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The Game Ordo as an Element of Forming the Strategic Thinking of the Kyrgyz Ethnic Group

Abstract. The article examines the uniqueness of the Kyrgyz folk game ordo from more than 50 different games on alchiki (in the Kyrgyz language chuko). The essence of ordo is revealed as a team game of men knocking out the khan and the alchiks from the drawn circle. The circle drawn on the ground meant the territory of the state, in the center of which was the ruler's headquarters (a depression was made where tompoy-alchik was located. Rival players worked out a plan to capture a given country using various maneuvers. The author shows that this game was a kind of military map of the state, with the help of which the Kyrgyz (men) were trained in the military art of maneuvering, the ability and methods of introducing combat operations. It formed the players' strategic and tactical thinking skills, which contributed to making well-thought-out decisions in the interests of the community. There are five types of ordo games. It is noted that the researchers pay attention to the fact that ordo is found among nomadic peoples only among the Kyrgyz. This game, forgotten in the Soviet era, is now included in World Nomadic Games. The author draws attention to the importance of teaching the ordo game as a sport from the school bench in all educational institutions of the republic.

Keywords: game ordo, strategic thinking, decision-making, territory of the state, players.

Introduction

The Kyrgyz are one of the few nomadic peoples who have achieved and gained their statehood at the end of the XX century, which confirms the ability of this ethnic group to think strategically and make fateful decisions in such complex abrupt changes in history. Strategy, as we know, means a general set of manoeuvres conducted in order to defeat the enemy, as well as the most profitable mode of action, the art of choosing the best alternatives or choosing future development options. However, to make strategic decisions, you need the presence of analytical thinking, knowledge and skills. This article will review and analyze the role of the Kyrgyz national game of the ordo in the formation of the strategic thinking of the Kyrgyz ethnic group for thousands of years¹.

When writing the article, the following scientific methods were used: analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, observation, comparison and modeling, possible variants of the development of the ordo game. This study is one of the first articles that examine the ordo game from the plane of forming strategic thinking.

Analysis

The ability to think and act strategically, in different epochs, was not inherent in all peoples and states. Although the history of each particular success is often unique, the peoples and states that achieved it adhered to the line that Adam Smith estimated as one of the most important virtues

¹ The ancient game of alchiki was one of the most common in Central Asia, as it helped children develop their eyesight, accuracy and dexterity.

Alchik is the bone of the knee joint of a sheep or ram.

The bones needed for the game were previously boiled – or else the alchiki leftover from meat dishes after meals were taken. Usually, each player had their own set of alchiks, but children could also play with a common collection – but it was not customary to share bits. The bones needed for the game were previously boiled – or else the alchiki left over from meat dishes after meals were taken. Usually, each player had their own set of alchiks, but children could also play with a common collection – but it was not customary to share bits. Each set of bones was unique in its own way: the alchiki varied in shape and weight and accordingly had different properties as projectiles. For example, the most valuable thing for the players was the main alchik – «tompoy», a large bone. Unlike other bones, it was not cooked before the game, so that it would not decrease in mass and lose its impact force. And sometimes the main alchik was even filled with lead.

– prudence, which combines the highest prudence, which allows us to «recognize the most remote consequences of our actions» and self-control [1, p. 213].

Researchers of the Kyrgyz national games draw attention to the fact that the meaning of the games includes social, ideological and moral meanings. They contributed to the socialization of members of society, introducing them to traditional, moral values, fostering a sense of patriotism, empathy and the formation of national identity. They also played the functions of continuity and transfer of experience from one generation to another – spiritual culture, norms of behavior, the concept of honor, dignity, and the values of the motherland.

As you know, the nomadic civilization was characterized by a harsh way of life, which required military training, education of masculinity, fearlessness. The nomads were dominated by games where the quality of fighting spirit, patience, endurance and hard work were brought up. Using their centuries-old experience and wisdom and love for open spaces, the Kyrgyz people held games in an open space where no special buildings and structures are required. I would like to draw attention to the fact that the game Khan ordo is a special game for the Kyrgyz (out of more than 50 different games on alchiki) and is found among nomadic peoples only among the Kyrgyz [2, p. 60-82] and the rules of this game differ only slightly from territory to territory (Altai, Ala-Too, Pamir, China) [3, p. 26-27].

This game was a kind of military map, with the help of which men were trained in the military art of maneuvering, the ability to introduce combat operations and methods of applying various tactics of introducing the battle.

The game Khan ordo is a team game of men with knocking out the alchiks and the khan (ruler) from the circle. The circle drawn on the ground meant the territory of the state, in the center of which was the ruler's headquarters (a depression was made where tom-poy-alchik was located), and the rivals developed a plan to capture this country using various maneuvers. The logic of the game boils down to the fact that one group was tasked with capturing the ruler's stake and knocking the khan out of the circle, which meant overthrowing him from the throne, that is, victory. The player required not only physical training but also developed logical thinking, the ability to think through several steps forward, i.e. to understand the position of the parties and develop effective strategic plans to capture the «khan's stake», acting quickly and consistently.

The second group of players had to be able to correctly introduce an internal policy to protect the khan's stake while being inside the circle, that is, in power. They were required to be careful, to have the qualities of prudence and self-control.

During the game, participants had to analyze positions, develop a game plan, which contributed to the development of game thinking, through generalizations of different levels of concepts. Thanks to the use of such concepts as a means of analyzing the position and developing an action plan, players who possess them were able to identify properties and relationships in the position that are not available to players with less developed concepts, to produce and choose a strategic idea that is most adequate to objectively existing opportunities.

It should be noted that there are different types of ordo games. Researcher N. Rysmendeeva N. [4, p. 116-118] identified five types of games:

1. «Alp Ordo» – played at the level of states and khans (rulers). Such games were entered by the epic «Manas» and the Manas himself. «Kyrk choro» (forty knights), who accompanied national legendary hero Manas, always played these games. Players were divided into two teams of 20 people and play a round of ordo, especially before going on a combat campaign.

2. «Big (Chon) Ordo» – played at the level of two tribes, villages (today, approximately a game of two regions) based on an agreement, the duration of the game was not discussed, it lasted until one of the parties won. For example, under Ormon Khan in the nineteenth century, the game «Big (Chon) Ordo» was held between the Sarybagysh and Bugu tribes.

3. «Small (Kichi) Ordo» – such games are held at the present stage and the time is determined – two hours. Features of this type of game, the fact that the rules that were spelled out in traditional ordo

games are not observed. We can say that the form of the game has changed in accordance with the modern way of life when players have to go back and do their work and family affairs.

4. «Single (Churmuy) Ordo» – this game is played when the number of opposing sides does not match, and each player performs one-on-one. This can be compared to a duel during the wars, when the fighting warriors performed one – on-one. At the present stage, this type of game is also very common.

5. «Abalak Ordo» – is considered the youngest type of this game. The game uses an abalak². This type accelerated and facilitated the process and the end of the game.

As you can see, the variety of types of ordo games are related to the scale, participants and methods of holding, which have changed and simplified based on changes in the lifestyle of the Kyrgyz.

D. Sarygulov notes [4, p. 121] that the players, as during the military operations, were divided into «on bashi» («tens»), «eluubashi» («pentecostal»), «zhuzbashi» («centurion»). The drawn circle during the game is a state (the territory of the union of several nomadic tribes), in the center of which is the khan's headquarters (the ruler is a khan in his tent-yurt, the modern concept of a residence), around it are «viziers»- advisers (alchiki), warriors (alchiki). In the game, each player had their own function «top buzmai» (provocateur); «tooruganadam» (guard), «kadaganadam» (attached person), etc. We can say that this is a kind of military specialization in conducting game operations. If you make a comparison with the fighting, where some act as shooters, others fight with spears, and others are excellent with swords, just like in the game ordo – some play in a group, others shoot at each alchik-individually, the third selectively, etc. The game also used imaginary military rules and tactics, for example, if when tompoy (khan) was captured, the alchiki (guards) were touched and they moved - this meant that «he is alive and he can kill you» – this was not considered a win.

According to Academic A. Kakeev [5, p. 10-13], each attribute in the game is a symbol of the state. In the game, if the khan was knocked out of the center, it meant the destruction of the state. During the game, the players practically felt and clearly saw what it means to lose the khan, i.e. the state, and this increased their heightened sense of patriotism.

During the game, there were cases when one side won 90 alchiks (warriors), and the other only 5-10, but they were hurt-wounded by the khan's blow. But the khan was not destroyed, which meant that he had to fight for the sake of his state for the rest of his life. The strength and skill of the ordo players depended significantly on his ability to develop strategic and tactical plans and decisions. If the rules were violated during the games, it could negatively affect the relations of the tribes and even lead to armed clashes. It is no accident that there is a phraseological unit in the Kyrgyz language «Fire can ignite from the game». An obvious example of the importance of observing the rules during the ordo game is given by the people's writer of the KR T. Kasymbekov in his novel «The Broken Sword» [6, p. 106-108], when the khan's son tried to break the rule during a game, but he was stopped by one of the fans. The «vizier» – advisor Musulmankul assessed this act as an attempt of permissiveness and unfair management of the khanate, and the suppression of this violation as the restoration of justice.

According to K. Aidarkulov and T. Arzybayev, the word syzyk, chiyin (dash, line), which was drawn for the game, was important, it is a certain border (line) that cannot be crossed in the practical life of the Kyrgyz, when the lines were drawn as borders between tribes. In the Kyrgyz language is the aphorism «cyzyksip» («drawing a line»). In the game, you cannot cross this line of the circle and it is from this line that you must «strike» at the conditional «enemy», be able to use maneuvers to achieve the goal [7, p. 84].

Of course, the ability to think logically and anticipate the actions of players brought up logical and strategic thinking in men. In the epic «Manas» and «Semetey» it is mentioned that before the military campaigns of the forty knights, the Manas arranged a game of ordo, improving their military art. In the history of the Kyrgyz people, there are examples of successful strategic decisions, for example, the famous strategy of Ormon Khan – «Ormonopuza» («Ormon's threat»). Academic

² Abalak-a plank measuring 6*9 cm, made from the horns of mountain goats or cows. Plank one side longer, and the second is shorter, but the thickness of it should be same size as tompoy alchik

B. Jamgerchinov, describing Ormon Khan, drew attention to his resourcefulness, ingenuity in dealing with enemies who lead them astray and confused [8, p. 47].

In the history of the Kyrgyz people, there are known facts when the participants of the game *khan ordo* played it for 3-4 days, there were cases when the game lasted for weeks. The game was interrupted only at night. Traditionally, the games were held in the fall, in the spring, when the nomad was free from the farming. However, not everyone could take part in the game of *Khan ordo*, as it required preparation, great skill and foresight. In many cases, the ordinary members of society hardly participated in these games. Former players of the big *ordo* game have always been held in high esteem in Kyrgyz society and were granted a special right in the games – *chokon* (the right of an additional strike granted to the loser in the *ordo*) [9, p. 90-91].

During the game, considerable gifts were placed on the prize: money, camels, and horses. For example, in a game between the *Sarybagysh* and *Bugu* tribes, 40 horses were put on the prize. The prize was shared between the players and their fans.

In sovereign Kyrgyzstan, the traditional game of *ordo* is being restored. According to the memoir of D. Sarygulov [4, p. 122], in the mid-90s of the twentieth century, the *ordo* game was held in 13 villages of the republic. The teams were divided by age category, above-60 years and up to 60 years. A good game was shown by the players of the category above 60 years old (until 3 p.m.), and the second category under 60 years old continued the game for a very long time. The elders explained this phenomenon by the physical unpreparedness of the next generation, associated with unclean ecological food, smoking, and alcoholic beverages.

Conclusion

Thus, the analysis of the place and significance of the *Khan ordo* game in the traditional Kyrgyz culture shows that it contributed to the intellectual and physical development of the participants of the game, fostered the ability to analyze, abstract, make decisions, and also formed a sense of patriotism and physical fitness among the members of the Kyrgyz community.

Today, in Kyrgyzstan, the *Khan ordo* team games are held on an initiative, privately. However, in our opinion, it is important to teach this game as a sport from the school bench in all educational institutions of the republic, given that it fosters a sense of patriotism and the ability to make strategic and tactical decisions.

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**Ордо ойыны қырғыз этносының стратегиялық ойлауын қалыптастырудың
элементі ретінде**

Аннотация. Мақалада қырғыздардың алуан түрлі 50-ден астам асық ойындары (қырғыз тілінде чуко) ішіндегі ордо ұлттық ойынының ерекшелігі қарастырылған. Сызылған шеңберден хан мен асықтарды шығару арқылы ойналатын ерлердің топтық ойыны ордоның мәні анықталды. Жерге салынған шеңбер мемлекеттің аумағын білдіреді, оның ортасында томпой асық орналасқан ойыс жасалды. Қарсылас ойыншылар әртүрлі амалдарды қолдана отырып, аталмыш елді басып алу жоспарын жасайды. Автор бұл ойынның мемлекеттің әскери картасы іспетті екенін көрсетеді, оның көмегімен қырғыздар (ер адамдар) әскери іс-қимыл жасау, жауынгерлік өнерді меңгеру шеберлігі мен әдістерін үйренген деген тұжырым жасайды. Ойын қатысушылардың стратегиялық және тактикалық ойлау дағдыларын қалыптастырды, бұл қоғамның мүддесі үшін ойластырылған шешімдер қабылдауға ықпал етті. Мақалада ордо ойынының бес түрі айқын көрсетіледі, сонымен қатар көшпелі халықтардың арасында тек қырғыздарда ғана бұл ойынның бар екендігіне назар аударылады. Кеңес дәуірінде ұмытылған бұл ойын бүгінде Дүниежүзілік көшпелілер ойындары тізіміне енгізілген. Автор ордо ойынын республиканың барлық білім беру мекемелерінде спорт түрі ретінде оқытудың маңыздылығына тоқталады.

Кілт сөздер: ордо ойыны, томпой – асық, стратегиялық ойлау, шешім қабылдау, мемлекет аумағы, ойыншылар.

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Игра ордо как элемент формирования стратегического мышления кыргызского этноса

Аннотация. В статье рассматривается уникальность кыргызской народной игры ордо, включающей в себя более 50 различных игр на альчиках (на кыргызском языке «чуко»). Также раскрывается сущность игры ордо как командной игры мужчин с выбиванием хана и альчиков из начерченного круга. Нарисованный на земле круг означал территорию государства, в

центре которого находилась ставка правителя и делалось углубление, где располагался томпой – альчик. Игроки-соперники вырабатывали план захвата данной страны, используя различные маневры. Автор показывает, что данная игра представляла собой некую военную карту государства, с помощью которой кыргызы (мужчины) обучались военному искусству маневрирования, умению и методам ведения боевых действий. Игра формировала у ее участников навыки стратегического и тактического мышления, что способствовало принятию продуманных решений в интересах сообщества. В статье выделяются пять типов игры ордо, также отмечается, что среди кочевых народов ордо встречается только у кыргызов. Данная игра, подзабытая в советское время, сегодня включена в список Всемирных кочевых игр. Автор обращает внимание на важность обучения этой игре как виду спорта уже со школьной скамьи во всех образовательных учреждениях республики.

Ключевые слова: игра ордо, томпой – альчик, стратегическое мышление, принятие решений, территория государства, игроки.

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