

## A NEW APPROACH TO THE ISSUE OF THE COLONIZATION OF KAZAKHSTAN IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES (A HISTORICAL-PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECT)

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**Abstract:** The historical process is a movement towards a predetermined goal. This position of historiography has been fully confirmed by a series of events and facts of the implementation of the so-called “voluntary” accession of Kazakhstan to tsarist Russia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The reconstruction of the historical past is one of the ways of cognizing reality. In this article, the authors attempted to conduct a historical-philosophical analysis of the colonization of Kazakhstan based on archival and literary sources and to prove that both Cossack and regular army units took part in the colonization of Kazakhstan. The tsarist government did not miss an opportunity to use the Cossacks backed up by regular units as the vanguard of its military-colonial policy. Therefore, the all-round strengthening of Cossack troops attracted special attention of the tsarist government during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. All documents relating to the military service, structure, land ownership, internal conditions of Cossack troops were adopted at the level of the Senate, the Military Council of the Empire, the government and approved by special Imperial Edicts.

**Keywords:** Colonization, irregular troops, military lines, land militia regiments, recruits.

### INTRODUCTION

Many prerevolutionary Russian scholars – historians, philosophers – denied colonization of new territories by Russia, without seeing the real state of affairs. In particular, Danilevskii N.Ya. considered it possible to declare: “If we consider this case in good conscience and true justice, then none of the possessions of Russia can be called a conquest in another, anti-national and, therefore, humanity-hated sense”. Danilevskii N.Ya. had the following opinion: “What is actually a conquest? Where are the conquered peoples and conquered kingdoms? It should be calculated how many Russians and members of national minorities there are in Siberia to make sure that for the most part it was the occupation of a vacant lot, made (as history shows) by means of the Cossack hardiment and resettlement of the Russian people almost without the state assistance”. This “vacant lot” is actually the nomadic space taken from aborigines and transferred to Russian immigrants (Danilevskii, 1995).

According to Alexander Ivin, nothing happens by chance in history. Universal interconnection and interdependence are immanently present in historical events and processes. The historical process is a movement toward a predetermined goal. These statements have been fully confirmed in a series of events and

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facts of the implementation of the so-called “voluntary and peaceful” accession of Kazakhstan to tsarist Russia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Ivin 2008).

A problem of incorporating or accession of Kazakhstan to tsarist Russia, in particular, the features of this long-term and contradictory historical process, continues to be a pressing problem of Kazakhstan’s historiography. In this regard, an academician M.K. Kozybaev rightly noted that a concept that absolutely all national suburbs joined Russia voluntarily and only in the sense of a progressive phenomenon was one of the myths of Soviet historical science (Kozybaev 2000).

In recent years, some domestic historians, based on the study of new archival materials, the analysis of prerevolutionary sources and military-civil literature, have proved the idea that the whole territory of Kazakhstan was conquered and occupied by tsarist troops from the very beginning.

## **METHODS**

In the course of work, the authors creatively used the principles of historical awareness, such as historicism, objectivity, specificity, reasoning and evidence of the presented statements and other methods, namely, comparative-historical and problem-chronological methods, periodization, interpretation and retrospection, the statistical method and others. The following general scientific methods and principles of scientific research have also been used: analysis and synthesis, analogy, systematization, ascent from the abstract to the specific and other methods that reveal the problem of incorporating or accession of Kazakhstan to tsarist Russia, in particular, the features of this long-term and contradictory historical process. The works of prerevolutionary, Soviet, domestic and foreign researchers have also been examined during the research. In recent years, some domestic historians, based on the study of new archival materials, the analysis of prerevolutionary sources and military-civil literature, have proved the idea that the whole territory of Kazakhstan was conquered and occupied by tsarist troops from the very beginning.

## **RESULTS**

In the article, a set of issues of the development of tsarist military capability in Kazakhstan, including the creation of boundary lines and fortifications, the erection of steppe fortresses, the composition of their garrisons, armament and technical equipment of regular troops of Orenburg and Siberian Corps (23rd and 24th Infantry Divisions), the formation of the Ural, Orenburg and Siberian Cossack Armies, and other aspects of the aggressive, expansionist colonial power in the Central Asian region are examined for the first time.

## DISCUSSION

It should be recalled that although there is an opinion on the Cossack colonization of Kazakhstan, nevertheless, prior to the beginning of the nineteenth century, tsarism used both Cossack and regular units of the Russian army on military lines. Cossack units were created on the initiative of the tsarist government to pave the way for the further conquest of Central Asia for the purpose of changing the events on the world stage. The source reports the following on this fact: “Previously, the events in Asia were interesting as long as they were related to the affairs happened in this borderland; now we have begun to expand our influence in Asia in order to put pressure on European affairs, should an opportunity arise” (Encyclopedia of Military and Marine Sciences, 1888).

The Orenburg irregular corps consisting of 650 Cossacks was formed on October 1, 1736. In 1755, the Senate approved the army composition of 2,000 Cossacks and in 1780, it included the Stavropol Kalmyk Corps of 3,000 soldiers (Myakutin, n.d.). Another source reports that the Orenburg Cossack Army was established in 1742 (Venjukov, 1873). According to the third source, the Orenburg Cossack Army was formed upon the tsar’s edict in 1743 (Military Statistical Review of the Russian Empire. Vol. XIV, Part 2: Orenburg Governorate, 1848). The use of regular armed forces facilitated the process of Kazakhstan’s accession. As evidenced by the archival documents, “... at first the posts were guarded by regular dragoon regiments, then by Cossacks, but due to the riots among them they were replaced by regular troops together with the Cossacks” (State Archives of the Omsk Region, Fund 366, Series 1, File 47).

These words confirm the fact that the Russian government understood that Cossack forces should not be left without attention. The Cossack troops are a great and powerful force if they are managed skillfully, thus the role of the Cossack troops in the conquest of Kazakhstan and Central Asia was not diminished, but it was reinforced by the presence of regular troops. As F. Usov wrote: “Garrisons of infantry soldiers and horsed dragoons were placed in the fortress. Moreover, in 1725 Gagarin’s successor Prince Dolgoruky petitioned for the formation of a special unit in five mentioned fortresses, which would be composed of 785 serf Cossacks” (Usov 1879). The idea of using regular troops was maintained for all subsequent years. An extract from the document of a later period of Kazakhstan’s accession is another proof of this version. In 1846, when the tsarist authorities strained their forces to fight the national liberation movement of the Kazakh people, the War Minister ordered a commander of the Separate Orenburg Corps, General Obruchev, to erect military fortifications in the depths of the steppe, near the pockets of uprisings, and not to integrate regular forces into garrisons and mobile detachments, they should consist only of Cossacks. General Obruchev wrote in reply: “In my report as of April 17 (1845) No. 366 I informed you, Your Excellency, that I suppose it is necessary

to assign regular infantry and artillery units to the mentioned fortifications at first because in local steppe expeditions these troops serve as the main support for the detachments and are the best defense against the Kirghiz, who cannot attack them and restrain their actions, local Cossacks do not yet have the skill to act on foot and therefore cannot replace infantry” (State Archives of the Omsk Region, Fund 366, Series 1, File 230).

Until 1745, there was a relative lull along the Siberian military line. This can be explained by the fact that, firstly, when Russia began to conduct an active military policy in the region, this alarmed the Chinese Empire and this led to the clash of the two great powers. It was not profitable for Russia to conduct military operations and it was forced to take a wait-and-see position waiting for more favorable conditions. Secondly, this Russian policy led to the fact that, as a result of the struggle for the khanate power, Abulkhair decided to ask the Russian government for military assistance and this resulted in sending the embassy to Ufa and accepting Russian citizenship by the Kazakhs of the Younger Zhuz in 1731. Mounting a military steppe expedition led by I.K. Kirillov meant not only the erection of military lines and fortifications, but also the formation of a contingent of regular and irregular troops in the region for the successful conduct of an event for the “voluntary” accession of Kazakhstan to Russia.

The Ural Cossack Army laid the foundation of a contingent of regular and irregular troops in Kazakhstan. As a Russian historian V.N. Vitevskii wrote: “Trying to colonize the Orenburg region, which is still poorly populated, he (V.I. Neplyuyev) speaks out for leaving the runaways in Yaik, despite the desire of the Military Collegium. The State Military Collegium knows that the mentioned Yaik army is an important military corps both for local security in the fight against steppe nomadic peoples and for other state purposes, and there is a major constant need to observe it in good condition, to maintain its population, then it is better ...” (Vitevskii 1897).

The Orenburg Governor-General V.I. Neplyuyev was one of the first to draw attention to the Ural Cossacks as a military force for the complete conquest of Kazakhstan. Especially since the Yaik Cossacks lived in constant hostility with the Kazakhs. Professor M.Zh. Abdirov in his book “The History of Kazakhstan’s Cossacks” cites the following facts: “In 1711 a detachment of 16,000 Kazakhs plundered a grain cart heading off to the Yaitsky town, 300 Cossacks were captured and sold to Khiva. In 1713 a detachment of 800 Kazakh horsemen captured a fishing cart going to Samara, the Cossacks were killed. Then they attacked the Yaitsky town and stole 4,000 horses from behind the ramparts between Yaik and Shagyn. In 1714, 1715 and 1716 Kazakhs and Kara-Kalpaks attacked the Cossack carts again in the steppe, captured people, stole horses” (Abdirov 1994). This happened in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Actually, the entire history of the formation of the Yaik Cossack Army is full of such examples, so the tsarist government could

not but take advantage of such an opportunity as to use the Cossacks backed up by regular units as the vanguard of its military colonial policy.

Therefore, the all-round strengthening of the Cossack troops and taking this concern up to the level of state policy were of much concern to the tsarist government during the nineteenth century. All documents relating to the military service, structure, land ownership, internal conditions of the Cossack troops, were adopted at the level of the Senate, the Military Council of the Empire, the government and approved by special Imperial Edicts. Although it is true that until the beginning of the nineteenth century the Cossack armies were used primarily in the form of mobile detachments, which were sent to the steppe from military lines, in order to pacify Kazakh villages and conduct punitive expeditions. But it must also be noted that since the Ural Cossack Army was formed spontaneously, it was not reliable in terms of the discipline and submission to the center. That is why the first regular parts of this region (the Penza Infantry Regiment and the Ufa Garrison) were sent to the Kazakh steppe together with Kirillov. They were joined by the Vologda Regiment and a regular unit formed from Ufa noblemen and Cossacks.

Simultaneously with the construction of military lines and fortifications, the tsarist government created a powerful military contingent for the conquest of Kazakhstan, placing regular troops redirected from the interior of the country and newly formed irregular troops in the Orenburg governorate. By virtue of the decree of February 19, 1731, land militia regiments, which had previously guarded the old Zakamsk line, were assigned to settle in fortified places in the Orenburg region. They were joined by Orenburg and Ufa Garrison regiments and Orenburg Cossacks. There were four land militia regiments: Sheshminsky, Bilersky, Sergievsky and Alekseevsky ones. The first two regiments numbering up to 5,000 people were composed of servicemen of Zakamsk suburbs, the other two regiments (Sergievsky and Alekseevsky ones) were made up of "servicemen of former services", who were previously town noblemen, soldiers, dragoons, reiters and spearmen. These regiments were supposed to be transferred to the Samara and Yaitsk lines (Vitevskii 1897).

Changes in the political arena in the second half of the eighteenth century, a rise of France and an increase in military conflicts in Western Europe forced Russia to maintain the most of the regular troops on the western border. Therefore, before Pugachev's rebellion in 1773-1775 among the Yaik Cossacks, the Russian government tried to create regular units in the region and actively use the Cossacks. By this time, the total number of irregular troops in the Orenburg governorate numbered 4,493 people.

The garrisons consisted of artillery units equipped with a full set of artillery pieces and ammunition. It should be mentioned that the Russian government tested new types of weapons in the Kazakh steppe, such as missile launchers and rapid-fire missile tubes. The history of the appearance of missile weapons in the

tsarist troops is as follows. In the spring of 1860, several missile launchers with 554 missiles were sent to Omsk at the request of the Military Governor of Western Siberia. On April 21, 1860, a new weapon on the cart arrived in Omsk. A lieutenant Vrochensky supervised the transportation and then headed the first missile unit in Asiatic Russia.

Soon after arriving in Omsk, Vrochensky's battery was sent to the south to be used in the war against the Kokand. The success was complete. The enemy left weapons, horses, provisions and fled. Later at the siege of Pishpek, it took only 8 missiles to completely demoralize the enemy shooters and force them to leave their positions. The Russian General K.I. Konstantinov invented the missile weapon. The weapon was a square trunk-tube on a tripod (Andreev 1992).

Cossack forces together with artillery units settled in fortresses and fortifications of the Orenburg region were assigned not only to protect military lines; they were also the vanguard of military penetration into the Kazakh steppe. Therefore, regular army and irregular Cossack troops from the interior of Russia were sent to the border in order to strengthen the vanguard. In 1739, Prince Urusov and regular and irregular troops of 5,878 people arrived in the Orenburg region. The Actual Privy Councilor I.I. Neplyuyev replaced Prince Urusov as the Orenburg governor. During his tenure of office, the number of the contingent of regular and irregular troops in the region increased significantly: "... The Orenburg region has become rather defensive due to Neplyuyev and partly his predecessors' strategic concerns..." (State Archives of the Orenburg Region, Fund 6, Series 11, File 6/1).

Having such a contingent of troops does not indicate the voluntary and peaceful accession of Kazakhstan to Russia. Before pushing into the Kazakh steppes, tsarism established a bridgehead and a powerful military fist on the borders with Kazakhstan. The Russian government moved regular forces to the frontiers and formed irregular troops and this demonstrated that it was afraid of its new subjects and a new order would be imposed by force of arms. By June 1806, regular and irregular troops of the Orenburg governorate already numbered 81,306 people. The irregular Orenburg Cossack Army numbered 62,722 soldiers. The tsarist government gradually came up with opinion that the formed contingent of armed forces was far from perfect. Therefore, they began to transfer regular units to the Kazakh steppes. By the 1750s, the Siberian military lines had already hosted regular troops of 10,447 people (State Archives of the Omsk Region, Fund 366, Series 1, File 24).

The buildup of troops in this region was explained by the fact that the works on the construction of a new frontier line Presnogorkovskaya, instead of the old line Ishimskaya, began in 1752. Dragoon regiments led by Kindermann were accommodated on the New Line and about 2,000 Cossacks were sent from Siberian cities. In addition, Siberian peasants under the name of assigned Cossacks were also sent on temporary duty to build fortresses and pits. In 1758, 1,000 people from

Donskoi and Yaitsk Cossack Armies were sent on a two-year service. Subsequently, Bashkir-Meshcheriak units were sent instead of them and were replaced every year (Usov 1879).

The tsarist government was feverishly gathering strength to conquer its own subjects, accumulating military power for penetrating into the interior of Kazakhstan, Central Asia and further to India. By 1765, the Siberian Military Line hosted regular and irregular troops of 13,374 people.

It should be noted that, according to the archival data, prior to the beginning of the nineteenth century the Russian government did not attributed a primary role to the Cossacks; the Cossack troops were used as secondary, regular units were the main striking force. This circumstance is partly due to the fact that Siberian military lines bordered on another state that was no less powerful than Russia and, secondly, the Cossacks as military forces were not regular. Nevertheless, analyzing the archival data, we can conclude that the Russian government has accumulated a rather powerful military force on Siberian military lines for further penetration into the Kazakh steppe. This is evidenced by the sources; the staff of the Siberian Line Army consisting of 10 cavalry regiments, each of 500 soldiers, was approved in 1808. The total number of the army should have been 5,950 soldiers, not counting a cavalry artillery troop with 12 guns (Khoroshkhin 1881).

The confirmation of this fact can be found in another source: “The Regulation as of August 19, 1808 on the Siberian Line Army, which included the Cossacks of all frontier lines, legitimized the existence of this army as such, established the order of its management, and the Military Chancellery got an order to incline the foreigners, who lived behind the frontier lines, to resettle in the army and become its members” (Tikhmenev, & Gruzinskii, 1910).

It should be noted that the garrisons included artillery units equipped with all the latest technology, while the Kazakhs were armed only with matchlock guns. There were 243 cannons in total on New, Irtysh, Kuznetsk and Kolyvanovsk lines (State Archives of the Omsk Region, Fund 366, Series 1, File 64, pp. 1-5, File 63). It was a selective force thrown against peoples at the stage of feudalism, who were armed with ancient weapons and often shot large rocks poured with lead, instead of bullets.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, there were changes in the world political arena. Due to the danger emerged on the western borders of the Russian Empire, the 24th Infantry Division was withdrawn from the Siberian military lines. This exposed the southern border. Then it was decided to form new regular military units. On August 19, 1808, a decree was adopted to approve the first staff of the Siberian Linear Cossack Army (Usov, 1879). At the beginning of 1812, Emperor Alexander I issued a decree “... to form twelve new regiments of new recruits that would be ready to act when the fatherland asks them to protect its borders...” On July

3, 1812, the Military Governor Prince Volkonsky received a report on the formation of 12 new regiments – 8 infantry and 4 chasseur regiments (State Archives of the Orenburg Region, Fund 6, Series 3, File 3602).

The buildup of the Russian armed forces in Zhetysu for final consolidation in the region led tsarism to the idea of creating here a new independent Cossack Army separated from the Siberian Linear Cossack Army. Two Siberian Cossack regiments deployed in the territory of Semirechye included already 3,693 combat Cossacks (the 9th regiment included 21 officers and 1,318 Cossacks, the 10th regiment included 28 officers and 2,326 Cossacks), the 9th regiment included 700 people, while the 10th regiment included 600 people (Bekmakhanova 1980).

On July 13, 1867, Emperor Alexander II issued a decree on the establishment in the region of the tenth Cossack military unit in Russia – Semirechensk Cossack Army - consisting of two regiments, each of 600 soldiers. The order to allocate two regiments for the Semirechensk Army was imposed on the Siberian Cossack Army on August 17, 1867. Semirechensk Cossack Regiment No. 1 was formed on the basis of the 9th regimental district, Regiment No. 2 – on the basis of the 10th regimental district of the Siberian Cossack Army. There were 43 officers, 123 police officers and 2,366 combat Cossacks in the new army (Ledenev, 1908). The Semirechensk Cossack Army took an active part in all the wars of conquest conducted by tsarist Russia in the Central Asian region.

In the middle of the nineteenth century in Central Asia, a “Great Game” began between the world and regional powers for influence and domination in this unique geopolitical knot of Eurasia, which resulted in acute Russian-British rivalry. After the defeat in the Crimean War, the tsarist government began to view the region as a convenient bridgehead for revenge and fight against England. “Only in Asia we can fight it with some probability of success and damage the existence of England”, advancing to the Amu Darya “ultimately it is possible to threaten the Great Britain from this side”, – as noted in one of the documents of the Russian Foreign Ministry (Popov 1940).

In response to the straightly anti-Russian foreign policy of the British government, the Military Minister of Russia, Adjutant General D.A. Milyutin searched for the ways to weaken Russia’s main enemy in Asia and, in his opinion, a military strike against British possessions in India could be one of such ways. He said: “In the event of war we can do nothing to harm England in Europe – there is only Asia” and, if necessary, “we can arrange an expedition there, if not to invade India, at least to divert British forces from Europe and cause as much harm to their commercial interests as possible” (Korneev 2004).

For the successful advance of the tsarist troops in Semirechye, the tsarist government held a number of political events. “For the management of newly annexed districts of the Senior Zhuz in 1848 the government established a post



of a superintendent of the Great Kirghiz Horde”, who was subordinated to the West Siberian Governor-General. The preparation of material resources for the advancement of the tsarist troops to the border of Central Asia was one of the first and important tasks of the superintendent; therefore, the superintendent was responsible for the construction of bridges, ferries, boats, the search for beasts of burden – horses, camels, and selection of guides from among the local population (Central State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Fund 3, Series 1, File 7).

The regular units in Kazakhstan included both land and naval forces. In 1794, a decision was made to keep 3 frigates, 12 galliots and 12 fleet ships in the Caspian Sea (Beskrovniĭ 1973). By 1866, the Caspian flotilla consisted of steam vessels (five boats, four schooners, eight steamships, four longboats); sailing vessels (one schooner, five conveyors, six sea barges, two floating lighthouses); port vessels (one floating boat, 24 boats of different names). The total tonnage of capacity was 1.476 tons with 10 guns; the personnel consisted of two naval barracks (Maksheev 1867).

The importance and necessity of the consolidation of the Russian authorities in Semirechye were defined as follows: “Firstly, in order to consolidate the order and tranquility in the large horde...” (Central State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Fund 3, Series 1, File 7). On October 17, 1799, Emperor Pavel I issued a special decree “On the Settlement of the Siberian Territory Adjacent to the Chinese Frontiers” by retired soldiers, criminals who had to be exiled and recruited peasant serfs (Plekhanov, 1997). The same policy was pursued in Kazakhstan, in particular, in Zhetysu after the accession of the region to Russia.

The tsarist government formed not only a contingent of regular and irregular troops in the region, but also cared about creating reserves for the army. Reserves were created in the form of Russian settlements, from the number of workers and craftsmen in newly constructed cities, fortresses and fortifications. No wonder the Military Governor of the Syrdarya region I.A. Grodekov once said that “every new Russian settlement in Turkestan is equal to a battalion of Russian troops” (Safarov 1920). In April 1900, an appointed hetman of the army Ionov noted in a report to the Turkestan Governor-General that in Semirechye this idea should be expressed in an increase in the number of Cossack villages. The hetman supposed that, taking into account a small number of cavalry in the district, the army was of great importance as the only cavalry reserve in Turkestan, which could strengthen troops at the border. And in the case of “unrest in the vast Kirghiz steppes it will be irreplaceable in suppressing the revolt of nomads”, Ionov concluded (Correspondence with the Office of the Turkestan Governor-General, (n.d.)). In fact, Russian settlers resettled to the Kazakh lands were by far not ordinary peasants. V.N. Vitevskii wrote: “There is no doubt that people of different classes and occupations, who were sentenced to exile, were the most plentiful material for the colonization of the Orenburg

region". A decree as of February 11, 1736 prescribes "increasing the number of Russians in those new places", exiling various criminals there, appointing some of them for regular service, others – for land cultivation and still others – more serious criminals – for working in mines. In 1743, it was ordered to send to Orenburg all those criminals, who were returned from exile and publicly whipped or whose nostrils were torn out. Self-employed plebeians, illegitimate children, the elderly and released serfs, and everybody, who could not pay a head tax, were exiled here for the settlement (Vitevskii 1897).

The Military Governor of the Semirechye region G.A. Kolpakovsky was forced to admit: "They were homeless, dubious people, who relied not on their own labor, but on benefits from the government, cultivated arable land and Kirghiz irrigating ditches" (The Order of Land Tenure of Semirechensk Cossacks in connection with the Works of the Settlement Organization in the Region and the Expected Thirty-Tithe Cossack Capitation Allotment, n.d). All contemporaries of the Cossack colonization of Zhetysu told about low moral qualities of the Cossacks and their family members. Although, N.A. Severtsov notes that the Semirechye Cossacks are a "clever and smart people", "sometimes even hardworking", "there are brave and honest people among them", anyway, he admits they have "a bad temper" and notes their "moral stupidity", laziness, drunkenness, "women's easy virtue", a tendency to robbery and theft of Kazakh cattle. He accuses the Cossacks of "predatory destruction" of forests, apricot and apple groves near Verniy and Talgar and other accessible foothills. He writes that, possessing large plots of arable land, pastures, hayfields, forests, the Cossacks "live near Zailiysky Alatau so carefree" and "the poorest and drunk Cossack lives better than a rich Voronezh peasant..." (Severtsov, 1947).

Sending such people to the Kazakh steppes, the tsarist government solved two problems – firstly, it created a reserve for military operations against the local population and, secondly, cleared the primordially Russian territory from the unwanted element, anticipating popular movements.

According to a decree as of February 11, 1736, retired dragoons and soldiers were provided with the land from 20 to 30 quarters per family; in addition, this land became hereditary property. In addition to common soldiers, retired officers, who had no villages of their own, were invited to resettle; they received land allotments according to their ranks and also were appointed as the heads of settlers composed of retired soldiers.

During the conquest, the nomadic and semi-sedentary Kazakh population was displaced from the fertile forest-steppe, foothill and mountainous zones, lost the best places for wintering and summering, was pushed into less comfortable territories due to natural and climatic conditions, or even into arid desert and semi-desert steppe areas with poor soil resources and scarce water resources (Masanov, 1995). The expansion

of the territory of the Russian state, the expansion of the latter to the East, North and South (in particular, to the territory of Kazakhstan and Central Asia) was simultaneously the Russification (more or less rigid) of the annexed peoples and their culture (in particular, the desire for Christianization of many peoples).

One of the prerevolutionary authors rightly and openly wrote: “One can categorically assert that no other part of tsarist Russia suffered so severely as the Kirghiz region, the vast steppe areas of which had attracted tsarist officials up to now” (Central State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Fund 437, Series 1, File 85).

## CONCLUSION

Summarizing all of the above, it can be noted that based on archival and literary sources, the authors attempted to prove that both Cossack and regular army units took part in the colonization of Kazakhstan. The consolidation of regular and irregular forces into a single combat unit in the form of two corps – the Separate Orenburg Corps and the Separate Siberian Corps – took place not without the influence of the tsarist autocracy. As for the expansion of the military contingent, the tsarist government actively pursued the policy of creating Russian settlements, which ultimately solved two problems, firstly, a reserve for the army was created and, secondly, it relieved the government from internal problems, anticipating popular movements.

In conclusion, let us cite an excerpt from the statement of the Orenburg Governor Prince Volkonsky in 1804, who truthfully described the true aims of tsarism in Kazakhstan: “Considering the primary construction of the Orenburg line, settlement of land militia infantry and cavalry regiments in fortresses and redoubts, the prudence of the chiefs of that time should be noted – they succeeded and implemented such an extensive and useful plan of consolidation against rapacious and treacherous peoples of the steppe” (State Archive of the Orenburg Region, Fund 6, Series 7, File 22). Thus, a historical fact of the colonization of Kazakhstan by tsarist Russia must be viewed in its true sense, taking into account the correlation of “givenness” and predetermination of historical circumstances, true invasive goals and intentions of the strong against the weak.

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