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Russia and Siberia:  
Completion of the Annexation of Western Siberia  
and the Exit of Russian People to the Yenisei River

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The Russian government had several problems that needed to be solved urgently after the territory of the former Siberian Khanate and its politically dependent (vassal) regions finally became part of the Russian state, as it was evidenced by the formation of a number of Russian administrative centers with military garrisons. Firstly, despite being already defeated in several battles with the Russian military servicemen, Khan Kuchum still continued to pose a danger to the southern borders of Russian possessions in Western Siberia, as he raided the local Tatar population to prevent them from becoming Russian subjects and also provoked similar raids of the *Kalmyks*, who, at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century roamed in the South Siberian steppes, gradually moving from the Altai mountains to the Volga basin. Secondly, in the North of Western Siberia, it was necessary to establish control over the activities of trading people, who for several decades carried out the extraction of fur animals in large quantities and bought them from the indigenous population without paying taxes to the Russian state. Thirdly, after completing the construction of fortified points on the Ob River, detachments of Russian military servicemen had good prospects for the further advance to the East towards the Yenisei River, making the local Siberian administration

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able to expand the *yasak territories*<sup>1)</sup> and increase the receipt of furs to the state budget.

Khan Kuchum, who retreated to the Barabinsk steppe<sup>2)</sup>, managed to preserve his “guard”—the *Nogai* and *Bukharian* detachments, with which he began to terrorize his former subjects—the Turkic population of the steppes of the South of Western Siberia. It was especially hard for those tribal groups who lived in the territories of the Tyumen, Tobolsk, and Tara *uyezds*<sup>3)</sup> in the South of Western Siberia, where they recognized their subordination to the *voivodes*<sup>4)</sup> of those three Russian administrative units and began to pay *yasak*. Kuchum regarded them as traitors and his raids were accompanied by extremely cruel treatment of the population of the former Siberian Khanate. In response, the *voivodes* of those three *uyezds* regularly organized military trips to the steppe against Kuchum’s detachments, including preventive raids. Such campaigns were actively attended by the Tatars as well, who entered the Russian service and received their new sovereign’s salary for that<sup>5)</sup>. But Khan Kuchum, who suffered defeats in those clashes, always managed to evade his pursuers.

The Moscow government made attempts to attract Kuchum to Russian service, offering him fairly honorable conditions and good maintenance. One of the last such offers was made to him in 1597. Russian

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1) There is the tribute area—the area from the indigenous population which gathered *yasak*. *Yasak*—a natural tax, tax, tribute paid in furs.

2) Barabinsk steppe, Baraba—a vast territory of the forest-steppe and steppe zone between Omsk and Novosibirsk, which is a low-land plain with an area of about 120 thousand km<sup>2</sup>.

3) Uyezd—in ancient Russia: “okruga”, a group of volosts that gravitated towards the city, a territorial and administrative unit, the basis of the administrative division of the Russian state.

4) Voivode—a military leader, senior in the army, appointed from among the representatives of the nobility. From the 16<sup>th</sup> to the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the Russian state this term referred to an official who manages the administrative territory.

5) “Serving Tatars” were in three garrisons in the South of Western Siberia—in Tobolsk, Tyumen and Tara. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, in Tobolsk—their number was over 250 people, in Tyumen—from 70 to 110 people, and in Tara—from 50 to 65 people.

envoys told the elderly Khan<sup>6)</sup> about the conditions on which his nephew Mametkul, who was endowed with fiefdoms and received Russian nobility after he was captured by the *Cossacks*<sup>7)</sup> with the help of one of the Tatar *murzas*<sup>8)</sup> still in Yermak's lifetime, making him an example of the future prospects that awaited Kuchum as well. But for Kuchum, the transition under the rule of the "White Tsar"<sup>9)</sup> in Moscow was incompatible with his self-esteem as being a Ghenghizid. The refusal of

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- 6) According to written sources of Russian and Central Asian origin, Kuchum then was already about 80 years old and became almost blind and deaf.
- 7) A Cossack is a free, independent person, an adventurer, a vagabond (from the Turkic languages). By the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century in the lower reaches of the rivers of Eastern Europe, a kind of republics of military brotherhood developed, whose representatives lived by robbing neighboring territories and trading ships passing along the rivers. The Russian government sought to use these republics to defend its southern borders and periodically recruited Cossacks as an armed force. As a result, some of the Cossacks who retained their independence from the state remained free, and those who entered the service became servicemen and received the sovereign's salary (monetary, grain and salt).
- 8) "Murza"—from the Persian word for "prince", became the common title of the Tatar nobility. Tatar *murzas* who switched to the Russian service often received princely titles.
- 9) One of the titles of the Russian Tsar since the time of Ivan the Terrible. During the life of Chengiz Khan when the Mongolian Empire was divided into four *ulus*—the inheritance of his older sons, ulus of Jochi (the eldest son) was divided between his own sons (also the grandsons of Chengiz Khan)—into the right, or Western, wing (*Ak Horde* or "White Horde"), ruled by Batu Khan (the second son of Jochi), and the left, or Eastern, wing (*Kok Horde* or "Blue Horde") ruled by Orda Khan (the eldest son of Jochi). The right and left wings were determined by the orientation of the Mongolian yurts that had access to the south side. At the same time, the white color symbolized the seniority of Batu over the rest of the Juchids, approved by Chengiz Khan himself. The blue color symbolized the subordinate position of the Orda in relation to Batu, but the primacy over the other sons of Jochi. Shibani (Sheiban), the fifth son of Jochi, the ancestor of Kuchum, occupied the third position in this hierarchy. According to some Russian historians, the names "White Horde" and "Golden Horde" in the Mongolian sense of the 12<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> centuries were synonymous. In Russian written sources, the name "Golden Horde" for the first time appeared only in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Previously, the possessions of Batu and his successors were simply called "Tatars". By the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, this state was divided into several smaller khanates. After the Kazan Khanate was annexed to the Moscow Kingdom (1552), the Russian Tsar became being called the "White" Tsar in the Turkic countries, apparently considering him as the legitimate successor to the power of the khans of the Golden Horde.

the former Siberian Khan to become a Russian subject forced the Moscow government to act more decisively. When Tobolsk voivodes received the news about Kuchum's intention to attack Tara and his attempts to attract Kalmyk khans to this raid into the territory of the Russian *uyezds*, it moved them to search for a way how to solve the "Kuchum problem" at last.

From late July to early August 1598, preparations for a campaign against Kuchum began in the fortress of Tara. This campaign was led by the Tara *voivode* Andrey Voeykov, who received additional detachments of servicemen from Tobolsk and Tyumen to help his own garrison. As a result, the amount of Voeykov forces grew up to 400 people. In addition to them, this campaign was also attended by serving Tatars in the number of about 300 people. Thus, *voivode* Voeykov received under his command an impressive force for Siberia at that time—about 700 military men.

On August 4, 1598, the Voeykov detachment emerged from Tara. It was known that Kuchum and his people were located in the Eastern part of the Barabinsk steppe near Lake Uba<sup>10</sup>). On August 15, the Russian-Tatar joint forces approached the lake, but it turned out that Khan Kuchum with his family and military detachments had migrated to the East to the Ob River. *Voivode* Voeykov had to quickly catch up with the Khan's army: he had to use the surprise factor, since Kuchum's army was somewhat superior in number to the Russian forces, and after learning about the persecution, the Khan had the opportunity to increase it by attracting the local inhabitants.

On August 20, at dawn, Voeykov's detachment caught up with Kuchum, who was encamped at the Ob on the right bank of the Irmen River<sup>11</sup>). Despite the fact that the detachment was tired from a long journey and its number was about a hundred people less than the soldiers of Kuchum, *voivode* Voeykov decided to give battle. He attacked

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10) Now Lake Ubinskoe is about 200 km away to the West from Novosibirsk.

11) Currently, the site of the last battle of Khan Kuchum is flooded with waters from the Ob reservoir, located about 55 km away from the dam of the Novosibirsk hydroelectric power station.

the fortified camp of the enemy and defeated most of Kuchum's troops.

The outcome of the battle was largely determined by the fact that the attack of Voeykov's army was unexpected by Kuchum: his men fiercely resisted, but suffered a crushing defeat. The Khan's younger brother, his son, and two adult grandsons were all killed in the battle, along with most of his "old guard"—*Nogais* and *Bukharians*. Trying to escape, many of his soldiers drowned in the Ob. Kuchum himself, with a small entourage of 30 people, managed to escape again, using a small boat to go down the river.

Notable captives, including Kuchum's wives and younger children, were sent by the victors to Tobolsk, and then from there to Moscow. They were given honors corresponding to their status, received decent maintenance and estates in the Moscow region (in the Yaroslavl *uyezd*). Later, the descendants of Khan Kuchum received the title of *tsarevichs*<sup>12)</sup> of Siberia. In 1686, according to the special Tsar's decree, the Siberian *tsarevichs* were included in the genealogical books of the Russian nobility. In 1718, one of the descendants of Khan Kuchum, *Tsarevich* Vassily Sibirsky, took part in a plot against Peter I, acting on the side of his son, *Tsarevich* Alexey. For that, he was stripped of the title of *Tsarevich* and exiled to Arkhangelsk. His descendants were also left without the title of princes. Despite this, many of Kuchum's descendants continued to reach high ranks in the sovereign's service. Vassily's grandson, also Vassily Sibirsky, reached the rank of General of the Infantry in the service of Catherine the Great. Under the rule of Alexander I, he was appointed a Senator. His son Alexander was also a General who participated in the Patriotic War of 1812 against Napoleon. His portrait is on display in the Hermitage Military Gallery of portraits of generals—participants of the battle of Borodino near Moscow in 1812. Finally, the latter's son, also called Alexander Sibirsky (1824–1879), like his father served in the military and then participated in the Crimean war<sup>13)</sup>.

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12) "Tsarevich" means the "Tsar's son" in Russian.

13) The Crimean War of 1853–1856 (a.k.a. "Eastern War"), was a war between the

As for Kuchum himself, one story says that after the battle, the Russian authorities decided to make another offer to draw him to the Tsarist service. The Tara's *voivode* sent a noble Tatar, Tul-Mamet, who had recently become a Russian subject, as a special messenger from *voivode* Voeykov. Tul-Mamet found Kuchum in a place two days' trip away from the site of the last battle on the right bank of the Ob River (in the area of modern Novosibirsk). However, the elderly khan again refused to accept Russian rule, referring to the fact that he was already too old to go into the service of the Russian Tsar, and then went to the *Nogais*.

According to another version, which is more popular in Russian historical tradition, Kuchum for some time roamed near Lake Zaisan (now Eastern Kazakhstan). Then he decided to return to the Ishim steppes<sup>14</sup>), where he hoped to find his relatives and former ulus people scattered in different places, who could strengthen his own position. The later opinions about the causes and circumstances of his later death in the academic literature differ widely. Some sources say that Kuchum and his associates were killed in 1601 by the *Kalmyks* on the Nor-Ishim River near Lake Kargalchina<sup>15</sup>); others argue the killers had been *Nogais* or *Karakaplaks* instead of *Kalmyks*. There is even a very peculiar story saying that Kuchum somehow managed to get to the Crimea, where he was finally killed by the order of his distant relative, then Crimean Khan, Gazi-Giray.

After Kuchum's death, his eldest son Aley led the anti-Russian struggle. For about three decades, he and his sons (Kuchum's grandsons), Ablaikerim and Kirei, continued to resist the Russian authorities and tried to restore the Siberian Khanate, relying on the forces of various nomads, including the *Kalmyks*, but their efforts were not crowned with success. The indigenous peoples of Siberia did not support those "Kuchumovichi" ("Kuchum's descendants" in Russian) in their quest to

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Russian Empire, on the one hand, and a coalition consisting of the British, French, Ottoman empires and the Kingdom of Sardinia, on the other.

14) The Ishim River is a left tributary of the Irtysh. Ishim steppes is a territory in the South-East of the Tyumen region, near the border with Kazakhstan.

15) About eighty kilometers from the confluence of the Ishim with the Irtysh.

regain their former dominance.

After the final defeat of Kuchum, Russian rule was quickly recognized by the Tatar population who lived along the Ob River and in the Barabinsk steppe. Following them, other groups of the Tatar population living East of the Ob began to accept Russian domination. Those groups, being often relatively small, were under serious pressure from the stronger nomadic formations of the South of Central Siberia, and it was quite logical for them to seek protection from the Russian state that came close to them. A significant event in this regard was the appeal for help of the *Eushta* Tatars living on the Tom' River<sup>16)</sup>, whose number at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century was estimated at 300 people. On January 20, 1604, envoys from the *Eushta* Tatars arrived in Moscow to visit Russian Tsar Boris Godunov, asking him to put them under his care and protect them from the raids of neighboring tribes. The head of the Embassy was a *Kniazec*<sup>17)</sup> of *Eushtas*, called Toyan. After presenting his gifts to Tsar Boris, Toyan submitted a petition to him asking for the admission of his small tribe under the rule of the Russian state and the construction of a city in his *Eushta* land. This would have allowed the administration and garrison of the newly built city to control a fairly large territory not yet subordinate to Moscow: Toyan listed in his petition the tribes who lived in this territory. At the same time, Toyan asked to protect his tribe from the raids of nomads from the South (*Dzungars*, *Kalmyks*, *Kirghiz*, *Nogais*, *Teleuts* and so on).

Tsar Boris Godunov accepted the Toyan tribe under the protection of Moscow, and the *Eushta* people were freed from *yasak*, unlike the neighboring tribes, whose leaders were not in a hurry to swear allegiance at first. The city of Tomsk was founded in the center of the land of Toyan in the same year (1604) and later turned out to be an important Russian strategic center, which protected the Russian possessions from nomadic raids. Later, in 1618, in order to protect Tomsk itself from nomads, the

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16) The Tom' River is a right tributary of the Ob. It flows into the Ob River about 200 km North of Novosibirsk.

17) *Kniazec* (little prince) —this is how the Russians called the leaders of the aboriginal clan groups, distinguishing them from the bulk of their tribe.

Kuznetsk *ostrog*<sup>18)</sup> was founded: it became an important border point in the South of Siberia, keeping such status until the end of 17<sup>th</sup> century.

All mentioned above is related to the South of Western Siberia, but what was happening then in the North? The foundation of the city of Berezov, although it stabilized the political situation in the North of the Trans-Urals, “pacifying” the militant *Khanty* and *Mansi*, did not solve the problem of governmental control over the movement of traders and, consequently, the flow of furs from the Northern regions of Siberia to the European part of Russia. The *voivodes* of the new city were able to control the route through the Northern Urals. But there was still the sea route, through which huge amounts of furs passed and which still remained uncontrolled: the State Treasury was losing a lot of money.

Regarding the routes from Russia<sup>19)</sup> to Siberia, one can say that the path through the Northern Urals, called *Pechorsky*<sup>20)</sup>, was actively used by Novgorod people since the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. By the time the city of Berezov was built, that route, starting from the city of Sol’ Vychegodskaya, was about 3000 *versta*<sup>21)</sup> to Berezov. It took more than thirteen weeks to overcome it. In the European part of Russia, this route lay upstream, and only in Siberia it was possible to descend along the course of small rivers from the Ural Mountains to the city of Berezov and to the Ob River. Then it was possible to move up the Ob and Irtysh rivers to Tobolsk and other cities in Siberia, and down the Ob to the city of Mangazeya (see below about the latter). As a result, this route was preferred when moving from Siberia back to the West: the main part of the path involved moving downstream.

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18) *Ostrog*—a small wooden fortress with towers (blind and passable), ditches and other defensive fortifications. The walls of the fortress could be built in the form of vertically dug sharpened logs, but they could also be “*gorodny*”—a chopped wall, sometimes—double, with a space filled with stones.

19) Throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Russian people in Siberia called the European part of Russia after the old “Rus”. The expressions “went to Rus (Russia)” or “came from Rus (Russia)” meant that a person went beyond the Urals, or came from beyond the Urals.

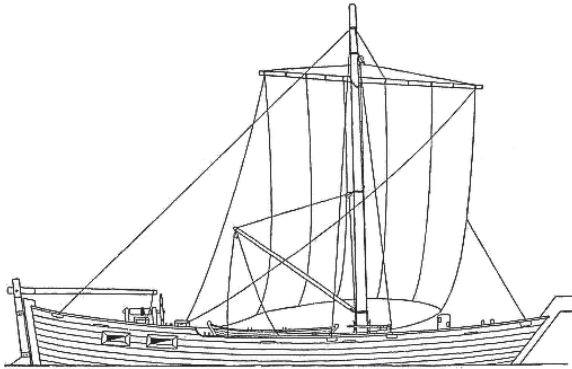
20) From the name of the Pechora River, which originates in the Ural Mountains.

21) “*Versta*” is a Russian unit of distance measurement, equal to 1066.8 meters. It was used before the introduction of the decimal system in the USSR in 1927.



Another route, the sea route, ran along the coast of the northern seas. It started from the city of Arkhangelsk. From the mouth of the Severnaya (“North”) Dvina River, vessels passed through the White Sea, skirted Cape Kanin Nos, and along the coast of both the Barents and Kara seas reached the Yamal Peninsula. Through the Peninsula, the vessels were conducted along the Mutnaya (“Muddy”) River to tundra lakes, between which there was a distance of half a *versta* (about 0.5 km), being usually overcome the portage by dragging<sup>22</sup>). From the second lake, the Zelenaya (“Green”) River led to the Gulf of Ob Bay, and then, along the Taz River, they reached the city of Mangazeya. This path took about three to four months one way.

### *Sailing ship type Koch 1640*



The vessels used by the Russian *Pomors* (literally, “inhabitants of the White Sea coast”) were built for the purpose of ice navigation, having a special egg-like shape, a round stern and additional side covering, called “kotsa” and made of larch or (less often) oak, near the waterline, which allowed them to move in broken ice. The lack of keel allowed those that became trapped in ice to be more easily freed (because, when gripped in

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22) Portage—an isthmus between two rivers or two other reservoirs, where ships and their cargo were dragged from one to the other along a dry path.

ice, this type of hull would squeeze to the surface) and then dragged across the ice to open water<sup>23)</sup>, and the problem of the stability of the ship was resolved by the inclusion of a big rudder. Such vessels had a draft of up to three meters, a load capacity of up to 200 tons, from one to three masts and could move against the wind. The preserved terminology of parts and details of such vessels shows that the development of polar navigation (*Pomors* reached the edge of the eternal ice when hunting sea animals) and polar shipbuilding as a certain Russian phenomenon. The construction of vessels of this type was stopped by a decree of Peter I issued on December 28, 1715. According to that, the Tsar demanded that in Arkhangelsk (the only big center of polar shipbuilding in those days) only European-type vessels, unable to move in the ice, were built: the ship's hull, squeezed by the ice, was destroyed.

Apparently, the sea route to the lower reaches of the Ob was known by the *Pomors* for a long time, at least in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The English and Dutch merchants who came to Arkhangelsk in the 1570s and 1580s received information from the local sailors that they knew the sea route not only to the mouth of the Ob, but also to the Yenisei River. The English and Dutch had had the idea of following that route around Asia to the warm seas. It is known that they organized several expeditions, but they could not go further than the Islands of Novaya Zemlya (“New Land” in Russian). Meanwhile, in those years, people from the Russian North were already actively engaged in the development of the fur wealth of Siberia in the lower reaches of not only the Ob, but also the Yenisei. It is known that by the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century there was a settlement on the Taz River, where merchants from Pomorye (“the White Sea Coast”) settled. From there they diverged not only in the Northern *taiga*<sup>24)</sup> between the Ob and the Yenisei, but also went further East, beyond the Yenisei.

23) To do this, an anchor was brought to the distance of the length of the existing rope, which was fixed in a hole cut in the ice. Using a hand winch at the bow of the vessel, it was pulled up to the opening, then the anchor was carried further, repeating this action until the vessel reached open water.

24) Taiga—a strip of wild, impenetrable coniferous forests that occupies a vast area in northern Europe, Asia, and North America.

Russian fortified posts with military garrisons were built on the territory of the former Siberian Khanate and finally it consolidated into the Russian State, and the Russian government was able to pay attention to the duty-free export of fur wealth from Siberia. To establish administrative control over the flow of furs, it was necessary to build a city or *ostrog* at the end of the year's navigation, when the rivers and sea were covered with ice, in an area already firmly developed by traders. The most convenient way to do this was between the rivers Taz (flows into the Ob Bay) and Yenisei, through which the main flow of furs from the Yenisei *taiga*, the territory that in the sources of the late 16<sup>th</sup>–early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries was called “Mangazeya and Yeniseya”. The term “Mangazeya” has caused many disputes among researchers about its origin, but most often in the academic literature there is a point of view that it came from the name of one of the *Samoyed* ancestral groups (the ancestors of the *Nenets*, or *Nentsy*, and *Entsy*), who lived in this area.

In 1600, the Moscow government decided to send an expedition in order to build a *ostrog* at the mouth of the Taz river. In the summer of 1600, a detachment of 100 military servicemen, recruited from the different cities of Siberia, headed by the *pismenny golovas*<sup>25)</sup> of Prince Miron Shakhovskiy and Danila Khripunov, who were appointed the first Mangazey *voivodes*, set off from Tobolsk along the Irtysh and Ob rivers. In Berezov, they were joined by fifty *Cossacks*. Having thus increased the number of the detachment by fifty percents, Prince Shakhovskoy and Khripunov continued their journey to reach their final destination before the winter. But in the Gulf of Ob, the squad was caught up in a violent storm, some of the ships were wrecked, a significant part of the food stocks was lost, more than a third of the participants died: it was obvious that further movement on water was impossible. The detachment was assisted by local *Samoyeds* who roamed nearby: they provided the servicemen with a means of transportation, and after loading the expedition's supplies on deer and getting themselves on skis, the detachment

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25) *Pismenny golova* (“the writing head” in Russian) —is one of the officials who formed the regional administration of the Moscow State and subordinate to the city (*uyezd*) *voivode*. They were usually appointed from among the nobles.

moved on.

However, the problems of the Shakhovskiy and Khripunov expedition did not end there. Soon the detachment was attacked by *Samoyeds*, who gathered in the number of up to 1000 people. Once under siege<sup>26)</sup>, the participants were able to withstand the initial attack of the natives, but then decided to leave the encirclement: using the deer provided to them earlier, the participants of the campaign began to fight their way out of the siege. The wounded Prince Shakhovskiy and 60 *Cossacks* managed to escape. The rest died during the breakout. The fate of Khripunov remained unknown. The surviving *Cossacks* still managed to reach the Taz River and then built a city in about 200 *verstas* from its mouth, later called “Mangazeya”. Most likely, the city was built on an already habitable place, where in previous years traders and fur trappers could probably wintered.

A year later, in the spring of 1601, the Moscow government decided to send another, this time more numerous, expedition to the lower reaches of the Yenisei River (“to the *Yeniseya and Mangazeya*”), led by the *voivodes* Prince Vassily Mossalsky and Savluk Pushkin. The responsibility for its preparation and provision was assigned to the newly appointed Tobolsk *voivodes*, Fyodor Sheremetyev and Ostafy Pushkin, who were then still just on their way to their assigned place of service. In the early summer of 1601, the new expedition, which included a total of 200 *Cossacks* and *Streltsy*<sup>27)</sup> in addition to the initial people, set off from Tobolsk on 13 ships. In addition to 100 *Tobolyaks*<sup>28)</sup>, seventy service men from Berezov and thirty from Surgut were to take part in the campaign, for which Mossalsky and Pushkin were to call in Berezov.

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26) In this case-by organizing the defense, arranging defensive fortifications from improvised means: fallen trees and their own skis and sleds, using the terrain. Having firearms, serving people quite successfully repelled the attacks of the Siberian aborigines, becoming inaccessible to their arrows.

27) “*Streltsy*” (plural form of “*Strelec*”, meaning “*Sagittarius*” in Russian)—Russian servicemen “on the device” in the 16<sup>th</sup>—early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, who served in the state-run *Strelec* Army and were armed with a “fire fight”, usually being infantrymen, less often cavalrymen. The *Streltsy* formed the first permanent army in Russia. Some foreigners also called them “*Musketeers*” or “*Arquebusiers*”.

28) “*Tobolyaks*”—the so-called inhabitants of Tobolsk.

There, the participants of the campaign were to receive artillery—four guns, for installation on the city walls, with a sufficiently large amount of ammunition in 400 cores. Given the incomprehensible situation with the construction of the city (any news from Prince Shakhovskiy at the time of sending the second expedition to Moscow had not yet arrived), the leaders of the second expedition were ordered to move hastily day-and-night<sup>29)</sup>, in order to arrive at the site of the construction of the city by water before the onset of frost. And in order to avoid attacks by *Samoyeds* during stops, it was strictly forbidden to approach the shores in any case.

When they reached the Taz River, *voivodes* Prince Mossalsky and Pushkin found the city already built. They kept 100 people with them to perform the sovereign's service, and the rest of the serving people were released to their garrisons. Later it turned out that Mangazeya was built in a very good place for customs control. Already in the first years of the city's existence, up to 1000 people stayed there for the winter (on the Polar Night). Later, during the city's heydays in the 1620s–30s, up to 2,000 merchants and hunters gathered here.

The nickname “Golden-boiling” was firmly established for Mangazeya; it was an extremely rich trading and merchant city, where goods and gold were in large bulk and without losses of time for transactions, thus bringing fabulous profits. Just in the period 1630–1637, about half a million sable skins were exported from there to the European part of Russia.

For a long time, Mangazeya did not have its own garrison and the service was carried out by *yearlings*<sup>30)</sup> sent from Tobolsk and Berezov—about fifty people from each city. It was just these men who, moving in the following years up Nizhnaya (“Lower”) Tunguska and Podkamen-naya (“Under the Stone”) Tunguska rivers, the right tributaries of the

29) It should be remembered that in the summer time in Northern latitudes, the sun is above the horizon all day—a phenomenon called “Polar Day”.

30) “Yearlings”—serving people sent from garrisons to serve in fortified points, *ostrogs* on a remote territory. Initially, they were sent for about a year, until the arrival of the next shift squad. Gradually, with the expansion of Russian possessions in Siberia, yearlings were sent to serve for a longer period of three to four or more years.

Yenisei, brought “under the sovereign’s hand” some groups of *Tungus* in a huge territory, building a whole network of *yasak*’s *zimovyeyes*<sup>31)</sup>. The number of yearlings available in the city by the beginning of the 1620s was clearly not enough, so the government decided to increase the number of servicemen in Mangazeya. In 1626, fifty *Cossacks* were recruited from Tobolsk to be sent to Mangazeya for permanent residence. At the same time, the number of *yearlings* in Mangazeya had not been reduced. After creating their own garrison and so increasing the total number of serving people in that polar city, Mangazeya *voivodes* became able to send small groups of serving people further to the East. As a result, in the second half of the 1620s, the Mangazeya detachments expanded the territory of the Mangazeya *uyezd* to the entire right Bank of the Lower Yenisei (both Nizhnaya Tunguska and Podkamennaya Tunguska basins, a.k.a. the entire North of the present Krasnoyarsk Region of Russian Federation), then moved to the Vilyui River, a left tributary of the Lena River, and finally to the Lena itself.

The penetration of Russian people into the Middle Yenisei basin started long before the territory was officially incorporated into the Russian State, just as it earlier happened in Northern Siberia. There is strong reason to believe that in the second decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, separate groups of traders and merchants from Mangazeya moved up the Yenisei River to the mouth of the Angara River. But it was a very long detour. Another, more convenient and relatively short route to the Middle Yenisei from Tobolsk was via the Ket’ River, a tributary of the Ob. In the academic literature, there is a version that at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Tobolsk administration had the idea of building a new *ostrog* on the Middle Yenisei. With the foundation of the Ketsk *ostrog* in 1604 in the lower reaches of the Ket’ River<sup>32)</sup>, the need for the existence

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31) “Zimovye” (“winter hut” in Russian) is a temporary dwelling built by hunters for the winter period. Until the 18<sup>th</sup> century these were fortified buildings that made up the original settlements of Russian merchants and traders and *Cossacks* in the Urals and Siberia. Some of *zimovyeyes* under certain circumstances could subsequently grow until they received the status of a city, like Irkutsk.

32) According to some sources, the foundation of the Ketsk *ostrog* may have taken place earlier, around 1596.

of any fortified point on the Yenisei at that time disappeared, since as a result of its appearance and the establishment of the Ketsk *uyezd*, the border of the Russian state moved sharply to the East, almost to the Yenisei itself. In addition, the construction of the Ketsk *ostrog* made it possible for its *voivodes* to be active in bringing “new lands” under the high sovereign’s power, including those which had never been previously subject to the power of the Siberian administration. It was then that small groups of Surgut service people began to leave the Ketsk *ostrog*, approach the banks of the Yenisei, and *yasak volosts*<sup>33)</sup> began to form: later it became another part of the Yeniseisk *uyezd*. A few years later, the route to the mouth of the Angara River was already well known to the people in Ketsk *ostrog*. By this time, the Ketsk *yasak collectors*<sup>34)</sup> had even visited the “Tyulkina *zemlitsa*<sup>35)</sup>”, which laid up the Yenisei River, where twenty years later Andrey Dubensky built the Krasnoyarsk *ostrog*.

In different historical conditions, the *ostrog* on the Yenisei or in the lower reaches of the Angara River could have appeared soon after the construction of the Ketsk *ostrog*, but the events of the Time of Troubles<sup>36)</sup> that lasted for a decade and a half, suspended the further expansion of the Russian State to the East. In time, this coincided with the activation of the Lower Angara Tungus, who, in turn, were earlier pushed from the South-East by the *Buryats*. By the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, they had already actively assimilated the tribes in the lower

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33) *Volost*—from the Old Russian “power, country, district”. Here: the territorial-administrative unit of the aboriginal population with the most authoritative leader, the chief, by whom certain amounts of furs were collected.

34) *Yasak collectors*—military servicemen who used to go in small groups to collect *yasak* from the already taxed aboriginal population. In the outlying, border districts, their task was also to collect information about not yet explained “land”.

35) “*Zemlitsa*”—literally: a small land, territory. In Siberia, “*zemlitsa*” was the name for the territories inhabited by tribal groups of aborigines, which, as a result of their annexation to the Russian state, were taxed, paying *dan*’. At the same time, the “*zemlitsas*” became taxable units, called “*volost*”.

36) “Times of Troubles” (“*Smuta*” in Russian, meaning “turmoil”)—a period in the history of Russia from 1598 to 1613, marked by natural disasters, the civil war, the Russian-Polish and Russian-Swedish wars, and the most severe state-political and socio-economic crisis.

reaches of the Biryusa River<sup>37)</sup>, and at the end of the first decade of that century, they began to make regular raids on the Keto-speaking population<sup>38)</sup> of the left Bank of the Middle Yenisei, thus acting as competitors of the Ketsk *yasak collectors*.

Russian written sources of the first two decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century contain quite a lot of information about the external activity of the Angara *Tungus*, their aggressive actions against the *Keto* (*Yenisei Ostyaks*). The *Ostyak kniazecs* complained to the Ketsk *ostrog* that the *Tungus* regularly (two or three times in the summer) crossed the Yenisei in boats to the left bank, keeping the *Ostyaks* in constant fear. If the original goal of the *Tungus* was the usual interests of people in primitive society—to rob the inhabitants of *Ostyak volosts*, to capture men and children as slaves, and women as potential wives, then gradually their actions began to take on a different hue. By the middle of the second decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century in addition to the remaining former goals, the *Tungus* raids also began to include plans to kill Russian *yasak collectors* who went to the *Ostyak camps*<sup>39)</sup>, and attacking the Ketsk *ostrog* in order to destroy it

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37) The Biryusa and Chuna rivers merge to form the Taseeva River, a left tributary of the Angara River.

38) On the left Bank of the Middle Yenisei, between the rivers Yenisei and Angara on the right Bank of the Yenisei River, to the south from the current Krasnoyarsk, in the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, there lived certain groups of the remnants of the ancient population of the South-Western and Central Siberia, who spoke the so-called “Yenisei languages”. It is very likely that those were the remnants of some tribes whose ancestors, following the retreating glacier, reached Beringia, where they split up: some went to the American continent, and some returned to the Altai-Sayan region in South Siberia. Nowadays researchers find some elements of anthropological similarity and language structure between the *Yenisei Ostyaks* and the Na-Dene language group of Native Americans. Toponymy shows that in the first Millennium BC, Keto-speaking peoples lived in the territory from the Ob River in the West to Lake Baikal in the East, and from the foothills of the Altai and Sayan Mountains in the South to the Angara River in the North. Even at that time, they were experiencing strong assimilation pressure from their neighbors—*Selkups*, *Turkish tribes*, *Buryats* and *Tungus*. To date, only *Keto* (*Yenisei Ostyaks*) with a population of about one thousand people have been preserved, living mainly along the banks of the Yenisei River from the mouth of the Podkamennaya Tunguska to the mouth of the Lower Tunguska.

39) Camp—a temporary settlement of nomads of the tundra, wandering hunters of the *taiga* zone of Siberia.



and subjugate the local *Ostyaks* for permanent payment of *yasak*.

The Russian administration had to react somehow and protect the loyal *yasak Ostyaks*. In order to react this way, in 1617, at the initiative of the Tobolsk *voivode* Prince Ivan Kurakin, an expedition was being prepared against the *Tungus*: after the ice drift from Surgut to the Ketsk *ostrog*, it was planned to dispatch a detachment of *Streltsy* in the number of thirty people and to strengthen it with fur trappers and *Ketsk Ostyaks*.



“Siberian *Tungus* near chum (tent house)”

Whether that campaign against the *Tungus* who began to annoy the Russian administration with their raids, really took place, or not, is still unknown. By that time, it became obvious that it was possible to resist the militant *Tungus* and protect the *Ostyak volosts* from them not by organizing punitive expeditions, but by firmly settling in their lands, thereby turning the *Ostyak volosts* from border to internal lands. Presumably, it is for this reason that the Tobolsk *voivode* Prince Kurakin began to look for the possibility of building an *ostrog* on the Upper Tunguska, as the Angara<sup>40)</sup> was called at that time.

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40) Since the time when Russian people got acquainted with the Yenisei basin, its three largest right tributaries were called Tunguska—Lower Tunguska, Podkamennaya (Under the Stone) Tunguska and Verkhnyaya (“Upper”) Tunguska, or, more often, just Tunguska, which had the Buryat name “Angara” above the Bratsk rapids.

At the request of the Tobolsk *voivode* Prince Kurakin, the Ketsk *voivode* Chebotai Chelishchev made an inquiry about the way “to Tungusy” from the military servicemen who had visited those places. However, the remoteness of Tunguska, which could not be reached from Tobolsk during the period of one navigation<sup>41)</sup>, still forced Prince Kurakin to decide to build a new *ostrog* on the Yenisei, as it was previously assumed. It was obvious that the new *ostrog* in the future would become a base for Russian military servicemen moving further East, so it was quite reasonable to build it and then turn it into the administrative center of the surrounding areas. Moreover, the distance from the Ketsk *ostrog* to the Yenisei, as the nearest Russian administrative center, was too far. As a result, a number of Eastern *volosts* of the Ketsk *uyezd* were transferred to the not yet existing *uyezd* center, which was just going to be founded on the Yenisei, covering a vast but sparsely populated territory that lay along the left Bank of the Yenisei, extending for about 800 km—from the basins of the Sym and Kas rivers in the north (both are left tributaries of the Yenisei), on the border of the Mangazeya *uyezd*, to the “Tyulkina zemlitsa” in the south, where lived the nomadic tribes of the *Yenisei Kyrgyz*.

In the spring of 1618, preparations began for an expedition to build a new *ostrog*. The appointed leader of a small detachment<sup>42)</sup> assembled from different garrisons in Western Siberia, was Petr Albychev from Pelym, with Tobolsk *Streltsy* centurion Cherkas Rukin as his deputy. The way from Tobolsk to the Ketsk *ostrog* in the 17<sup>th</sup> century usually took from six to eight weeks, and about the same time needed to get from Ketsk to the portage from the Ket’ river to the Kem’ river, a tributary of the Yenisei. The advance was carried out along the rivers: from Tobolsk it was necessary to go down the Irtysh, then up the Ob and

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41) “Navigation period” means the span of time between winters when rivers are not frozen over and are thus available to be travelled by boats.

42) The squad of this detachment is not exactly known, presumably—30–40 people. This indicates the initial significance that the Tobolsk administration assigned to the new *uyezd* center: such a garrison was quite enough to “pacify” the *Angara Tunguses*. And it was possible to think about the future prospects and significance of the new *ostrog* on the Yenisei later.

Ket'. Thus, the detachment of Albychev and Rukin could cover the distance from Tobolsk to the beginning of the portage, where they built Makovsky *ostrozhek*<sup>43)</sup> in no less than three months; the movement of the detachment was hampered by the numerous grain reserves and "ship supplies" in amounts provided for a year. The detachment could not leave Tobolsk until mid-May and, consequently, was able to reach the portage on the Yenisei in late August or early September—at best; most likely, it could happen no earlier than mid—October, by the beginning of the ice freeze.

Arriving at the portage, the servicemen decided to spend the winter on the Ket' river. It is possible that even then Albychev and Rukin received news about the *Tungus* intention to prevent the Russian settlement on the Yenisei. In this situation, it was simply unwise and dangerous to drag all the supplies to an empty place. Therefore, the first step towards the construction of the Yeniseisk *ostrog* was the appearance of the Makovsky *ostrozhek* which arose as a fortified wintering place for the detachment on the territory of the Ostyak *Kniazec* Namak, and therefore was first called "Namatsky". Later, throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Makovsky *ostrozhek* served as an economic base: supplies intended for the Eastern Siberian cities, primarily grain and salt, were delivered from Tobolsk to Makovsky *ostrozhek* during navigation period and placed there in "sovereign barns". Then they were transported by sleigh to Yeniseisk along the winter route, where they were stored in specially built storage facilities in the basement of the Vvedenskaya (Introduction) Church. With the advent of new navigation from Yeniseisk, they were transported further to their destinations—Krasnoyarsk, Yakutsk, and Transbaikalia<sup>44)</sup>.

The fears of the leaders of the detachment were not in vain: subsequent documents report that the attack expected from the *Tungus* took place. In Makovsky *ostrozhek*, the future builders of Yeniseisk withstood the first siege. They did it without anyone's help: it was unrealistic to

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43) *Ostrozhek*—little *ostrog*.

44) In this role, Makovsky *ostrozhek* functioned for a long time, in fact, until the construction of the Trans-Siberian railway at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

take *ostrozhek* by storm, as the *Tungus* did not have the appropriate skills. Also, the *Cossacks* were not afraid of a siege, because they took grain supplies from Tobolsk in sufficient quantity, and they were well equipped, at least until autumn. Apparently, the besiegers realized the futility of their actions, and lifted the siege. We should not forget that in the hands of Russian service people there were firearms that the natives had not previously seen. “Fire fight” brought quite serious confusion to their attacks, which was skillfully used by the *Streltsy* and *Cossacks*<sup>45)</sup>.

After lifting the siege of Makovsky *ostrozhek* by the *Tungus*, the detachment of Albychev and Rukin was able to get to the bank of the Yenisei and begin to fulfill the main goal of the campaign—the construction of an *ostrog* there. The exact time of construction of the Yeniseisk *ostrog* is difficult to establish. But it is known that in the following year, 1619, a newly appointed officer to replace Albychev and Rukin, Maxim Trubchaninov from Tobolsk, met with them in an already built *ostrog*.

With the construction of the Yeniseisk *ostrog*, the process of “bringing under the high sovereign’s hand” the territory beyond the Yenisei effectively began. *Tungus* of the Lower Angara region very soon turned from competitors of Russian *yasak collectors* into an object of their close interest: several *Tungus kniazec* from 1621/1622 began themselves to pay *yasak* to Yenisei servicemen. Since then, the *Tungus* were no longer dangerous to the *Yenisei Ostyaks*. Raids on the left bank of the Yenisei stopped, making a positive effect on the growth of the Keto-speaking population of the Yeniseisk *uyezd*: over a decade, it increased by a third, from 350–370 people in 1618 to 450–500 people in 1630.

Initially, as in many other Siberian cities, the service in the Yeniseisk *ostrog* was carried out by *yearlings* sent from different cities. Only after the arrival of the first *voivode* Yakov Khripunov to Yeniseisk in 1623, was a permanent garrison of 100 *Streltsy* formed there. But in a few years, when the territory of the *uyezd* began to expand rapidly to the

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45) It should be noted here that Russian military service people, as a rule, had protective weapons—chain mail, which was almost impenetrable with arrows. While rifle bullets pierced the leather armor of the *Tungus* and other natives of Siberia, including when the leather armor was covered with metal plates.

East, the Yeniseisk *voivodes* constantly appealed to Moscow with requests for an increase of the garrison. In the early 1630s, the Central authorities finally responded to those appeals, and the Tobolsk *voivodes* were instructed to recruit one-hundred and fifty men for the Yeniseisk garrison in Tobolsk and fifty men in Berezov, which accelerated the process of moving the Yeniseisk military servicemen to the East.

Now we turn to the history of the advance of detachments of Russian servicemen up the Yenisei, in the direction of the already mentioned “Tyulkina zemlitsa”. In 1623, when the first *voivode* Yakov Khripunov was sent to the Yeniseisk *ostrog*, his relative, the nobleman Andrey Dubensky, arrived with him. The following year, Khripunov sent Dubensky with a small detachment moved up the Yenisei to study the place where it would be possible to put a new *ostrog*, which would be closer to the large yet still unknown “new lands” and would significantly increase the collection of *yasak*. As a result of his trip, Dubensky looked for a fairly convenient place on the left Bank of the Yenisei River at the mouth of the Kacha River, overhung by the hills of reddish clay, which was fixed in the name of the future *ostrog*, called “*Krasny Yar*” (the present city of Krasnoyarsk)<sup>46</sup>). *Voivode* Khripunov soon forwarded the information collected by Dubensky to Moscow. In the Order of the Kazan Palace<sup>47</sup>), this information was rechecked, and people who visited those places were specially questioned. After all, the government realized that the place chosen by Dubensky as a site for the construction of a new *ostrog* was quite convenient, and it also could provide a large profit to the sovereign, but in order to prevent it from danger from nomads, it was necessary to place a garrison of up to 500 people in it.

At the end of 1626, a decision was made in Moscow to organize an expedition to the “Tyulkin land”, and the responsibility for its success

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46) “Yar” means “breakage”, steep bank of the river. “Krasny Yar” means “The Red Yar”.

47) The Order of the Kazan Palace—the Central governing body created soon after the annexation of the Volga region to the Moscow Kingdom; it was in charge of all the Eastern territories of the Russian state. Since 1599, the Order of the Kazan Palace supervising the territory of Siberia, which in 1637 was transferred to the special Siberian Order allocated from the Order of the Kazan Palace.

was assigned to the new Tobolsk *voivode*, Prince Andrey Khovansky. Since the garrisons of Siberian cities were not able to allocate the expected number of serving people, it was decided to “clean up” in the *Cossacks* for the sovereign service of all comers and provide them with the sovereign’s salary for two years in advance. *Voivode* Khovansky sent a similar appeal to Siberian cities, but there were not so many people who wanted to go into the sovereign’s service, so the recruitment had to be reduced first to 400 people, and then to 300, who were hardly recruited from among the “walking people”<sup>48)</sup> in Tobolsk, Tyumen and Verkhoturye. The problem of providing such a big detachment with the sovereign’s salary, including ammunition and food, also fell on the shoulders of the Tobolsk administration, and the command staff was formed from among the already experienced service personnel. We must assume that it was very difficult for the Tobolsk *voivodes* to attract officers of their garrison to participate in the expedition to the “Tyulkin land”, as it was indirectly evidenced by the incredibly high annual salaries given to the first Krasnoyarsk *atamans* (*Cossack* military leaders) Ivan Kol’tsov (son of former Yermak’s subordinate), Yermolai Ostafiev and Ivan Astrakhanets, who were paid thirty rubles each, while usually *atamans* received from ten to twenty rubles a year.

*Pishchals*<sup>49)</sup> for the newly formed detachment were sent from Moscow, the gunpowder and lead were issued from Tobolsk stocks at the rate of half a pound<sup>50)</sup> of both per person. As well Tobolsk sent two hundred

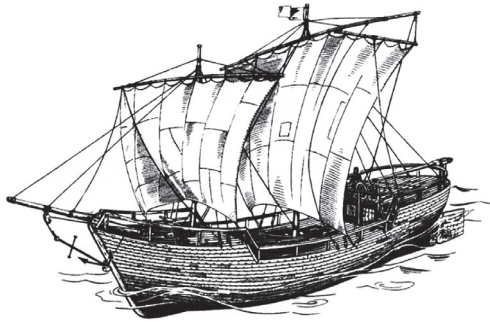
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48) “Walking people”—At that time, “walking person” usually meant an idle person without any certain permanent business. In this case, the term “walking people” means a category of the Russian population that was not assigned to any social group, to the “draft”, and had the opportunity to move from place to place, changing the type of activity. They continued to exist as social strata until the first quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, before the tax reform of Peter I.

49) *Pishchal*—Russian researchers of weapons history distinguish *pishchal* in an independent type of flintlock gun in Russia in 16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> centuries, giving it the following characteristic: the total length is 1.25 m (including the barrel, 0.87 m), the caliber is fourteen millimeters. In European armies at that time, the close equivalent was the *fusee*, a flintlock rifle designed to arm infantry. The total length of the latter was 1.2 m (including the barrel 0.84 m), the caliber was eleven millimeters.

50) Pound—Russian pound was then approximately 410 g.

and six spears for ordinary *Cossacks*, while the other sixty-four spears were supposed to be forged in the Yeniseisk *ostrog* from iron, also sent from Tobolsk. The participants of the campaign received certain amounts of tools and construction materials, while the main part of it—nails, staples and other iron products, was supposed to be obtained in Yeniseisk.



*Strug boat*

From Tobolsk, the expedition set out in June 1627 on sixteen *doshaniks*<sup>51)</sup>, one *strug*<sup>52)</sup> and five boats. In October, it reached Makovsky *ostrozhek*. During the winter of 1627/1628, the expedition's supplies were transported by horses along the winter route to the Yeniseisk *ostrog*. At the end of May, 1628, Dubensky's detachment set out from the Yeniseisk *ostrog* up the Yenisei River. During the following summer months, the Krasnoyarsk *ostrog* was built, which reliably covered the Yeniseisk *ostrog* from nomad raids, which, in turn, allowed the Yeniseisk administration and servicemen to expand the territory of the Yeniseisk *uyezd* to the East—to move up the Tunguska River and soon reach the Lena River and then, to get in Transbaikalia.

51) Doshanik—river transportation vessel of various sizes, mainly a large flat-bottomed boat with deck or half-deck.

52) Strug—Russian river flat-bottomed sailing-rowing vessel of various sizes. On the North Dvina River there were *strugs* with a displacement of up to 160 tons. On the contrast, old *Yermak's strugs*, considering the practicability of the rivers along which he crossed the Urals, were small.

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