

LKHAGVASUREN ENKHSARUUL

(*Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest*)

## **Text modules in the Manchu source *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* (A case of the Qing Dynasty's Sudden Attack on the Dzüüngar Empire in 1734)**

### **Abstract**

The Manchu source *Jun gar-i ba-be necihiyeme toktobuha bodogon-i bithe* ‘Strategy Book for the Pacification of the Dzüüngarian Territory’, appeared in print in 1770 and Chinese block print in 1772 before being included in *si ku quan shu* 四庫全書 ‘Complete Book of the Four Storehouses’ in 1781. Entitled in Chinese as (*qin ding ping ding zhun ga er fang lue* (欽定) 平定準噶爾方略 (Imperially Endorsed) Strategy Book for the Pacification of the Dzüüngarian Territory’, which is a manifestation of political gratitude extended towards the Qing dynasty (1644–1912) for their unification of the Dzüüngar Empire (1671–1755), the Tibetan Plateau, and the Muslim city-states of the Tarim Basin. The tribal appellation Dzüüngar, also known as Man. *Jun gar*, Oirt. *Jöün yar* ‘Left wing’, Mon. *Jegün yar*, Chin. *zhun ga er* 準噶爾, Rus. Джунгар appeared in the first document in the 17th century as an integral component of the Oirat confederation with the Tsoros (Mon. *Čoros*) clan. The geographical location of the Tsoros lineage, on the left wing of the Oirat confederation, ultimately became the empire designation when Galdan (1644–1697, r. 1671–1697), the leader of the left wing, effectively consolidated their power and united the right wing, establishing a reputation as the last independent Mongol state with a non-Chinggisid bloodline. In the winter of 1678, the Fifth Dalai Lama, Ngagwang Lobzang Gyatsho (Tib. *ngag dbang blo bzang rgya mtsho*; 1617–1682) bestowed on him the preeminent honorific title, Tib. *dga’ldan bstan* ‘*dzin bo shog thu khang*; Man. *šajin be jafara g’aldan bošoktu han* ‘Galdan Boshogtu Khan, Patron of Religion’. After five successors, namely Tseveenrabdan (1665–1727, r. 1697–1727), Galdantseren (1694–1745, r. 1727–1745), Tseveendorjnamjil (1730–1749, r. 1745–1749), Lama-darjaa (1724–1752, r. 1749–1752) and Davaach (d. 1759, r. 1752–1755), the empire was occupied by the Qing Dynasty in 1755.

As an official historical narrative covering the period from 1700 to 1765, *Jun gari bodogon-i bithe* reveals changes in the content of a primary source, which have been made based on fundamental rules intended to extend and safeguard the legitimacy of the ruling reign. On the other hand, it is a history written by the winner about the loser. The main feature of this genre is that sponsors and requests by individuals determine which historical events are considered significant, which facts are selected, and from what perspective these events are interpreted. Furthermore, the participants in its compilation influence how future generations will remember and evaluate these events by commenting on, summarising, deleting, explaining, and analysing primary sources. The present paper first introduces *Jun gari bodogon-i bithe*, including its content, volumes, block

prints, the location of the collection, and the biographies of 87 individuals who contributed to the compilation. The next section describes the historical background up to the Qing Dynasty's sudden attack in 1734, and how this attack is indicated in *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*. Finally, it examines the primary sources related to the attack, reviews the real context of the event, and compares the primary sources with the narrative's content to determine how it was edited. The following two Manchu archive documents hold crucial significance to the present study: A report of Fupeng (福彭, 1708–1749), the Grand General for Pacifying the Frontiers (Man. *jecen-be tok-tobure amba jiyanggiyūn*, Chin. *jing bian da jiang jun* 靖邊大將軍), Prince of the Blood of the second degree of Pacified Commandery (Man. *doroi necin giyūn wang*, Chin. *duo luo ping jun wang* 多羅平郡王) on January 18 and February 13, 1734, and those were included in the third volume of *Qing dai xinjiang manwen dang'an huibian* 清代新疆滿文檔案匯編 ('Collections of the Manchu Language Archival Materials on the Qing Xinjiang'), published in 2012.

**Keywords:** Manchu archive documents, official historical narrative, Qing Dynasty, Dzüüngar Empire, *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*, report of the Grand General Fupeng, sudden attack in 1734

### A Brief Introduction to *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*<sup>1</sup>

Qianlong Emperor (r. 1736–1796) and chief supervisor Fuheng 傅恆 (1722–1770) have included their viewpoints on why they should be compiling *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* in a preface. According to the Qianlong emperor's statement, this huge record is dedicated to forever remembering the achievements of the people who sacrificed their lives in the war: 'Relying on the collective strength, we were fortunate to achieve success. However, the number of our soldiers who faced the sharp edge of battle was by no means small. Therefore, the compilation of this record is primarily driven by the loyalty and righteous spirits of those who fell. I cannot bear to let their memory fade into oblivion. Thus, I have documented everything, not to boast about territorial expansion or conquest, but to honour them'.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the chief supervisor Fuheng declared that revealing the military accomplishments in the Strategy Book is expedient: 'The military campaign continued for no more than five years. The strategy has surpassed expectations and is unprecedented among a hundred kings. Inscriptions are put down among mountains in the distant regions, mark-

<sup>1</sup> A detailed study on *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* cf. Enkhsaruul 2024.

<sup>2</sup> A foreword of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* written by the [Qianlong] emperor. Manchu text is: /2v6/ geren-i hūsun-de /2v7/ aktafi jabšan-de gungge mutebucibe mini coohai ursei dacun /3r1/ agūra-de gasihiyabuhangge inu komso akū tuuntu ere bithe-be /3r2/ arahangge cohome tondo jurgangga fayangga-be burubufi ularakū-de /3r3/ isibure-de tbcirakū turgunde gemu yongkiyame arafi ejebuhe /3r4/ umai ba-be feshelhe jecen-be badarambuha jalin waka; Chinese text is: /1r4/ 藉眾之力, /1r5/ 幸底於績, 然我士卒之攬鋒鏑者, 不為少矣, 故此書之輯, /1r6/ 率因忠魂義魄, 不忍令其泯滅, 無聞具載以誌之而猶, /1r7/ 不在於擴土開疆之為也。

ing the extent of the realm. Order ministers to open an office for compilation, revealing the military accomplishments in the Strategy Book, is expedient'.<sup>3</sup> As mentioned in the preface, completing the Manchu version in 1770<sup>4</sup> took 15 years since it started in 1755.<sup>5</sup> Subsequently, the Chinese block print was produced in 1772<sup>6</sup> and then became the Historiography section's 115th–117th books and the Politics section's 357th–359th books of the 'Complete Book of the Four Storehouses' in 1781. This Manchu source comprises four sections:

- Man. *šutucin*, Chin. *xu* 序, Mon. *orosil* 'A Preface', Man. *julergi banjibun*, Chin. *qian bian* 前編, Mon. *emünedü jökiyal* 'The First Collection' of 54 books from 1700 to 1753
- Man. *jingkini banjibun*, Chin. *zheng bian* 正編, Mon. *jingkini jökiyal* 'The Main Collection' of 85 books from 1753 to 1760
- Man. *sirame banjibun*, Chin. *xu bian* 續編, Mon. *daruy-a jökiyal* 'The Supplemental Collection', 32 books from 1760 to 1765.

The preface has four different parts:<sup>7</sup>

- Man. *Han-i araha jun gar-i ba be necihiyeme toktobuha bodogon-i bithei šutucin* 'A foreword written by the [Qianlong] emperor of Strategy Book for the Pacification of the Dzüüngarian Territory; Chin. *pingding*

<sup>3</sup> An account [of Fuheng] respectfully presented to the [Qianlong] emperor. Manchu text is: /2v7/ coohalaha inenggi /3r1/ hono sunja aniya-be baibuhakü /3r2/ dorgi bodogon yargiyan-i tanggü han-ci colgoroko lakcaha /3r3/ jecen-i alin dabagan-de eldengge wehe ilibufi ne /3r4/ hešen-ci casi ba na-be badarambuha-be dahame /3r5/ bithei ambasa-de afabufi kuren neifi bithe banjibume /3r6/ coohai gungge-be /3r7/ bodogon-i bithe-de iletuleburengge giyan; Chinese text is: 师期甫再闰而不逾, /3v7/ 庙算为百王所未有。 碣树龙堆绝徼流沙, 诘尽提封; /3v8/ 觚操虎观新编聚米, 宣昭/4r1/方略。

<sup>4</sup> A foreword of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* written by the [Qianlong] emperor. Manchu text is: /4r3/ Abkai wehiyehe-i šanyan tasha gūsin sunjaci aniya juwe biyai sain inenggi han-i araha; Chinese text is: /2r5/ *Qianlong sanshi wu nian gengyin zhongchun yue ji yubi* 乾隆三十五年庚寅仲春月吉御筆 'The Metal Tiger year of the 15th of Qianlong's reign, the second month's propitious day, [it] recorded'.

<sup>5</sup> An account [of Fuheng] respectfully presented to the [Qianlong] emperor. Manchu text is: /15v1/ [n]iohon ulgiyan aniya weileme deribuhe-ci ebsi /15v2/ towohon aniya oho; Chinese text is: /9r4/ 始於亥春閏時十/9r5/ *shi yu hai chun yue shi shi you wu nian zhi jiu* 有五年之久 'It started in the Wood Pig year and lasted for fifteen years.'

<sup>6</sup> An account [of Fuheng] respectfully presented to the [Qianlong] emperor. Chinese text is: /1r4/ *Qianlong sanshiqi nian daxue shi fu heng deng gong zhuan* 乾隆三十七年大學士傅恒等恭撰 'The 37th year of Qianlong's reign, Grand Secretary Fuheng and others wrote'. This text only appears in the Chinese variant of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*, published in 1990 by Tibetan Studies Chinese Literature Editing Office, Tibet Academy of Social Sciences, cf. Wu Fengpei – La Ba Ping Cuo et al. 1990.

<sup>7</sup> The author discussed the content, publication, block-prints, volumes, and editor members of the *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* in her previous article, cf. Enkhsaruul 2024.

*zhungaer fanglüe xu* 平定準噶爾方畧序; Mon. *qayan-u bičigsen jегүн җар-un җаҗар-и төбсидкен тоятаниҗулуҗсан бодуль-а-йин биčиг-үн оросил*

- Man. *gingguleme ibebuhe jun gar-i ba be necihiyeme toktobuha bodogon-i bithei iletuleme wesimbure bithe* ‘An account [of Fuheng] respectfully presented to the [Qianlong] emperor of Strategy Book for the Pacification of the Dzüüngarian Territory; Chin. *gong jin pingding zhungaer fanglüe biao* 恭進平定準噶爾方畧表; Mon. *kičiyenggüyilen dabsiyulaysan jегүн җар-un җаҗар-и төбсидкен тоятаниҗулуҗсан бодуль-а-йин биčиг-үн ilerkeyilen ayiladqaqu bičig*
- Man. *jun gar-i ba be necihiyeme toktobuha bodogon-i bithei hacin-i ton* ‘A catalogue of Strategy Book for the Pacification of the Dzüüngarian Territory; Chin. *pingding zhungaer fanglüe mu lu* 平定準噶爾方略目錄 (in 1772 version while *zong mu* 總目 ‘a general catalogue’ in 1781 version); Mon. *jегүн җар-un җаҗар-и төбсидкен тоятаниҗулуҗсан бодуль-а-йин биčиг-үн јүүл-үн тоҗ-а*
- Man. *jun gar-i ba be necihiyeme toktobuha bodogon-i bithei ujui debtelin* ‘A First Book of Strategy Book for the Pacification of the Dzüüngarian Territory; Chin. *pingding zhungaer fanglüe juan shou* 平定準噶爾方略卷首; Mon. *jегүн җар-un җаҗар-и төбсидкен тоятаниҗулуҗсан бодуль-а-йин биčиг-үн теригүн debter*

Manchu and Chinese prefaces identify 87 individuals who contributed to the compilation and publication of this source in nine different roles, including chief and vice supervisor, controller, collector, chief reviser, Chinese and Manchu reviser, corrector, and official translator. Furthermore, these 87 individuals represented 16 institutes in the Qing government, namely, the Boards of Civil Appointments, Revenue, Rites, War, Justice and Work; the Court of Colonial Affairs, the Department Director of the Imperial Household, the National Academy, the Imperial Equipage, the Workshop of the Imperial Household, the Imperial Patent Office, the Imperial Clan Court, the Court of Banqueting, the Grand Secretariat, and the Court of Imperial Instruction. Regarding their ethnic background, the authors consisted of three main groups: Manchu, Mongol, and Chinese. Among the members, 50 were Chinese, 57 per cent of the total, followed by 34 Manchu, 39 per cent, and three Mongols: Bandi 班第 (d.1755) from the Borjigin clan, Nayantai 納延泰 (d. 1762) from the Sartuk clan, and Bayansan 巴延三. There were three personalities on the compilation board list who had passed away before the completion of the source composition, and their case exemplifies the current source’s authorised feature through their heroic actions and ungrateful service to the ruling reign. Bandi of the Borjigin clan was appointed as vice-general for the Left side of the Pacification



Figure 1. Manchu version of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* (from the State Museum in Berlin)

of the Frontier in July 1754. He, alongside the Manchu councillor Oyonggo (1714–1755), took their own life when besieged by Dzüüngarian rioters on the Ili River around August 24, 1755. Recognising their remarkable actions during the adversary’s siege, the editors have honoured them as heroes, exemplifying a profound loyalty that transcends generations. Contrary to the above case, Yarhashan (Man. *Yarhašan*, 1689–1759), a member of the Manchu Aisin-Gioro clan, exemplified the consequences of being incapable of leading an army and nonachievement. *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* indicates that the Chinese troops of the Green Banner died because of his lack of leadership skills.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore,

<sup>8</sup> The 72nd book in the Main Collection of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*. May 14 (Man. *sahahūn meihe inenggi* ‘Water Female Snake Day’), 1759 (the 24th year of Qianlong). Manchu text is: /57r2/ coohai bade nimeme akū oho niowanggiyan turun-i /57r2/ cooha-de /57r3/ gosire kesi isibuha, /57r4/ aliha bithei da sade /57r5/ dergi hese wasimbuhange, Jaohūi sei baci hese-be /57r6/ dahame yerkiyang ni bade nimeme bucehe, jai ebsi /57v1/ jidere de jagūn-i unduri nimeme bucehe niowanggiyan /57v2/ turun-i cooha be getukeleme baicafi wesimbuhebi {...} /57v6/ te /57v7/ ere jergi nimeme bucehe urse gemu Yarhašan-i /58r1/ guca-ci gaifi genehe

he let the rebels escape from his siege: ‘When Yarhashan and others besieged the rebel Hojijan (d. 1759) in Kucha [city], and if Yarhashan and others had strictly watched them, the rebels would be unable to escape’.<sup>9</sup> Four years after he was appointed vice-general tasked with quelling Dzüüngarian nobleman Amarsanaa’s (1722–1757) rebellion in December 1755, he faced execution at the military camp, yet was considered innocent later. These three individuals became a perfect case to demonstrate the Qianlong Emperor’s intention to compile this source: as revealed earlier, ‘I have documented everything, not to boast about territorial expansion or conquest, but to honour them (our soldiers who faced the sharp edge of battle)’.



Figure 2. Chinese version of Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe  
(from the Palace Museum in Beijing)

cooha, guilehe-i jergi /58r2/ jaka-be fatafi jeme dabnaha turgunde, ilhi /58r3/ hefeliyeneme nimeme bucehe seme turgun be tucibume /58r3/ wesimbuhe be tuwaci, gemu Yarhašan-i kadalhangge fuhali /58r4/ fafun šajin akū-ci banjihanngge; Chinese text is: /23v5/ 恩卹軍營病故綠旗兵丁。/23v6/ 上諭大學士曰，兆惠等遵旨將進攻葉爾羌及歸途/23v7/病故之綠旗兵丁查明具奏從。 {...} /24r1/今據奏病故兵丁，皆係雅爾哈善自/24r2/庫車帶往，因採食杏實等物過多，腹泄病故等語，/24r3/ 似此情節皆雅爾哈善毫無紀律所致。 ‘The Chinese troops of the Green Banner who died in the military camp have been bestowed the mercy of favour [by the Qianlong emperor]. The emperor’s order was issued to the grand secretary. Jaohūi and others reported on the investigation of the Chinese troops of the Green Banner who attacked Yarkent and who died of illness on the way back. {...} According to the report, the soldiers who died of illness were all brought by Yarhashan from Kucha. They died of diarrhoea due to eating too many apricots and other foods. This situation was caused by Yarhašan’s lack of leadership skills.’

<sup>9</sup> The 80th book in the Main Collection of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*. October 10 (Man. *fulahūn ulgiyan inenggi* ‘Fire Sow Day’), 1759. Manchu text is: /30r1/ te bicibe Yarhašan /30r2/ se guce-de Hojijan-be horiha manggi, ce aika ciralame /30r3/ tuwakiyambihe bici, fudarkan hūlha aide bahafi tucimbini; Chinese text is: /14v2/ 若如雅爾哈善等在庫車圍困霍集占使，/14v3/ 伊等嚴加防守，逆賊安能出走。

The main question concerns whether or not distinctions occur between the Manchu and Chinese versions and between the two Chinese versions. Throughout the comparison, a notable distinction can be seen only in the preface on the content and number of volumes in the first, central, and supplementary collections of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*. This additional information, unrecorded in the 1770 Manchu version, emerges with minor compositional alterations at two locations within the two Chinese block prints. The 1772 Chinese version placed this additional information before the preface and catalogue on three pages and 47 columns,<sup>10</sup> while the 1781 Chinese version placed it after these sections on three pages and 44 columns.<sup>11</sup>

Chinese 1772 version	Chinese 1781 version
<i>Qianlong sanshi qi nian, daxue shi fu heng deng gong zhuan zou jin</i> 乾隆三十七年，大學士傅恒等，恭撰奏進 ‘The Qianlong’s <b>thirty-seventh year</b> [1772], grand secretary Fuheng and others respectfully wrote an account’	<i>Qianlong sanshi wu nian, daxue shi chen fu heng deng bianzuan biao jin</i> 乾隆三十五年，大學士臣傅恒等，編纂表進 ‘The Qianlong’s <b>thirty-fifth year</b> [1770], grand secretary and minister Fuheng and others compiled the accounts presented to the throne on festive occasions’
‘ <i>Qianbian</i> ’ <i>wushisi juan, suo ji zi kangxi sanshijiu nian qi yue yiwei, zhi qianlong shiqi nian jiu yue ren shen</i> 《前編》五十四卷，所紀自康熙三十九年七月乙未，至乾隆十七年九月壬申 ‘The First Collection’ has fifty-four volumes, covers the period from the Kangxi’s thirty-ninth year [1700], the seventh month, Wood Coat [4th] Day to the Qianlong’s <b>seventeenth year</b> [1752], the ninth month, Water Monkey [15th] Day.	<i>zi kangxi sanshijiu nian qi, yu qianlong shiba nian zhi shi, ji wei ‘qianbian’, fan wushisi juan</i> 自康熙三十九年迄，於乾隆十八年之事，緝為《前編》，凡五十四卷 ‘From the Kangxi’s thirty-ninth year [1700] to the Qianlong’s <b>eighteenth year</b> [1753], matters, were compiled as ‘The First Collection’ with fifty-four volumes’
‘ <i>Xu bian</i> ’ <i>sanshisān juan</i> 《續編》，三十三卷 ‘The Supplemental Collection’, <b>thirty-three</b> volumes.	‘ <i>Xu bian</i> ’ <i>fan sanshier juan</i> 《續編》，凡三十二卷 ‘The Supplemental Collection’, <b>thirty-two</b> volumes.

Table 1. Differences in the preface of the two Chinese block prints

<sup>10</sup> Wu Fengpei – La Ba Ping Cuo et al. 1990: 1–2.

<sup>11</sup> Taiwan Commercial Press Company Limited (ed.) 2008: Vol.1, 25–26.

The first difference to be pointed out is the publication date of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*. Particularly, the 1781 edition mentioned the Manchu block print date of 1770, while the 1772 version cited the Chinese block print date of 1772. The next two differences are considered the author's mistake. For instance, the fact that the First Collection ended in the seventeenth year [1752] of Qianlong contradicts the fact that on the 50th page of the 54th volume of the First Collection in the 1772 version, it indicated *Qianlong shiba nianchun zhengyue wu yin* 乾隆十八年春正月戊寅 'The Qianlong's 18th year [1753], spring first month, Earth Tiger [22nd]'. Furthermore, the Supplementary Collection in the 1772 Chinese version comprises 32 volumes spanning 51 pages, which contradicts information regarding the total number of volumes, 33, mentioned in its preface. The next apparent conflicting data relates to the total count of all books in the compilation under consideration. The Manchu version asserts that there were more than 170,<sup>12</sup> while the Chinese versions of 1772 and 1781 state that there were approximately 170<sup>13</sup> and 171.<sup>14</sup> In reality, the total number of books in the compilation, including three collections and a preface, is 172. Returning to the main concern of whether differences occur between the Manchu and Chinese versions, it is certain that there will be minor differences derived from the two languages' structures and lexicology, as well as the two-year gap in the block-printing allowed to correct (or edit) the Chinese version. The following three cases can be illustrated.<sup>15</sup>

Manchu version (Preface 4v–5r): <i>amcame gūnici, arutai-i aiman halafi jun gar seme gebulehe</i>	Chinese version (Preface 4v): <i>su zi a lu tai zhi bu bie wei zhunga'er zhi ming</i> 溯 自阿魯台之部，別為準噶爾之名
'Thinking back in retrospect, the tribe[s] in the <b>Arutai</b> switched [their] name to Dzüüngar'	'Tracing back to the tribe of <b>Alutai</b> , it later became known as the Dzüüngar.

The modern standardised Chinese character for Altai is *a le tai* 阿勒泰. Due to limited access to the additional source, it remains unclear why the Manchu version referenced Arutai, how it can be explained, or if it was the writer's mistake.

<sup>12</sup> Manchu text is: *uheri emu tanggū nadanju debtelin funceme weilehe* 'All made more than one hundred and seventy volumes'

<sup>13</sup> Chinese text is: *Shu bai qishi juan* 書百七十卷 'One hundred and seventy volumes'

<sup>14</sup> Chinese text is: *Ping ding zhun ga er fang lue yibai qishiyi juan* 平定準噶爾方略一百七十一卷 'One hundred and seventy-one volumes of the Strategy Book for the Pacification of the Dzüüngarian Territory'

<sup>15</sup> A case study of comparison on the Manchu and Chinese block-prints of the *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*, cf. Enkhsaruul 2025c.

Manchu version (Preface 5v): <i>duin oirat daci ini hanci adaki bime ehe mujilen tebufi durime ejelehe</i>	Chinese version (Preface 4r): <i>sibu ben yi chunchi xiongxin yi chi jingtun</i> 四部本伊脣齒，雄心已侈鯨吞
‘[Galdan] annexed [them because he] kept <b>evil intent</b> even though the Four Oirats were his [Galdan’s] close partners’	‘[Galdan] annexed [them to seek his] <b>great ambitions</b> even though the Four Oirats were his [Galdan’s] close partners’

A Manchu expression in the above text, *ehe mujilen* ‘evil intent,’ has an equal meaning with the Chinese word *huo xin* 禍心[id.]; regardless of that, translating it as *xiongxin* 雄心 ‘great ambition’ appears to follow the Chinese classic stylistics.

Manchu version (First book 3v): <i>sirame aniya, ejen-i beye geli dailame genefi, conotu alin-de isinafi, fudarkan hülhai jui sebtan banjur-be jafafi yabure kūwaran-de olji alibuha</i>	Chinese version (First book 2r): <i>Mingnian, jia fu qinzheng, chu lang ju xu shan, huo nizi sai bo tun ban zhu er, xian fu xing zai.</i> 明年，駕復親征，出狼居胥山，獲逆子塞卜屯班珠爾，獻俘行在。
‘The next year (1696), the [Kangxi] emperor personally led the campaign, reaching <b>Conotu Mountain</b> , capturing the rebel [Galdan]’s son Sebtanbanjur, and presenting him as a booty at the imperial palace [for short stays away from the capital]’	‘The next year (1696), the [Kangxi] emperor personally led the campaign, reaching <b>Langjuxu Mountain</b> , capturing the rebel [Galdan]’s son Sebtanbanjur, and presenting him as a booty at the imperial palace [for short stays away from the capital]’

It seems that *Conotu* is the Mongolian name of the mountain, which is derived from the *činu-a* ‘wolf’: the Manchu expression for the wolf is *niohe*. Chinese ‘Langjuxu Mountain’ 狼居胥山 is a general term for referring to the northern desert, in particular nomads, ever since the Han dynasty (119 BCE). Tracking back the sources, Sebtanbanjur was captured around Barkhöl Mountain (Man. *Barkul*, Mon. *Bars köl*, Chin. *ba li kun* 巴里坤) while hunting in the winter of 1696 and sent to the Kangxi emperor’s military camp near Shenmu city 神木縣, close to the Shaanxi Province and the Ordos Mongols, at the beginning of 1697.<sup>16</sup> The author couldn’t clarify the location (or usage) of the Manchu term *Conotu alin* at the moment due to source limitations. It should be noted that there are minor differences in some expressions between the Manchu and

<sup>16</sup> Unda (1709), the 38th volume of the ‘Strategy Book for the Pacification of the Northwestern Territory Campaigned by Imperial’. A note on March 4 (Wood Doe Day) 1697 (the 36th year of the Kangxi), regarding Sebtanbanjur’s meeting with the Kangxi Emperor.

Chinese versions of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*; nevertheless, differences in the content require further investigation.

The accessibility of the present source has greatly improved, as major institutions have digitized it for free access. The National Library of France<sup>17</sup> hosts a complete Manchu version, while the State Museum in Berlin<sup>18</sup> holds an incomplete Manchu edition comprising 109 volumes. Another incomplete set of 49 volumes is preserved at the National Archive of Mongolia,<sup>19</sup> which has cataloged the titles online. Due to its significance in 18th-century Mongolian history, Chakhar Mongolian historian Bүrd Buyanchuulgan (Mon. *Bүrd Buyančiyulgan*, 1885–1937) has translated the complete text into Uyghur-Mongolian script, titled Mon. *Jun γar-un γajar-i töbsidken toytayaysan boduly-a-yin bičig*, now kept at the National Library of Mongolia.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, the text attracted international attention, including a partial (four volumes) Chinese reproduction by the Japanese official Ota Nanpo (大田南畝, 1749–1823) in 1805<sup>21</sup> to understand the interrelationship between the Russian Empire (1721–1917) and the Qing Dynasty. Two government offices, *gu gong bo wu yuan* 故宫博物院 ‘The Palace Museum’ in Beijing<sup>22</sup> and *guo li gu gong bo wu yuan* 國立故宮博物院 ‘National Palace Museum’ in Taipei have a Chinese blockprint of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*, at the moment. As with the Manchu version, the Chinese version was also made accessible through websites thanks to the efforts of several universities and organisations.<sup>23</sup> The Chinese block print from 1772 was published in four volumes by the Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences in 1990,<sup>24</sup> marking the first time Chinese block print collections had been made available. Soon after, the National Palace Museum produced the 1781 Chinese block print version in volumes 47th through 53rd of the Forbidden City Rare Book Collection in 2000 (which consists of 7 volumes),<sup>25</sup> and shortly later, Taiwan Commercial Press Company Limited published it in three volumes in 2008.<sup>26</sup> In light of the Chinese historians’ hard work in publishing and introducing the source into the academic framework, the Chinese version gained

<sup>17</sup> The National Library of France 2025.

<sup>18</sup> The State Museum in Berlin 2025.

<sup>19</sup> The National Archive of Mongolia 2025.

<sup>20</sup> The National Library of Mongolia 2025.

<sup>21</sup> For a detailed study on the Chinese reproduction of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*, cf. Kusunoki 2004.

<sup>22</sup> The Palace Museum in Beijing 2025.

<sup>23</sup> Among them, Peking University – Byte Dance Open Lab for Digital Humanities has launched an edition of the 1781 Chinese version of *Jun gari bodogon-i bithe*, cf. Peking University 2025.

<sup>24</sup> Wu Fengpei – La Ba Ping Cuo et al. 1990.

<sup>25</sup> Li Shengzhao 2000.

<sup>26</sup> Taiwan Commercial Press Company Limited 2008.

popularity among those who recognise its historical significance. For instance, a collaborative effort involving The Institute of Uighur Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Национальная академия наук Республики Казахстан, Институт уйгуроведения), alongside The Abu Rayhan Beruni Institute of Oriental Studies at the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Академия наук Республики Узбекистан, Институт востоковедения имени Абу Райхана Беруни), released a book in 1994. Aligned with their primary objective, this book collected 55 reports from *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* concerning East Turkestan from 1755 to 1762<sup>27</sup> then made a Russian translation based on the Chinese version. Contrary to the Chinese version, the Manchu version was introduced much later, especially with the contribution of the National Library of France in 2010. It provided a new academic conversation to compare the Manchu and Chinese versions. An initial notable step in collaboration with this Manchu version was conducted by Mongolian historians because of its value in eighteenth-century Mongolian history, in 2020. Considering that Mongolians translated it completely into Uyghur Mongolian script in the 1930s, unfortunately, it was put aside a little from the academic frame due to the uncertainty of the original version used for translation. *Тод номын гэрэл төв* ‘The Centre of the Light of the Clear Script Books’, together with several Mongolian historians,<sup>28</sup> translated the Manchu version in the National Library of France into the Cyrillic Mongolian script. It became volumes 89 to 98 of the *Bibliotheca Oiratca* series, which included 10 volumes and 2547 pages with an additional index of personal and place names. As a project member, the author was pleased to participate in this significant project and translated more than 30 volumes from Manchu to Cyrillic Mongolian from the Main Collection of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*.

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<sup>27</sup> Sadvakasov 1994: 75–141.

<sup>28</sup> Sukhbaatar – Oyunjargal 2020. General editor Na. Sukhbaatar; series editor B. Tuvshingtogs; volume editor O. Oyunjargal; an academic preface by Na. Sukhbaatar and O. Oyunjargal; Manchu and Chinese block prints were examined and reviewed by O. Oyunjargal; transcribed from Manchu to Cyrillic Mongolian by C. Jambaldorj, E. Jargalmaa, B. Natsagdorj, G. Odba-  
yar, B. Oljisaikhan, S. Taivanbaatar and L. Enkhsaruul.

### Historical background

Four major military conflicts<sup>29</sup> can characterize a relationship between the Qing Dynasty and the Dzüünger Empire<sup>30</sup>, each marking a distinct interaction phase. The main result of the first conflict (1690–1697) was the subjugation of the Khalkha Mongols to the Qing Dynasty in 1691. The second conflict took place on the Tibetan Plateau from 1718 to 1720, and in the end, the Qing successfully established ministers to govern the Qinghai-Tibet region from Xining and Lhasa. In the third phase (1730–1734), both sides established a border treaty in 1739. Finally, the fourth and most decisive phase, between 1755 and 1758, led to the ultimate demise of the Dzüünger Empire. The third conflict<sup>31</sup> occurred in Yongzheng's (1678–1735) and Galdantseren's reign, as relates to the present study. Galdantseren Khan held the throne in an unstable political situation when his father, Tseveenravdan Khan, died of a poisoned meal from his second wife, Seterjab (d. 1727), in her fellows' attempt to turn the Dzüünger Empire's political rule. Meanwhile, the Yongzheng emperor carefully investigated Galdantseren's situation and devised a brilliant plan to conquer the Dzüünger Empire. The plan consisted of three main strategies:<sup>32</sup> to make an alliance with the surrounding pivotal political strengths like the Russian Empire, Kazaks, and Kalmyk Mongols in the Volga region; to persuade Luvsanshunu (1695/6–1732), son of the Tseveenravdan and Seterjab, to become an opponent of Galdantseren; and to mobilise armies to the significant border locations of Khovd and Barkol. Furthermore, the Yongzheng Emperor appointed two generals to attack the Dzüünger Empire in 1729 based on two main roads named the West Road (Man. *wargi jugūn*, Chin. *xi lu* 西路) of the Barkhöl region and the North Road (Man. *amargi jugūn*, Chin. *bei lu* 北路) of the Altai region. Furdan 傅爾丹 (1680–1752) led the north road and was titled Grand General for Pacifying the Frontiers. At the same time, Yue Zhong Qi 岳鐘琪 (1688–1754) led the west road with the title of Grand General for Stabilization the Distant Lands (Man. *goroki be elhe obure amba jiyanggiyūn*, Chin. *ningyuan da jiang jun* 寧遠大將軍). Due to ungrateful service to the emperor, coupled with a lack of leadership ability, the title of Grand General for Pacifying the Frontiers was transferred to three individuals within

<sup>29</sup> A further study on the first conflict cf. Oyunbilig 1999, the second conflict in the Tibetan Plateau cf. Shim 2020, the third and the last conflicts cf. Atwood 2004: 622–624.

<sup>30</sup> For a detailed study of the ethnogenetic myth of the Tsoros clan, which established the Dzüünger empire, cf. Birtalan 2002.

<sup>31</sup> The military operation had a notable impact on the lives of Dzüüngarian locals, leading to the creation of a proverb during that time (cf. Enkhsaruul, 2025a). At that time, the Dzüüngarians attempted to make an ally with the Khalkha Mongols, and Galdantseren Khan sent a letter to Lamajab, a Khalkha nobleman, in 1731 (cf. Enkhsaruul 2025b).

<sup>32</sup> Oyunbilig 2017: 8–10.

five years: Furdan from 1729 to 1731, Xibao 錫保 (1688–1742) from October 1731 to 1733, and Fupeng between 1733 and 1735. As for the first two plans of allying with neighbours, the Qing Dynasty minister Tushi 托時 (d. 1760) was responsible for that, under the guise of congratulating Peter II Alexeevich (r. 1727–1730) in the Russian Empire. In addition to delivering the imperial letter to the Russian authorities at the beginning of 1731, he also brought four oral messages:<sup>33</sup> First, to inform the Russian authorities of the Qing Dynasty's war against the Dzüüingar Empire, and to inform Russia that if the Qing army fought near the Russian border, Russia should not have any suspicions; Second, if Peter II had any interest in the adjacent lands with the Dzüüngarian territory, please inform the Qing envoys about it when the Qing Dynasty conquered the Dzüüingar Empire, and these lands could be ceded to Russia; Third, if the Dzüüngarians fled into Russia during the war, Russia could accept and restrain them, but hand over their noblemen to the Qing dynasty. The last was a request to smoothly dispatch Man. *meiren-i janggin* 'Lieutenant-General' Mantai's<sup>34</sup> 滿泰 mission to the Kalmyks. It was intended to receive support from the Kalmyks in the war against the Dzüüngarians and cooperate with Luvsanshunu, who had taken refuge among his maternal relatives, the Kalmyks, to undermine Galdantseren's political power. Moreover, Mantai successfully fulfilled his request to meet the Kazakh envoy when staying in the Volga Region. Russians accepted the request but informed them that if they needed to contact the Kalmyks in the future, they must do so through Russia because 'these Kalmyk people were becoming the subject of her Imperial Majesty and could not do anything without her will and permission'. Despite their offers, the Russian Empire held a neutral stance, and Luvsanshunu politely refused to join.

In addition to the above two envoys, the assistant minister of the Board of Ritual, Hangilu 杭奕祿 (d. 1748), was dispatched to the Dzüüingar Empire in August 1730 to persuade them to accept the Qing Dynasty's authority.<sup>35</sup> Meanwhile, the Qing government mobilised 60,000 men to build the fortress of Khovd City. Due to these circumstances, the Dzüüngarians suddenly attacked the Qing border guards in the Barkhöl region at the end of 1730, which resulted in two well-known battles, Khoton and Khurga Lakes<sup>36</sup> in 1731 and Erdene Juu<sup>37</sup> in August 1732. The main purpose behind the attack was Galdantseren Khan's intention to manipulate the second Jebtsundamba Khutuktu (1724–1757) to

<sup>33</sup> Bantysh-Kamensky 1882: 178–181.

<sup>34</sup> Wu Yuanfeng ed. 2012, Vol. 1: 248–260. Lieutenant-General Mantai presented his report about the mission to the Kalmyks and its results to the Yongzheng emperor on March 5, 1732.

<sup>35</sup> The 20th volume in the Main Collection of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*. Yongzheng emperor issued an order on May 10 (Fire Cow Day), the 8th year (1730) of Yongzheng.

<sup>36</sup> Khoton and Khurga Lakes are in Tsengel district, Bayan-Ölgii province, Mongolia.

<sup>37</sup> Erdene Juu Monastery in Kharkhorin district, Övörkhangaï province, Mongolia.

make an alliance with the Dzüüingar Empire and to unite Mongols under his reign; however, the Yongzheng Emperor was aware of that and had already issued an order to move the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu from the Erdene Juu monastery to the Dolonnuur monastery in September 1731.<sup>38</sup> The battle at Khoton and Khurga Lakes turned out to be an advantage to the Dzüüingar Empire, while the fight in Erdene Juu ended up on the Qing Dynasty's side. Nevertheless, both sides feared each other's military power and withdrew their armies in the winter of 1732, and kept an eye on each other with strengthened border security. Moreover, the Qing Dynasty continuously investigated the Dzüüingar Empire's situation through information provided by the Dzüüingarian refugees<sup>39</sup> to the Qing generals and then decided to make a sudden attack at the beginning of 1734; what is more, the Qing court received information regarding the Kazakhs starting to rear-attack the Dzüüingar Empire in 1731, which directly connected Lieutenant-General Mantai's achievement to meeting the Kazakh envoy when visiting the Kalmyks in 1731.

### Records of the 1734 sudden attack in *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*

The general process of the sudden attack has been reported to the Yongzheng emperor and ministers in the capital city throughout three phases: the first, a commander who led the army in the field reported to Tseren (Mon. *Čering*, Man. *Zering*, Chin. 策凌, 1672–1750), Vice-General for Pacifying the Eastern Frontier (Man. *jecen-be toktobure hashū ergi aisilara jiyanggiyūn*, Chin. *ding bian zuo fu jiangjun* 定邊左副將軍), who was appointed in 1733. Then, the vice-general reported it to Fupeng, the Grand General, and finally, Fupeng sent an official document to the capital city. *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* provides two records on the sudden attack which appear under the dates of February 26 and March 24, 1734.

<sup>38</sup> The 26th volume in the Main Collection of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*. An order of the Yongzheng emperor on September 11 (Female Metal Goat Day), the 9th year (1731) of Yongzheng.

<sup>39</sup> Manchu archive documents on the Dzüüingar Empire's inner and outer situations provided by the Dzüüingarian refugees to the Qing generals have been translated into Mongolian cf. Enkhsaruul 2023. These documents consist of two main collections: between 1717 and 1724, General Finingga's reports stored in the State Museum in Berlin, and the second is from 1730 to 1734, selected from Wu Yuanfeng ed. 2012.

Record on February 26, 1734<sup>40</sup>

[Yongzheng emperor's twelfth year (1734), the second month,] the Black Monkey [26th] day. An imperial edict was issued, assigning the responsibility of military deployment and strategic manoeuvring to the Imperial son-in-law Tseren as the chief manager. The [Yongzheng] emperor issued an edict to the Grand Ministers of the Council of State: In a report from the General [Fupeng], Prince of the Pacified Commandery, Talmashan (Man. Talmašan, d. 1760) and others advanced to attack but, upon reaching the region of the Irtysh River, discovered that the bandit [Dzüüngarian] forces had already evacuated, taking all their livestock with them. Consequently, they temporarily withdrew their troops. Hence, [Fupeng] sent an accusing letter to them for their failure to advance swiftly. Upon my [Yongzheng emperor] consideration, once our army initiates an assault, the rebel, having been forewarned, will inevitably retreat in advance. Under such circumstances, even a deeper incursion would be no strategic advantage. The Prince of the Pacified Commandery's accusing letter

<sup>40</sup> The 35th volume in the First collection of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*. Manchu text is: /29v5/ sahalıyan bonio inenggi, /29v6/ hesei cooha yabure ba-i fidere forgošoro dosire bederere /29v7/ baita-be efu zering-de afabufi uheri /30r1/ icihiyabuha, /30r2/ coohai nashün-i baita-be icihiyara ambasa-de /30r3/ dergi hese wasimbuhangge, amba jiyanggiyün necin giyün wang-ni /30r4/ wesimbuhe bade, talmašan sa dasihime dosifi, ercis birai /30r5/ bade isinafi, fudaraka hülhai nıyalma ulha-be yooni /30r6/ bargiyafi genehe-be safi, uthai cooha gaifi mariha /30r7/ olihadame hūdun dosirakū turgunde wakašame bithe unggihe /30v1/ shebi, bi gūnici musei coohai dasihime dosire babe /30v2/ fudaraka hülha serefi jailame gurime jabduhabi, uthai /30v3/ šumin dosika seme baita-de ai tusa, necin /30v4/ giyün wang-ni wakašame bithe unggihengge jaci dabnahabi, /30v5/ cooha yabure fafun hergin umesi cira amba jiyanggiyün-i /30v6/ afabuha babe, talmašan se dahame yabirakū oci, /30v7/ yargıyan-i acanarakū, aikabade faršame šuwe dosifi /30r1/ tabcilara-de umai baharakū oci, ne jing niyengniyeri /30r2/ erin, morin ulha turha, hūwaitaha kunesun labdu akū-de /30r3/ ambula olhocuka, ainaha seme foi-horilame yabume baita-be /30r4/ tookabuci ojarahū, te wang-ni tehe amba kūwaran, /30r5/ dergi ergide bi, cooha yabure baci sandalabuhangge umesi /30r6/ goro, eiten coohai nashün-i baita holbobuhangge umesi /30r7/ ujen, efi zering-ni beye tubade bifi, musei coohai /31r1/ ar-bun dursun, fudaraka hülhai yargıyan tašan-be sahangge /31v2/ urunakū getuken, erci julesi yaya fidere forgošoro /31v3/ dosire bederere babe zering-ni alifi icihiyara /31v4/ baita oci zering gemu uheri icihiyakini, erebe /31v5/ necin giyün wang, efi zering-de sakini seme /31v6/ narhūšame bithe unggı shehe; Chinese text is: [雍正十二年二月] /14r7/ 壬申, /14r8/ 命军行调拨进退机宜, 听 /14v1/ 上谕办理军机大臣等曰: 据大将军平郡王奏称, 塔尔 /14v2/ 玛善等进剿, 行至额尔齐斯河地方, 见逆贼人众牲 /14v3/ 畜尽行收去, 遂领兵暂回。所有儒怯不行速进情由, /14v4/ 已经移咨饬行等语。朕思我军进袭之处, 逆贼既已 /14v5/ 探知, 先行移避, 即令深入, 于事何益? 平郡王移咨饬 /14v6/ 行, 殊为过当。军行纪律甚严, 若以大将军所谕, 而塔 /14v7/ 尔玛善等竟不遵行, 固属未便。倘勉强前进, 而掳掠 /14v8/ 并无所得。方今春令, 马匹疲瘦, 口粮无几, 甚为堪虞, /15r1/ 断不得以轻忽贻误。今王之营现驻迤东, 离行军 /15r2/ 之处甚远, 一切军机, 所关甚重。额驸策凌身在彼地, /15r3/ 我军情形, 逆贼虚实, 知之必悉。嗣后凡调拨进退之 /15r4/ 处, 系策凌承办事件, 俱听伊总理。著密行知照平郡 /15r5/ 王及额驸策凌。

appears excessive. Military discipline is of utmost importance. If Talmashan and his forces have indeed disregarded the directives of the General [Fupeng], it is inappropriate; however, if they were to press forward recklessly and achieve no gains in plunder or combat, it would be equally futile. At present, with the arrival of spring, our horses are fatigued and emaciated, and provisions are scarce—a highly precarious situation. Any act of imprudence must be avoided at all costs. The prince [Fupeng]’s main camp is stationed far to the east and distant from the operational front; managing military affairs is paramount. Imperial son-in-law Tseren, being present in that region, is fully informed of our army’s conditions and the true state of the rebels [Dzüüngarians]. Henceforth, Tseren will be responsible for all matters concerning military deployment and strategic movement. Send a letter to the Prince of the Pacified Commandery [Fupeng] and the Imperial son-in-law Tseren to inform them of the edict.

#### Record on March 24, 1734<sup>41</sup>

[Yongzheng emperor’s twelfth year (1734)], the third month, the White Rat [24th] day. Discussed to evaluate by edict the achievement of Gempil (d. 1749) in the attack on bandits [Dzüüngarians]. The Grand Ministers of the Council of State deliberated to reported that Gempil, a duke of Khalkha, during the severe cold of the last winter (1733), led his troops across the Altai Mountains, cleared a snow-covered path of over a hundred li (里), penetrated deep into the bandit [Dzüüngarian] territory, and advanced directly to areas such as Tsagaan Khujiir. The bandits, startled and scattered, abandoned their supplies and fled in all directions. Gempil’s forces captured men, women, and children of the bandits, as well as horses and livestock. As the bandits fled far away, Gempil and his troops

<sup>41</sup> The 35th volume in the First collection of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*. Manchu text is: /34r6/ ilan biyai šanyan singgeri inenggi, /34r7/ hesei gempil-i hülha-be gidaha gungge-be ilgama /34v1/ gisurebuhe, /34v2/ coohai nashün-i baita-be icihiyara ambasai /34v3/ gisurefi wesimbuhenge, kalkai gung gempil, tuleke /34v4/ aniya tuweri cak sere beikuwen ucuri hafan /34v5/ cooha-be gaiifi altai mulu-be dabame /34v6/ nimanggi jukün-be tanggū ba funceme hafumbume /34v7/ neifi hülhai jecen-de šumin dosifi šuwe /35r1/ cagan hūjar-i jergi bade isinaha-de hülha /35r2/ golondufi jaka hacin-be waliyafi buran taran-i /35r3/ burulame samsire-de hülhai haha hehe niyalma /35r4/ anggala-be oljilafi morin ulha-i jergi jaka /35r5/ baha, hülha goro burulaha turgunde, cooha gaiifi /35r6/ mariha, ambula faššame yabuha-be dahame, jecen-be /35r7/ toktobure amba jiyanggiyün necin giyün wang, /35v1/ aisilara jiyanggiyün efu zering sede bithe unggifi /35v2/ gempil sei faššaha babe dangsede ejefi algama /35v3/ girurebuki seme wesimbuhede, /35v4/ dergici yabubuha; Chinese text is: [雍正十二年]/16v1/三月庚子, /16v2/命议叙根丕勒击贼功。/16v3/办理军机大臣等议奏言: 喀尔喀公根丕勒于/16v4/去年冬月严寒之时, 率领官兵过阿尔台山岭, /16v5/开通雪路百余里, 深入贼境, 直抵察罕呼济尔/16v6/等处。贼众惊溃, 抛弃辎重, 四路奔逸, 擒获贼夷/16v7/男妇人口及马匹牲畜等物。因贼既远遁, 振旅/16v8/还师, 甚属效力。应行文定边大将军平定王、副/17r1/将军额駙策凌等, 以根丕勒等功绩注册议叙。/17r2/奏入, /17r3/上从之。

returned, having performed exceptionally well. It is proposed that a document be sent to the Grand General for Pacifying the Frontiers, Prince of the Pacified Commandery, and the Deputy General, Imperial son-in-law Tseren, to register and deliberate on the merits of Gempil and others. The report was submitted, and the emperor approved it.

The first record concentrates on the Khalkha nobleman, Vice-General, Tseren's appointment as the chief manager of military deployment and strategic decisions due to his leadership ability, skill to analyze situations properly and proximity to the frontlines. A conflict arose when General Fupeng accused Manchu commandant Talmashan and his forces of failing to advance quickly against the Dzüüngarians, who had already evacuated with their livestock. The emperor stated that Talmashan's withdrawal was justified, as an unnecessary pursuit would have been futile and risky given the exhausted state of the Qing army. On the other hand, the second record comments on the bravery of Khalkha Duke Gempil in the 1733 winter campaign against the Dzüüngarians. He led troops across the Altai Mountains in extreme cold, clearing over 50 km of snow-covered terrain. His forces successfully raided Dzüüngarian territory, causing their enemies to flee and capturing them with livestock. The Yongzheng emperor approved recognition of Gempil's achievements<sup>42</sup>, instructing officials to register and deliberate on his merits. It should be noted that neither the records sufficiently mentions the quantity of the Qing army and the enemy nor how many they captured, which place they crossed or when the army reached there; in general, neither records satisfactorily address the fundamental questions of when, where, and by whom.

### Archive documents on the 1734 sudden attack

The Altai Road, also known as the North Road, played a significant role in the sudden attack, as documented in the Manchu archives. The army was divided into two divisions:<sup>43</sup> Man. *galai amban* 'Commandant of the Vanguard Division' Talmashan led the soldiers along Bulgan<sup>44</sup> Road, while Gempil oversaw Khüreet<sup>45</sup> Road.

<sup>42</sup> The Manchu archive document in 1738 related to rewarding the 15 soldiers under Gempil's command was published in 2011, cf. Chuluun-Bicheldey 2011.

<sup>43</sup> The following content, from December 30, 1733, to January 8, 1734, is based on the report of Fupeng, the Grand General for Pacifying the Frontiers, Prince of the Pacified Commandery, on January 18, 1734, cf. Wu Yuanfeng ed. 2012, Vol. 3: 27–31.

<sup>44</sup> Bulgan River rises in the Altai Mountains in Bayan-Ölgii and Khovd Provinces, Mongolia, and flows south into the Ulungur Lake, the Altay Prefecture of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, China.

<sup>45</sup> Mon. *Küriyetü*; Man. *Kuriyetu* is supposed to be near Khoton Lake.

	Talmashan, Commandant of the Vanguard Division, led an army on Bulgan Road	Khalkha Duke Gempil led an army on Khüreet Road
December 30, 1733		Camped at Khoton Lake <sup>46</sup>
January 1, 1734		Foot soldiers cleared a snow-covered path of over 50 li (25km) to Khüreet Mountain by digging and trampling.
January 2, 1734		500 soldiers, led by Senbao, a Manchu <i>kūwaran-i da</i> ‘commander elected by the officers of a camp’, and Darjaa, Khalkha Lieutenant-General, cleared a snow-covered path by foot and horses over 50 li (25km) on the other side of the Khüreet Mountain.
January 3, 1734		Left soldiers on patrol at Khoton Lake and settled near the mountain with 3500 soldiers.
January 4, 1734		Passed the mountain by dawn darkness.
January 5, 1734		Arrived at Uu Belchir <sup>47</sup> by the downstream Kiran River. <sup>48</sup>
January 6, 1734		One thousand soldiers who could ski were sent in advance to make a road and to investigate the Dzüüngarians.
January 7, 1734		Headed out to the Irtysh River to prepare for the sudden attack.

<sup>46</sup> Mon. *Qotung nayur*; Man. *Hotong noor* is in Tsengel District, Bayan-Ölgii Province.

<sup>47</sup> Man. *Oo Belcir*; Mon. *Uu belc̄ir*, *belc̄ir* refers to a confluence of rivers in Mongolian. The location is unclear, yet it is supposed to be near the Kiran River.

<sup>48</sup> Mon. *Kiren γool*; Man. *Kiran bira*; Chin. *ke lan he* 克兰河, discharges from Dayan Lake in Sagsai district, Bayan-Ölgii Province, to dAltay Prefecture.

January 8, 1734	Reached Tsagaan Burgas, <sup>49</sup> captured five Dzüüngarian guardsmen and interrogated them. <sup>50</sup>	
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Manchu commandant Talmashan, upon coming to Argitai River,<sup>51</sup> gave 1300 soldiers from the main army of approximately 10 thousand<sup>52</sup> (or at least 3500) soldiers to Lieutenant-General Bursha (Man. *Burša*) and the fourth rank Khalkha prince Tsebden (Man. *Cebden*) to investigate Black Irtysh<sup>53</sup> and Shar

<sup>49</sup> Mon. *Čayan buryasu* ‘white willow’; Man. *Cagan burgasu*, the location is unclear; nevertheless, a unit named Tsagaan Burgas, near the borderline, is in Duut District, Khovd Province, Mongolia.

<sup>50</sup> Commandant Talmashan interrogated those five Dzüüngarian guardsmen and collected the following information: In October 1733, they joined the Dzüüngarian army of 1,400 soldiers assigned to investigate Bulgan Road and cross the Altai. However, they stayed in Khada Qinggil (Man. *Hada Cinggil*, apparently in the Qinggil County, Altay Prefecture) as their horses were too weak. Later, they were chased after the army, and when investigating their old trail, the army had already gone back through the Bulgan and Ulungu (Mon. *Örönggö*; Man. *Ūrunggu*; Chin. *wu lun gu* 乌伦古) Rivers. They were captured at Tsagaan Burgas while resting their weak horses that couldn’t catch up with the army. Furthermore, they also provided information regarding the nearest location of the Dzüüngarian people, including *jaisang* Mamut (d.1755), who settled down in the Black Irtysh with about 100 households, followed by the Dörvöd (Mon. *Dörbed*; Man. *Durbet*) nobleman Dalai Taish (Mon. *tayisi*; Man. *taisi*, a Chinese terminology to *tai shi* 太師 ‘Grand Preceptor’, Mongols used as a prominent title for noblemen) who lived with 1,000 households.

<sup>51</sup> The location of Man. *Argitai Bira* is unclear; however, is supposed to be near the Black Irtysh River.

<sup>52</sup> Dondob, a subject of Mamut, was captured at Dörböljin by commandant Talmashan’s division, and then, interrogated by Vice-general Tseren and Grand general Fupeng on January 28 and February 8, 1734, respectively. According to his statement, commandant Talmashan’s division had around 10 thousand soldiers. Man. /1-10/ *jaisang Mamut nukte-be* /1-11/ *jing dosi guribufi nuktebuki serede*, *Ulan* /1-12/ *Bulak-i karun tehe durbet-i Dalai* /1-13/ *Taisi-i emu niyalma jifi suweni cooha* /1-14/ *Bulgan jugūn deri tumen isime jidere* /2-1/ *baran sabuha seme alanaha manggi*, *Mamut* /2-2/ *nukte-be ere biyai juwen emu-de* /2-3/ *dosi nuktebum-bime Mamut-i beye ninju* /2-4/ *niyalma-be gaiḟi Cargiltu-i bade* /2-5/ *tefi meni juwan ninggun niyalma-be* /2-6/ *juleri karun sindame cooha jidere baran-be* /2-7/ *yargiyala seme tucibufi durbeljin gebungge* /2-8/ *bade isinjifi suweni cooha-de gaitai* /2-9/ *teisulebufi meni ilan niyalma jafabufi* /2-10/ *funche juwan ilan niyalma gemu burulaḟi tucike sembi* ‘just at the time when Mamut moved his people inside, a subject of Dörvöd’s Dalai Taish stationed in Ulan Bulag said that your [the Qing] army entered from Bulgan Road with around thousand. Then, Mamut moved his people inside on January 11. He settled with 60 people at Cargiltu and sent our 16 people to an advanced outpost to verify the coming army. We arrived at Dörböljin and suddenly encountered your soldiers, they captured three of us, and another 13 people escaped.’ cf. Wu Yuanfeng ed. 2012, Vol. 3: 58–59. The report of Fupeng, the Grand General for Pacifying the Frontiers, Prince of the Pacified Commandery on February 13, 1734.

<sup>53</sup> Mon. *Qara Erčis yool*; Man. *Hara Ercis bira*; Chin. *hala e er qi si he* 喀拉額爾齊斯河 is located in Fuhai County, Altay Prefecture.

Bulag<sup>54</sup> due to the Dzüüngarians' evanition from the Argitai River. When he reached Black Irtysh later than January 11,<sup>55</sup> Talmashan gave a hundred soldiers to Khalkha Duke Shagja (Man. *Šakja*) to support Bursha's division. An unexpected situation of Dzüüngarians' escape from Shar Bulag occurred when the soldiers reached the destination; nonetheless, it was clarified that they went down the Irtysh River throughout the examination of their old trails, and hence, the commanders sent a division led by Khalkha Duke Shagja after the tracks. The division had encountered 14 (according to Dondob's statement, 16, see note 50) Dzüüngarian guardsmen in Dörböljin,<sup>56</sup> captured three of them, and 11 escaped (in the view of Dondob, 13). Without a doubt, the attack, a challenge for the Qing army to deal with the harsh conditions of snow and cold weather from the beginning, was initially planned to replenish their military strength through booty captured from the Dzüüngarians. As a consequence of not expecting the Dzüüngarians to backtrack, the original plan ultimately failed, which resulted in commandant Talmashan retreating his army from Shar Bulag earlier than January 28.<sup>57</sup>

The main question concerns how the Dzüüngarians managed to escape the sudden attack; specifically, were they aware of the attack from the beginning or did they discover it by surprise? In the case of sudden discovery, how and when did they receive the information, and what was their reaction? It would be no wonder that this question was a puzzle for the Qing government as well; furthermore, the answer was revealed on January 28, 1734, through the interrogation of three Dzüüngarian guardsmen by Tseren, Vice-General. Besides that, their statements were double-checked by the Grand General Fupeng when he questioned them again on February 8. According to the declarations of the three Dzüüngarian individuals<sup>58</sup>, Galdantseren Khan received information about the

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<sup>54</sup> Mon. *Sir-a Bulay* 'Yellow Spring'; Man. *Sira Bulak*'s location is unclear; nevertheless, there are two possibilities in Fuyun County, Altay Prefecture, *sa er bulake* 萨尔布拉克 and *sha re bulake* 沙热布拉克.

<sup>55</sup> According to Dondob's statement, Mamut moved his people inside on January 11 when he received information about commandant Talmashan's division entering from Bulgan Road with 10 thousand soldiers. In detail, see note 50.

<sup>56</sup> Mon. *Dörbeljin*; Man. *Durbeljin*, cf., Chin. *duo er bu li jin cun* 多尔布力金村 seems to be located in Fuhai County, Altay Prefecture. According to Dondob's statement, he was captured at Dörböljin by the Qing army, cf. note 50.

<sup>57</sup> The above content, commandant Talmashan division's military operation, is based on the report of Fupeng, the Grand General for Pacifying the Frontiers, Prince of the Pacified Commandery, on February 13, 1734, cf. Wu Yuanfeng ed. 2012, Vol. 3: 51–52.

<sup>58</sup> The following content, statements of the three Dzüüngarian war prisoners named Dondob, Baran, and Enkbold, is based on the report of Fupeng, the Grand General for Pacifying the Frontiers, Prince of the Pacified Commandery, on February 13, 1734, cf. Wu Yuanfeng ed. 2012, Vol. 3: 58–72

Qing army deployed in the Khovd region through a Qing guardsman secretly captured by Dzüüngarian reconnaissance. As it was winter, with snow and cold weather around the area, their commander *jaisang*<sup>59</sup> Mamut, who ruled 100 households around Black Irtysh, had been calmly preparing to move inside after receiving the information about the Qing army deployment in the Khovd region in October 1733, yet, he suddenly received information from a guardsman that around 10 thousand soldiers entered from the Bulgan Road in their direction and moved his people rashly inside on January 11, 1734. Meanwhile, Mamut left a total of 16 guardsmen behind in charge of investigating the situation of the attack and three of them were captured at Dörböljin by the soldiers.

The following statement demonstrates that the Dzüüngarian commanders were convinced that the Qing army would not be able to cross the snow to their land; hence, they did not send additional divisions to the border stations around Altai Mountain.

*/10/ jaisang Cagün-i gisun, ne /11/ Altai mulu-de nimanggi tuheke, ere /12/ tuweri beiguwen forgon-de manju cooha /13/ yabume muterakū seme ilibume hendure jakade /14/ G'aldan cering teni cooha unggire-be /15/ nakaha* 'A word of *jaisang* Chagun: now, Altai Mountain has snow, and it is winter, in this cold season, the Manchu [Qing] army couldn't go. When [*jaisang* Chagun] spoke to stop [sending army], Galdantseren just desisted on dispatching army.'<sup>60</sup>

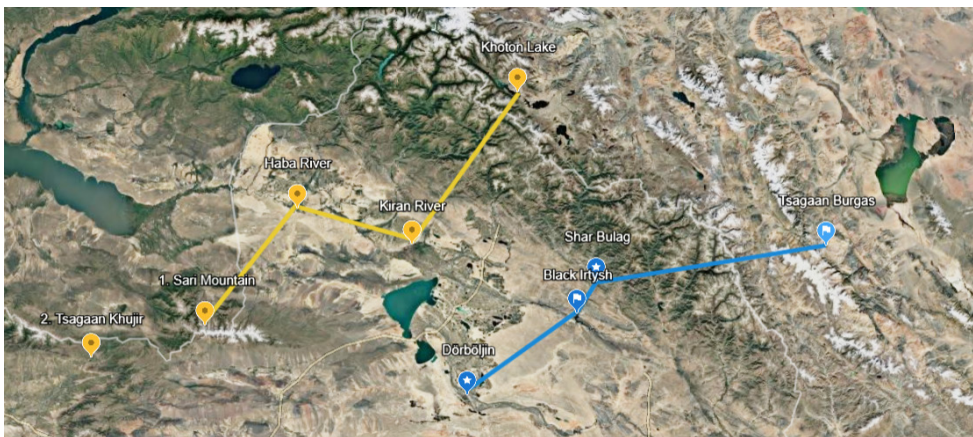


Figure 3. The locations of the two divisions traversed areas. Yellow signifies Khalkha Duke Gempil, whereas blue illustrates Manchu commandant Talmashan.

<sup>59</sup> Mon. *jaisang*, a Chinese terminology to *zai xiang* 宰相 'Grand chancellor', refers to an official who ruled at most 800 households cf. Atwood 2010: 623.

<sup>60</sup> Wu Yuanfeng ed. 2012, Vol. 3: 62. The report of Fupeng, the Grand General for Pacifying the Frontiers, Prince of the Pacified Commandery on February 13, 1734.

As mentioned in *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe*, Grand General Fupeng accused Commandant Talmashan of failing to advance quickly against the Dzüüngarians. In conformity with the Manchu archive document, General Fupeng has the right to accuse Talmashan, as he sent the Dzüüngarian refugee Tögsjargal (Man. *Tegus jirgal*; Mon. *Tegüs jiryal*), who recently submitted to the Qing Dynasty and was familiar with where and who settled around the area, to assist the army by guiding on appropriate roads and providing the correct information about surrounding territories. General Fupeng's diplomatic letter to the Yongzheng emperor on 6 March 1734 mentioned his interrogation of Tögsjargal on 16 February, during which Tögsjargal stated that Talmashan paid no attention to his words. Furthermore, he burned charcoal during the journey, which allowed the Dzüüngarian people to notice the approaching army and escape in time.

*/1-9/ Cecen wang-ni baci /1-10/ mimbe aniya biyai ice-de galai amban /1-11/ Talmašan-i meyen-de amcabume benebuhe, ede bi /1-12/ galai amban-i meyen-de genefi, amba /1-13/ cooha-be gajarcilame Sira Bulak-i bade /1-14/ isinafi tuwaci, Mamut-i nukte-i urse gemu /1-15/ gurime jabdufi genehebi, songko-be tuwaci /2-1/ ice songko ofi, bi galai amban /2-2/ Talmašan-de, amban te cooha tucibufi /2-3/ hacihiyame fargabuci manggai emu dedun yabufi /2-4/ coro ainci amcabumbi dere seme alha-de /2-5/ galai amban mini gisun-be gaihakū /2-6/ Sira Bulak-i baci cooha-be gocifi /2-7/ amasi mariha, juwe tanggū cooha-be /2-8/ tucibufi turšul-de unggihe, amala /2-9/ turšul-de genehe urse ilan niyalma-be /2-10/ jafafi gajihā, jafaha niyalmai gisun, suweni /2-11/ cooha aika casi fargame genehe bici /2-12/ ekšeme yabuci emu dedun-de nukte-be /2-13/ amcanambi, elhei yabuci juwe dedun-de /2-14/ urunakū nukte-be gemu bahabi seme /2-15/ gisurehe bihe, tere anggala, amba cooha /3-1/ Sira Bulak-de isinara onggolo juwe /3-2/ inenggi-de bi uthai galai amban-i /3-3/ baru, cimari coro nukte-i urse-de /3-4/ isinambi, tuwa yaha-be ume dejire, /3-5/ elden-be ume sabubure secibe, umai /3-6/ mini gisun-be donjirakū an-i tuwa /3-7/ yaha-be dejime yabure jakade, ainci /3-8/ tuwai elden-be Mamut-i urse-de /3-9/ sabubufi ce jailame jabduha dere sembi*

‘The Wise prince [Vice-general Tseren] sent me [Tögsjargal] to catch up with Talmashan, Commandant of the Vanguard Division, on Junaury 1, [1734]. Hence, I reached the commandant's division and guided the army to Shar Bulag. Upon arrival, [Tögsjargal] observed that Mamut's people had time to move. When investigating the trail, it was new, hence, I spoke to Talmashan, Commandant of the Vanguard Division, if the commandant sent soldiers ungently to pursue, [the soldiers] would go no more than one night and surely catch them by the day after tomorrow. The commandant didn't listen to my word, retreated the army from Shar Bulag and sent 200 soldiers to spy, then, people in spy captured three individuals. In the words of a captured person, if your army had been further

pursued and rashly, they would have been caught within a day and if calm, confidently in two days. Moreover, two days ago when the army reached Shar Bulag, I immediately [spoke] to the commandant that [we] would reach locals tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, don't burn charcoal and don't show the lights. [He] didn't listen to my word at all, and when [he] burned charcoal as usual, apparently the firelight was shown to Mamut's people and they had time to escape.<sup>61</sup>

On the other road of Khüreet, Khalkha Duke Gempil has advanced the army of 3500 soldiers<sup>62</sup>. Upon arrival at Haba River<sup>63</sup> on January 23, he collected information from a division with 200 soldiers sent in advance to reconnaissance about the Dzüüngarian people's disappearance from their settlement, and their old track led into Tsagaan Khuji<sup>64</sup> through Kenger,<sup>65</sup> Uliyatai, and Öden River by the Sari Mountain<sup>66</sup>. Hence, he sent a division led by Khalkha Sub-Duke Bitskhan (Man. *Bicigan*) with 200 soldiers to chase after them. To protect the division from his rear, Gempil also provided 200 soldiers to Khalkha Sub-Duke Rinjan (Man. *Rinjan*), plus 500 soldiers to Lieutenant-General Biramönkh (Man. *Biramungku*) to watch over Rinjan's division. In the evening of the day, when the main force crossed the Irtysh River through a raft in the Haba River, Khalkha Sub-Duke Bitskhan returned with three Dzüüngarian households captured at the Kenger. According to those war prisoners, Dörvöd nobleman

<sup>61</sup> Wu Yuanfeng ed. 2012, Vol. 3: 142–143. The report of Fupeng, the Grand General for Pacifying the Frontiers, Prince of the Pacified Commandery, on March 6, 1734.

<sup>62</sup> The following content, Khalkha Duke Gempil's military operation, is based on the report of Fupeng, the Grand General for Pacifying the Frontiers, Prince of the Pacified Commandery, on February 17, 1734, cf. Wu Yuanfeng ed. 2012, Vol. 3: 91–94.

<sup>63</sup> Mon. *Qaba γool*; Man. *Haba bira*; Chin. *Ha ba he* 哈巴河 is located in Habahe County, Altay Prefecture.

<sup>64</sup> Mon. *Čayan qujir* 'white saline'; Man. *Cagan hūjar*; Chin. *cha han hu ji er*'s 察罕呼济尔 location is unclear, yet, based on the *Imperially Endorsed Illustrated Treatise on the Imperial Western Territories*, it is apparently near the Tarbagatay Mountain in Emin Country, Tacheng Prefecture, Xingjiang, cf. Figure 4.

<sup>65</sup> The location of Man. *Kengger* is unclear. Based on *Imperially Endorsed Illustrated Treatise on the Imperial Western Territories*, Volume 25: *Keng ge er bulake, zai e lun nao'er shsnghu dong sanshi li. Yuan chu Tianshan bei lu, dong you yi quan, he er bei liu liushi li, zhi dou er bo lei jin cheng nan* 铿格尔布拉克, 在鄂伦淖尔上流东三十里。源出天山北麓, 东又一泉, 合而北流六十里, 至都尔伯勒津城南。'Kengger Bulak is located 30 li east of the upper reaches of Olon Nuur [Lake]. It originates from the northern foot of Tianshan Mountain, and flows northward for 60 li to the south of Dörböljin City'. Dörböljin is located in Fuhai County, Altay Prefecture.

<sup>66</sup> Man. *Sari alin*, cf., Chin. *sa li* 萨里, the location is unclear; however, based on *Imperially Endorsed Illustrated Treatise on the Imperial Western Territories*, it seems the mountain between Hoboksar Mongol Autonomous County and Jeminay County, Altay Prefecture, cf. Figure 4.



Figure 4. 'Imperially Endorsed Illustrated Treatise on the Imperial Western Territories', Volume 4. Tianshan North Road Map 1, from Khür khar Us (ku er ka la wu su 庫爾喀喇烏蘇) to Tarbagatay.

Dalai Taish, their commander, received information from Galdantseren Khan in January 1734 about the Qing army deployment in the Khovd region and ordered them to retreat inside. At the same time, as a result of Khalkha Dupe Gempil having cleared the snow around 300 li (150 km) in Khüreet Mountain, Vice-general Tseren dispatched<sup>67</sup> Khalkha Sub-Duke Lubsandash (Man. *Lub-zangdasi*) with 200 soldiers to protect Gempil's division's rear to investigate Haduli Mountain<sup>68</sup> and Arkyt.<sup>69</sup> The division discovered the old trail in Haduli Mountain, whereas the recent trail of five people with horses appeared in Arkyt. Following the trail, they encountered approximately 200 Dzüüngarian soldiers when they arrived there on January 25. During the battle, they killed five enemies, two of their soldiers died, and three were injured. The Manchu archive document further states that two divisions, Gempil and Talmashan, withdrew as the Dzüüngarian people had managed to escape the attack and shelter inside.

### Conclusion

The analysis of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* reveals the intricate relationship between historical narrative and the primary archive documents in Qing historiography. As an official record, the text functions as a strategic military document and an ideological tool, shaping historical memory to justify political legitimacy. The study of the 1734 sudden attack underscores the complexities of Qing-Dzüüngar military engagements and the challenges of interpreting historical events through official narratives. According to the Manchu archive document, the attack was divided into two directions: Manchu commandant Talmashan led 10 thousand (or at least 3500) soldiers through the Bulgan Road, whereas Khalkha Duke Gempil led 3500 soldiers on Khüreet Road. During the operation, the Talmashan division (from January 8 to 28) captured three individuals, and Gempil (from December 30, 1733, to January 28) overtook three households of around 15 people. On the other hand, the Dzüüngarian commanders had already received information about the Qing army deployed in the Khovd region from a Qing guardsman secretly captured by the Dzüüngarian reconnaissance before October 1733. Nevertheless, they were convinced that the Qing army could not enter through the snow surrounding the Altai Mountains in the cold weather. The Dzüüngarian people, unprepared to move, rashly

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<sup>67</sup> The content, Vice-general Tseren's dispatched division to Arkut, is based on the report of Fupeng, the Grand General for Pacifying the Frontiers, Prince of the Pacified Commandery, on February 17, 1734, cf. Wu Yuanfeng ed. 2012, Vol. 3: 97–98.

<sup>68</sup> Man. *Haduli dabagan*, the location is unclear.

<sup>69</sup> Man. *Arküt*, cf., Rus. *Архут пекка*. It seems to be located in Altai Republic, Russia

fled their settlement around January 11, 1734, due to the unexpected situation when the Qing army launched its attack. Unquestionably, the attack posed a significant challenge for the Qing army in coping with the harsh conditions of snow and cold weather from the outset. Because the Dzüüngarian locals' retreat was unexpected, the initial plan to replenish military strength through booty captured from the enemies ultimately failed, leading to the withdrawal of the Qing army. In addition, the Manchu archive document revealed why Grand General Fupeng had accused Talmashan of being a failure: he sent the Dzüüngarian refugee Tögsjargal, who had recently submitted to the Qing Dynasty, who was acquainted with the area, to assist the army by guiding them on the appropriate roads and providing accurate information about the surrounding territory. The fact was that Talmashan ignored his words and burned charcoal during the journey; the Dzüüngarian people were able to notice the approaching army and escape in time.

The records of the 1734 attack in *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* briefly indicate that the Manchu commandant Talmashan was accused of a lack of leadership ability and of failing to pursue the enemy, while Khalkha Duke Gempil was commended for his bravery in clearing over 50 km (as mentioned in the Manchu archive document, 150 km) of snow-covered terrain and successfully raiding enemy territory. In other words, *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* edited the information in the primary source by concealing the details of the military operation and focusing solely on the outcome that the Qing army successfully attacked the Dzüüngarian territory under such harsh conditions. Furthermore, it was a perfect case to illustrate the Qing Dynasty's generous policy of rewarding or punishing individuals based on their service to the government, regardless of ethnic background.

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### ***Sources of illustrations***

Figure 1. Manchu version of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* (from the State Museum in Berlin). <https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/suche?queryString=Jun%20gar-i%20ba-be%20necihiyeme%20toktobuha%20bodogon-i%20bithe&fulltext=&junction=> (Last accessed: 16.10.2025) In the public domain.

Figure 2. Chinese version of *Jun gar-i bodogon-i bithe* (from the Palace Museum in Beijing) <https://www.dpm.org.cn/ancient/hall/163984.html> (Last accessed: 16.10.2025) In the public domain.

Figure 3. The locations of the two divisions traversed areas. Original source is GoogleEarth.

Figure 4. ‘Imperially Endorsed Illustrated Treatise on the Imperial Western Territories’. Original source: <https://www.kanripo.org/text/KR2k0039/> (Last accessed: 16.10.2025). In the public domain. Modified by the author based on study results.