

## The Qalqa Mongols in the Seventeenth Century

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In 1634 Inner Mongolia was conquered by the Manchus. In 1688 the Qalqas of Outer Mongolia were routed by the invading army of Galdan, the qaγan of the ǰegün γar Kalmyks, and had to seek protection under the wings of the Manchu Ch'ing Dynasty. Up till now there have been but few studies of the history of Outer Mongolia in the intervening half century.

It is usually believed that previous to Galdan's invasion the Qalqa tribesmen had been governed by three qaγans, Tüsiyetü Qaγan, Čečen Qaγan and ǰasaγtu Qaγan, who in turn accepted the spiritual guidance of the first ǰebjundamba Qutuγtu, the supreme religious monarch holding sway over all Outer Mongolia. When the invasion took place, it is said, a great assembly of all Qalqa princes was convened, presided over by the holy lama, who was asked by the congregation to which side they should go to seek help, the Manchus or the Russians; the lama chose the Manchus because of their Buddhist faith and so the Qalqas took refuge in Inner Mongolia.

This legend cannot be true. Throughout the half century in question, the Outer Mongolian Qalqas were split into two factions, a Left Wing headed by Tüsiyetü Qaγan and a Right Wing headed by ǰasaγtu Qaγan. Internal conflict between the two was constant. The ǰebjundamba, being a son of Gömbü Tüsiyetü Qaγan, was worshipped by the Left Wing princes, but was not yet the supreme religious monarch for all the Qalqas that he became under Ch'ing rule.

The Ch'ing government had regarded the Qalqa Mongols as its tributaries, and in 1655 gave official recognition to eight tribal leaders as *jasays*, four each from the two Wings. The Left Wing Qalqas, politically united under Tüsiyetü Qaγan, was in closer alliance with the Manchus rather than with the Russians. The Right Wing, on the other hand, preferred unity of Mongolian peoples, allying themselves with the Kalmyks. Such differences in political alignment naturally caused the Ch'ing government to favor the Left Wing over the Right Wing after all Outer Mongolia came under its rule. While the Left Wing tribesmen were allowed to form two, then three, *ayimaγs*, of Tüsiyetü Qaγan, Čečen Qaγan and Sayin Noyan, the Right Wing constituted only one *ayimaγ*, of ǰasaγtu Qaγan.