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THE QUESTIONS OF THE SECURITY IN THE CENTRAL ASIAN INTERNATIONAL CARAVAN ROADS 1600-1850

Abstract: In this article is given some scientific conclusions over the questions of the robbery and brigandage in the International Caravan Roads between Central Asian khanates and neighboring countries and also on the some Security procedures of the Central Asian khanates, Safavid Iran and Russian Empire governors in the 17th and the first half of the 19th Centuries.

Key words: Caravan Roads, Security, Central Asian khanates, Russia, Iran, Kazakhs, Kalmyks, robbery, brigandage, envoy, dangerous, Diplomatic Relations, Siberia

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Introduction

It is considered that one of the most negatively influencing factors on the development of trade and diplomatic relations between nations was robbery, brigandage the Trade Caravans. That's why the prevention of robbery and brigandage on Caravan Roads and fight against it were the tasks solved on International Relations level among Central Asian khanates. This article is aimed to deal with the robbers' attack which was an obstacle to the development of International Relations and the measurements taken against them on international and local level.

During the 17th-19th centuries Russia was considered as a state with large trade turnover with Central Asia. Therefore, I decided to begin with the thoughts about some groups of nomadic Kalmyks and Kazakhs who robbery on the roads connecting these two territories. Because till the 17th and 30th-40th of the 18th century the Caravan Roads connecting central Russia crossed the territory where Kalmyks roamed, and through Astrakhan and Siberia. And from the 30th-40th years of the 18th century the importance of Astrakhan and Syberia decreased. After building the fortresses Orenburg (April 19, 1743), Troitsk, Petropavlovsk (1752), Bukhtarminsk (1763) by Russia, the Trade Caravans began to cross through the territory of Kazakhs.

Materials and Methods

We'll also consider Kalmyks who troubled both Russian and Central Asian traders by Robbery Trade Caravans on the road between the two countries during of Bukharan Khan Imamquli's period. That's why in 1641 Khiva khan sent his envoy named Isfandiyor Amin Bakhadir to Russian Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich and wrote special certificate to his name. That certificate reflected the fact that Kalmyks' attack troubled long lasting Trade and Diplomatic Relations between Russia and Central Asia. As a result of such attacks Trade Caravans of both countries were pillaged and that fact caused the danger as a breaking relations between Central Asia and Siberia, Astrakhan [8, 167]. That letter informed about the offer to Russia and Bukhara khanate to join together against Kalmyks. Isfandiyor Khan suggests to Russia government to build a military fortress in Emba River and gave proper instructions how to defeat Kalmyks. Cause Kalmyks migrated near Kazan and Siberia in summer and in winter the lived nomadically around Emba River. By driving out the Kalmyks from the Trade Roads, it was provided the safety of traders from Russia and Central Asia on the desert roads leading to Siberia, Astrakhan and Kazan. The Russia government received this offer, and replied with letter which informed that Astrakhan local government was ordered to collect the information about Kalmyks and that information would be used while planning the measures against



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Kalmyks' attacks [5, 56]. This fact proves that, envoy of Khiva Amin Bakhadir managed to attract Russia government's attention to the problem of settling the Kalmyks' attack which was an obstacle on Caravan Roads. And could provide the further Trade and Diplomatic Relations between two countries.

But the information concerning the later period shows that Kalmyks' attack on Trade Caravans was not settled totally. For example, in 1671, February 3, Russia Tsar Aleksey Mikhaylovich received envoy of Bukhara Mulla Farrukh. And Russia Tsar during the conversation among other significant questions mentioned about Russian citizens who were kidnapped by Kalmyks, and their return to their native country will serve to strengthen friendly relations between two countries [18, 533] Mulla Farrukh on the road back to Bukhara in 1671 March or May months stopped in Tobol'sk, and cause of raised fights among Kalmyks, decided to stay in Tobol'sk and wait caravan from Bukhara till the convenient moment would come [5, 66]. But he was died in 1672 in Tobol'sk long waiting for Kalmyks peace.

Here it should be mentioned that, envoy of Bukhara Hajji Farrukh who came to Moscow and Siberia after Mulla Farrukh in 1674, was Russian origin, had been taken captive by Kalmyks. He was born in Astrakhan, when he was 8, he and his father were taken captive and he was sent as a "gift" to Bukharan Khan by Kalmyks. He grew up in a palace and reached the status "*Topchiboshi*" (military official). Hajji Farrukh talked to the representative of Russia Tsar A.S. Matveev during their meeting about Nazarbek and Hajji Muhammad who were sent by Bukhara Khan Abdulaziz Khan to Russian Tsar as envoy in 1671. But they couldn't even reach the destination cause of Kalmyks attack and were made to come back to Bukhara.

And some group of Kazakhs who lived nomadically in the territory of deserts between Russia – Yaiq River (Ural) and Central Asia – Aral Sea, were considered as dangerous robbers for all Caravans Roads leading from Russia to the East. In 1731-1740 Kazakhs were accepted to Russian control and that fact gave possibility to provide the safety for Caravan Roads crossing through Kazakh territory. Later nomads' attacks lasted on Kazakh deserts. For example, in 1736 Russia Tsar decreed the development of trade in Orenburg, which meant to develop the trade with Tashkent. According to that decree there was sent a caravan to Tashkent in 1739. But, cause of being pillaged by robbers, the Caravan didn't reach Tashkent [5, 133]. Even there is a fact, that traders from Tashkent made complaint to Russia government, about insufficient organization of safety for Caravans by local "hokimiyat"- administrative government. And as a result 70 horses from caravan were snatched out by Kazakhs. Though those 70

horses were not returned to Caravan, the local government was ordered to protect the caravans from nomads' attack more stronger.

Beginning from the 40th years of the 18th century there was built fortresses in Orenburg (April 19, 1743), in Troitsk, in Petropavlovsk (1752) and in 1792 Russia Tsar issued the special decree about involving the soldiers during providing the safety of Caravans. And it was a significant deed in order to prevent the danger in Kazakh deserts. As given in data, there were kept 20 soldiers for that reason in Semipalatinsk fortress in that time. But such military groups accompanied the caravan till the definite places and then returned back. That's why that measure couldn't provide the total security of Caravans in wide and large deserts.

Orenburg General-governorship paid serious attention to that problem. For example, Orenburg General Governor G.S.Volkonskiy invited a group of Kazakh Aksakals (leaders) to Orenburg and presented 45 of them, and in return he obliged them to protect the Caravan from Orenburg to Bukhara [9, 59]. Despite of the organization accompanied defense of Caravans there were several attacks by Kazakhs to the Caravans of Russia, Khiva and Bukhara during 1810, 1811, 1812. As it is given in Orenburg State Archive dates, during 1821-22 cause of nomadic Kazakhs' frequent attack none of goods from Russia sent to Central Asia [9, 59].

Bukhara and Russia governments tried to solve the problem of fighting against robbers on Trade Roads as mutually beneficial task. For instance, Emir of Bukhara Haydar (1801-1826) in his letters [11, 289; 3, 646-647] (approximately between 1813-1816) to Russia Tsar Aleksandr the first and Orenburg general Governor G.S.Volkonskiy asked for a help to return Bukhara traders' property which were pillaged in Russia territory during French assault. And offered to settle robbery on the Caravan Roads together.

And even the local government of Siberia lines wrote letters [5, 98] to Kazakh sultans asking to protect Caravans from nomadic Kazakhs. This fact says that solving that problem attracted Kazakh sultans also. Sometimes such kind of letter played an important role while providing the safety of Caravans. For example, in 1828 Tartar traders with the help of such letter reached Tashkent in safe without any obstacles on the road.

In its turn the information about Kokand khan, who punished severely Kazakhs living around Chu River, shows that there were taken practical measures against robbers' attack in Kokand also. But nomadic attacks were not settled totally. For example during 1835, 1836-1839, 1846-1848 years the Caravans of both countries were robbed by Kazakhs. Georgian trader who was going to Semipalatinsk through Yarkent in 1799 Rafail Danibegashvili wrote in his travelogue about some groups of Kazakhs,

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Kirgizs, and Kalmyks who lived nomadically and busy with cattle rising in the steppe, as following: “... *It is very dangerous for travelers to meet with them, because they are busy with robbery*” [17, 37]. That’s why Russian traders being afraid of nomads’ attack, often traded with Central Asia through their Tartar or Central Asian friends.

In order to settle nomadic Kazakhs’ attacks on Trade Caravans, the Russian government took new measures: considering Kazakhs financial interests there were organized trade points where they could participate themselves actively. And in that territory there were built military fortresses. In 1847 for this purpose there was built Raim fortress in 60 verst far from Aral Sea.

Besides nomadic Kalmyks and Kazakh robbers on the Trade Roads between Central Asia and Russia there were Mangit (Nogay) tribes who also robbed the Caravans in steppes on the way to Astrakhan. For example, in the 16th century Seydi Ali Rais and his companions were in caravan which was returning from Central Asia to Istanbul. That Caravan went to direction of Astrakhan and reached Sarayjiq City. But on the way they met Hajjis and Turkish soldiers from Bukhara. They said that Russian soldiers captured Astrakhan and obstructed the road. Moreover, they heard that Mangit (Nogay) tribes were robbing the caravans mercilessly. As a result they were made to go back to Kharezm and chose the road through Khurasan and Iran. Seydi Ali wrote as following: “...*Mangit (Nogay) tribes leave for summer pastures in spring, and at that time the roads are peaceful and empty*” [19, 105-107]. It means that, Nogays who were busy with cattle breeding in Dashti Kipchak robbed the Caravans only in winter time, the Caravan Roads were not obstructed by them from spring till late autumn. That work also reflects such words: “*All the passengers wore sheepskins in order to cross Dashti Kipchak deserts. Because Mangits are so ill wicked sort of people, that seeing travelers worn other clothes, they suspect of them that they are Russian people. That’s why we have unwillingly such appearance*”. So then, in that time the robber Nogays also were serious danger for Caravans moved to this direction.

And now we will stop on some Turkmen tribes who used to robbery on the overcrowded roads which led to bottom flows of Volga River, from Central Asia to Iran, Turkey and Arabian countries and the measurements against them during the 16th - 17th centuries. Here it should be noted, that famous Historians P.P. Ivanov and A.K. Borovkov wrote that Iran, Bukhara and Khiva sources (from the point of their own benefit) mentioned about Turkmen people as they are “*robbers*”, “*pillagers*” and “*barbarous*” [6, 37]. That’s why most of modern researches continue to evaluate Turkmen people one-partly. The main reason of it, was that the territory belonging to Turkmen people was the place

which Iran, Bukhara and Khiva tried to seize. Certainly, these countries often attacked in order to conquer Turkmen’s territory and in their turn Turkmen people went on pillaging their trade caravans. No matter what was happened, the robber Turkmen people’s territory was not conquered by any of those countries and Turkmen robbers were still serious danger for Central Asian traders. Moreover, there is some information about not only robber Turkmen people but also some united groups used to steal on connecting roads the Safavid’s territory with Khurasan, Herat and Central Asia. In the 30-years of the 16th century Zayniddin Vasify wrote in his work a story from a man by name Abdurahmon Chalabiy who was going from Tabriz to Khurasan, and near Herat the caravan was pillaged by such thieves and he could hardly escaped the danger [4, 89].

Plundering the caravans by some Turkmen tribes, threat the peace of local people, made the irrigation systems out of order, and the trade roads fall into decay and international economic relations stopped for some time [2, 42]. In 1587-1628 Iran Shah Abbas I took several measures in order to provide the security of Caravan Roads, and fought mercilessly against the robbers [14, 8]. As a result the trade rose effectively and those years were the most developed period in the history of Iran.

In the early 18th century during Subkhanqli Khan Government of Bukhara, Nodir Divan Begi Turkmen ordered to his robber groups to attack Mahmud Bey Ataliq’s people who were going to suppress the rebellion in Badakhshan and to steal their property [12, 163]. Here it is seen that robber Turkmen people’s service was used sometimes for political opposed situations.

Bukhara rulers also tried to solve the problem of robber Turkmen with the help of special Diplomatic Relations. For example Bukhara ruler Amir Khaydar wrote a letter to Iran Shah Fatkhali Shah (1803-1884) several times and them by envoys. Those letters informed about the fact that Solur tribe of Turkmen who were subordinated to Iran, continued attacked the Trade Caravans and pillage their goods on the road with direction Bukhara- Iran. And the ruler invited Iran Padishah to fight against them together [13, 292]. He also mentioned about mutual interest of trade relations between two countries.

The problem of road security was seriously approached by Bukhara Khanate in the 2nd part of the 19th century. Particularly, there were built special near the road buildings – Rabot for guard groups in order to provide the safety of caravans on Khanate’s deserts without any people (Bukhara-Karshi-Kerki, Bukhara-Karmena-Samarkand, Chorjoy-Marv) [7, 297]. According to the data, 30 duty guard units under the supervision of special “Yuzbashi” (military official) who was set in Hajji Muborak place, protected region’s territory and Caravan Roads from



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Turkmen's attack. And every month they changed for new units came from Bukhara [15, 234]. This fact proves that Bukhara government paid serious attention to the defense of Caravans from Turkmen.

Iran Envoy who was sent to Bukhara in 1844 wrote in his travelogue that the robbery on Marv road reached its highest point and Solur and Sariq tribes of Turkmen were plundering the Caravans openly, and in order to stop such disorders even Bukhara government's measures were not of any use at all [1, 69]. It means that in the 2nd part of the 19th century the problem of robbery Turkmen still stayed as a problem requiring security measures.

This is proved by the information concerning the 2nd part of the 19th century about Caravans which were made to flee those territories which were under the control by robber Turkmen, such as Bozachi Rabot on Bukhara –Karshi Road, Rabatak place on Chorjuy-Marv Road [7, 298].

There were also volunteer guards groups formed from local people against robbers in some places of Bukhara which were often attacked by Turkmen robbers. This fact shows that Bukhara government couldn't completely protect the Caravans from nomadic Turkmen attack. That's why volunteer groups tried to fight against the robbers at least sparsely on trade roads. For example, Qoyliboy (late 19th century) came out from Mangit village of Karshi district and groups under Khurrambek's leadership always protected several villages and the Trade Roads crossed them from attack of the Turkmen [21]. Bukhara, Khiva and Iran governments couldn't totally solve the problem of robbers attack on the roads of this direction. Here, Captain Napira's information concerning 1874 about people in Deregez district located between Nishapur-Mashhad Road proves the fact. People of that district were made to build special tower in every area under plant to protect themselves from Turkmen's attack [16, 6]. Even local people had to work on the field carrying weapons.

In the middle of the 16th century Turkish traveler Seydi Ali Rais, who traveled through Caravan Roads connecting Central Asia and India, described the difficulties on the road as following: "On the road... if we say that the mountains and deserts we travelled are more complicated than Mecca and Jidda travels, there will be no lie. If Indian Sea will be inkpot and the forests of Sind district will be pencil, to describe in detail the difficulties we had during our travel, and if thousands secretaries will come together and they begin to write all the pains we had in the sea, they could hardly finish even the one of thousands; if hundreds of accountant begin to count the tortures we endured on the land, we can hardly believe that they will finish to count one part of the tenth" [19, 43]. It means that, as much difficult is sea hurricane

for the journey as dangerous are the disaster and barriers for the land roads.

When his Caravan reached Gujarat's capital Ahmadabad, local Muslims gave them two *Bots* (respected type of Indian people called "Bot", who take some little fee and forward traders and passengers safe and healthy with guarantee from one district to another) as a companion for their security. This was only the measure against the attack of Indian cavalry robbers called "Rajpoot". Because, according to Rajpoots faith to kill Bot or be a reason of Bot's death was a mortal sin. If Rajpoots attack any caravan with the representative from Bot tribe, Bots warn them and say them "We guarantee the safety of this caravan, if you damage them we will kill ourselves". If Caravan damaged or attacked, Bots really kill themselves. In that case, Rajpoot noblemen according to their faith, execute the robbers with their children and relatives. Being afraid of such punishment Rajpoots don't disturb Bots and Caravans they accompany [19, 68]. That's why taking advantage of this fact that Rajpoots can't harm in this territory, Bots made of it as a source of profit.

Beside of it, Heads of caravans with the aim to protect themselves organized friendly meetings with the heads of robber gangs. They took a letter of guarantee not to damage the caravan in return for gifts. For instance, the caravan with Seydi Ali Rais also had to do the same to be safe and free from robber Rajpoots' attack [19, 69].

Some groups of Afghan tribes also were considered as dangerous robbers for Caravans on the trade roads between Central Asia and India. In 1631 Mahmud Ibn Vali was returning from India to Central Asia with trade caravan. He wrote in his work about the fact that caravan was pillaged by robber Afghan tribe under head named Sher Khan on India and Afghan border in Pishing (Poshang) district and he and some passengers were captive by them [10, 274]. Earlier Sher Khan was set as an assistant in Pishang by Padishah Safi I. Before he was a head of gang with thousands of Afghan robbers and was busy with pillaging the Trade Caravans. But after being an assistant for Padishah he continued doing his work. In its turn Iran government took some measures to finish robber gangs. For example, basing on complaints against Sher Khan's doings, Iran Padishah Safi I demanded from Sher Khan evidences to prove his innocence. After realizing that he couldn't manage it, had to leave everything and escape to India.

From the given data we come to conclusion that, at that time the travelers kept going on their journey according to the information about the roads received from local people where they stopped. For instance, the Caravan with Seydi Ali Rais heard about Indian robbers in Sind, on Peshawar road they heard about the danger of Afghan tribes, in Badakhshan they heard about internal wars in Maverannahr, they heard

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about Dashti Kipchak nogays' danger and that Astrakhan was captured by Russia in Kharezm, they heard about the dangerous situation on Shirvan road from local people [19, 107] and chose the most safe direction that is Khorasan and Iraq road.

Conclusion

The most interesting thing is that, in most cases the Caravans took from the government a letter of guarantee for safety moving in every country or district they stopped. This was considered as a popular measure taken as a tradition in the 16th-19th centuries. For example, Seydi Ali Rais did the same. In order to protect the Caravan from Indian robbers' attack he received a guarantee letter about not damaging the Caravan from their noblemen in Sind. In Kharezm he wrote to the name of Mangit Mirzas, in Badakhshan (Taliqan) district he asked the ruler Suleymanshah to write to his brother-in-law Khatlan Governor Jahongir Alikhan about the help and provide the safety for Caravan. We can say that such kind of letters from the point of today's view served as a visa which gives right to enter and move safely in the territory of one country or district.

On the roads beginning from Central Asia through deserts and connecting East and West, besides nomadic robbers there were so many problems as the very hot weather in deserts, the attack of wild animals, lack of water, epidemic of infectious diseases and others which demand the safety measurements and were obstacle for the development of cultural, economic, and diplomatic relations of Central Asia with other countries. So can be material for special paper dedicated to this theme [21].

Concluding, we can say that as serious obstacle was the danger of robbers on Central Asian roads for the development of International Relations, so significant was the providing the Security on the roads. Cause of big economic profit of International Trade, the governments had to provide long lasting service of roads and guard the roads which crossed through waterless deserts and robbers place. And that interest helped not to stop the Cultural, Economic and Diplomatic Relations between people despite of multiple dangers.

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