seemed to have a damaging effect on the peace in the region, was not neglected by the Porte.<sup>21</sup>

The Ottoman Empire did not follow an independent and effective policy toward the Nogais, who were considered to be an ally against Moscow. The internal and external policies of the Small Nogai Horde (Kazi Ulus) were determined by the Khanate of Crimea on behalf of the Ottoman Empire. Whenever problems arose, the Ottoman Empire gave advice rather than using force. Nevertheless, the fact that the names of the Nogai mirzas are mentioned in the firmans (imperial decrees) and that some instructions were notified to them directly show that the Ottoman Empire saw them as an important political entity. The Small Nogai Horde and some groups of the Budjak Nogais were expected to play a balancing role in the Cossack matters in particular and the protection of Anapa Citadel. In this region, an effective initiative was made with the Don-Volga

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<sup>20</sup> Kochekaev, op cit, Ref 17 p 110.

<sup>21</sup> **Muhimme Daftars**, No: 3, document numbers 864 and 894.

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expedition of 1569 by the Ottoman Empire, but the Nogais, who encouraged her to such a venture, did not arouse good impressions in terms of their behaviour toward the Ottomans. This led to similar requests of the Nogais on campaigns against the Russians not to be heeded. Indeed, this is due to the Ottoman Empire not having political and military interests in the region.

### THE NOGAI HORDE AND NEW PROBLEMS IN 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

The beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century saw several important developments on foreign policy during the reign of Mirza Ishterek (1600-1612), the leader of the Great Nogai Horde. Trying to follow a versatile policy, Ishterek not only attempted to maintain the existing status quo with Moscow, but also endeavoured to stay in contact with the Ottoman State without the Crimean authority and Iran<sup>22</sup>. In addition, the Nogais were following a policy of trade relations with Bukhara and Khiva<sup>23</sup>.

The Nogais even raided Moscow's territory while trying to maintain the status quo with Moscow during the reign of Ishterek. When Moscow's envoy reminded Ishterek of these assaults in 1611, the latter stated that he had not heard of these incidents. However, when the envoy presented the evidence, he affirmed that they had in fact assaulted robbers and would assault again<sup>24</sup>. However, the Ottomans carried on relations with the Nogais as before. It was gruelling for the Ottomans practice their policies, including a scope out for the mercurial sentiments and decisions of the nomadic Nogais. In addition, concerning the *isti'malatnama* dispatched to Mirza Ishterek, the Ottomans seemed to have had inadequate information about the Nogais though they had had relations with them for a long time<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> It seems that Crimea felt indisposed as Ishterek Mirza did not abstain from struggling with the Crimean khanate and his effort to have relations with the Ottomans without any intermediary.

<sup>23</sup> Kochekaev, op cit Ref 17, p 53.

<sup>24</sup> Novoselskiĭ, op cit, Ref 13, p 63.

<sup>25</sup> If the information of *istimalatname* written for Ishterek Mirza is consulted, it is distinctive that he was supposed to have already converted to Islam. The basis of this idea might be the portrait which his son who was hostage in Istanbul was not drawn a well Muslim or the Crimean disinformation about the Nogais to the Porte. Mehmet Efendi, **Küçük Nogay Beyi Üştürek Mirza'ya Yazılan İstimalatnâme**, TTK Kütüphanesi, Y89, vr. 10a.

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Because of the Ottoman policy during the period of governmental changes in the Crimean Khanate, the tribes resisted against the Ottoman's will. The Ottomans, then, wanted to use the Nogais, under Kantemir's thumb, against those who cooperated with the Cossacks. From 1608 onwards, the Crimean Khanate, which followed a negative policy on the subject of alliance with the Ottomans, began to contend with them by cooperating with the Cossacks. These developments occurred as follows. Mehmet Gerai as a khan resisted against Ottoman rule. This could be considered normal, but it was the first time a Crimean khan had claimed his descendents' superiority over the Ottomans'. Although the Porte appointed the ex-khan Canibeg Gerai to the throne by deposing Mehmet Gerai, they did not go to the whole length owing to subsequent developments, and had to account for sending a letter to Mehmed Khan indicating the approval of his khanate. The Nogais participated drastically in this struggle, and the treaty between the Ottomans and Crimeans was assented in a council constituted by the Nogai Mirzas. Consequently, Mehmet Gerai once again acquired the firman of khanate. Thus, the fierce battle between the Ottoman forces and Crimean-Cossacks alliance resulted in the victory of allies. The Ottomans, therefore, had to recognize Mehmed and Shahin Gerai<sup>26</sup>.

In the meantime, Kantemir's activities as an Ottoman ally on the estuary of the Danube were seen to have attracted the attention of Poland and Moscow. Though they informed these claims to the Ottomans, the Porte rejected them<sup>27</sup>. Kantemir was the ruler in Bender in 1630-1634. Furthermore, Chirmen was under his control. Meanwhile his armed forces raided Poland several times. In 1630 Murtaza Pasha, with his new governor title of Ozi signed a treaty of seven articles with Poland. The government of Poland undertook to expel the Cossacks who were plundering the islands, to give back the Tatar's prisoners, to demobilize their army and to pay traditional tax to the Crimean khan. On the other hand, the Ottomans stipulated to halt the Tatars and emit an order in order to alert Kantemir, Uvak Mirzas and Akkerman's people<sup>28</sup>. In 1634 the Ottoman officers in the peace

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<sup>26</sup> Yücel Öztürk, **Özüden Tunaya Kazaklar**, (Istanbul: Yeditepe Yayınevi, 2004), pp 54-55.

<sup>27</sup> G. G. Litavrin, **Osmanskaia Imperiia i Strany Tsentralnoi, Vostochnoi i Iugo-Vostochnoi Evropy v XVII v.**, (Moskva: PIM, 1998), p 117.

<sup>28</sup> Joseph von Hammer, **Osmanlı Tarihi**, vol: 2, (Istanbul: MEB Yayınları, 2005), p 375. It is seen that Kantemir was explicitly against Moscow. His nephew Velisha Mirza asked for money from the Russian envoys in 1629. When he was rejected, he had the envoy Kologrivova's beard picked. The Russian envoys stated that it was done in Kantemir's knowledge. See Novoselskiĭ, op cit, Ref 13, p 187.

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negotiations with the Polish made a promise to change Kantemir, whom they saw as an enemy, in return for halting the activities of the Zaporek Cossacks. At the beginning of 1635, Kantemir was living in Budjak. According to an Ottoman archival document, he was to abandon Akkerman and settle in Crimea, but he was not able to finalize this<sup>29</sup>. The conflicts between Kantemir and Inayet Gerai in 1636-37 exposed significant outcomes: Inayet Gerai was able to exile Kantemir from Akkerman with the assistance of the Zaporek Cossacks and some Nogai groups. Yet this success did not yield a complete result for him because his brothers Husam Gerai and Saadat Gerai were raided by the army of Kantemir and killed<sup>30</sup>.

Inayet Gerai was executed after he had dealt with the Nogais. The Ottomans had to kill Kantemir in order to avert the developments which would have turned into a domestic warfare among the Crimean Khanate and Kantemir Nogais<sup>31</sup>. Therefore they had to kill his uncontrolled supporter, on the other hand, took advantage for pouring oil on troubled waters.

#### **THE ASSAULTS OF KALMUKS AND THE NOGAI HORDE**

One of the important developments deeply affecting the Great Nogai Horde took place in the 1730's. Upon the dissolution of the former Oyrat Union in 1627-28, the Koshots migrated to Tibet, and the Torgouts under Ho-Urluk rule migrated to the right bank of the Lower Volga through Northern Kazakhstan. They pushed forward the native Nogais of this region towards the west and tried to get them under control to employ them as shepherds<sup>32</sup>. It was a necessity for the Nogais, who were not sufficiently able to get rid of this threat, to get help from the Russians. However Moscow neither estranged the Nogais from itself by insufficient military actions nor endeavoured to protect them from the Kalmuks. With this policy Moscow exposed the Nogais and Kalmuks to each other and obtained the fidelity of the former without making any economical concessions. One of the important foreign policy strategies of Moscow was based on the exacerbation of the disputes among the nomadic groups.

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<sup>29</sup> Alexandre Bennigsen, inter alia, **Le khanat de Crimée dans les Archives du Musée du Palais de Topkapı**, (Paris: Mouton 1978), p 154.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p 338.

<sup>31</sup> Öztürk, op cit, Ref 26, p 56.

<sup>32</sup> M. Kh. Abuseitova ... [et al.], **Istoriia Kazakhstana i Tsentral'noi Azii**, (Almaty: Daik-Press, 2001), p 300.

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By following this policy, Moscow wished to obtain easily the right to put pressure on the other states by means of demonstrating her hegemony in the region and showing that she controlled the Nogais as one of her dominating groups<sup>33</sup>. By the same token, the Qazaqs had to accept the patronage of Moscow owing to the Kalmuks and Bashkurts in 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The attacks of Kalmuks brought forth unavoidable results on the fate of the Great Nogai Horde. The Kalmuk assaults had a deep influence on the minds of not only the Nogais but also the other Turkish groups. The pressure of the Kalmuks on the Nogais shows us the presence of Kalmuks around the Volga in 1632.

Meanwhile, the Kalmuks were driving off towards the Yaik region. Their raids exposed a perilous position which would give rise to chaos. Throughout 1633, they assaulted both the homeland of the Keykubat Nogais and the Nogais of Kanay Biy. On the other hand, they could by no means have had any assistance against these attacks<sup>34</sup>.

After the arrival of some groups of Nogai in the Caucasian steppes, the Kalmuks continued to carry on their activities on the right bank of the Volga by following the migration routes of former Nogai Hordes. In 1642 they were seen in the steppes of Salks and had good terms with Don Cossacks. The aim of this migration was not to extend the immigration area of the Kalmuks, but a wish to follow the Nogai groups, because they wanted to get them under control and use them almost like slaves in various services. In the mid 1640's, the Kalmuks became the most important political power of the Trans-Volga region other than Moscow. They were following a profoundly harsh and ruthless policy towards the nomadic groups of the region. Meanwhile, they were also seen in the Caucasus desiring to intimidate the Nogai settlers of the region.

Some Nogai groups, in the meantime, settled in the Caucasian steppes. As they exceedingly populated the region, the Besleneys had to abandon their places. The great military expedition of Taysish Ho-urluk of the Kalmuks to

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<sup>33</sup> One of the aims of the arrival of Russian envoy Khokhlov's to Bukhara in 1620's was to persuade the Bukhara Khan that the Czar Mikhael controlled Kabarda and the Nogais. While expressing this, he stated that the Grand Nogai Horde petitioned the Czar to elect a new leader. See, Audrey Burton, **The Bukharans: a Dynastic, Diplomatic, and Commercial History, 1550-1702**, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), p 149.

<sup>34</sup> V. V. Trepavlov, op cit, Ref 18, p 409.

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Kabarda resulted in his defeat in 1644<sup>35</sup>. During the battle, he lost his two sons. The battle was the greatest victory of the Nogais against the Kalmuks.

In the second half of 17<sup>th</sup> century, the problems of the Nogais with the Cossacks and Kalmuks continued<sup>36</sup>. At this time, a group of Nogais dwelling on the bank of Volga departed from their location. The Nogais were active around Astrakhan and joined the revolt of Stephan Razin hoping to feel better. This ensured the Nogais to some extent a tranquil atmosphere, but this position did not last long. They were faced with their former problems again after the revolt of Razin. One of the important events of this period was also the migration of a group from the Yedisan Nogais to the northern Caucasus in 1669.

### CONCLUSION

The Nogais, the descendents of Edige originated from important emirs of the Golden Horde, entered various political events in the lands stretching from the Volga to Hungary in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. They were attracted by the Ottoman state and Russia. During the period that the Horde preserved its union to a relative degree, that is, the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Nogais were considered to be one of the most effective powers of the region able to interfere with the internal affairs of the khanates of Astrakhan and Qazan. They thus pushed themselves forward in the political area.

While it was required to become clear of the parties from the time when the unity of the Horde was endangered on account of the quarrels between Ismail and Yusuf Mirzas and its aftermath, and even the Small Nogai Horde preserved this attitude, the policy of the Great Nogai Horde tended towards the stronger side in the choice between Russia and the Turco-Crimean alliance. The side which gave more opportunities for living the steppe was seen as an ideal ally by the Nogais.

At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Great Nogai Horde, which had a great biy, Ishterek, looked for an effective supporter and ally between the Ottomans, Moscow and Iran, but in vain. After that, the Nogais with whose affairs Russia intervened, even their coronation ceremonies, had to contend with the Cossacks sustained by Moscow.

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<sup>35</sup> Kochekaev, op cit, Ref 17, p 124.

<sup>36</sup> A. A. Ialbulganov, *Ocherki Voennoi Istorii Nogaitsev: Nauchno-Populiarnyi Ocherk*, (Moscow, 1998), pp 72-73.

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The Kalmuk's threat and their assaults on the Nogais expedited their exodus to various regions. As a result of this, a group of the Nogais had to take refuge with the Small Nogai Horde, the other group with the Crimean Khanate. The term 'dead nation' used for the Nogais, who were also experiencing a rapid fall in population, should be considered in this context.

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