

A.L.KUN'S DATA AS A HISTORICAL SOURCE FOR THE STUDY OF THE HISTORY OF THE PEOPLES OF THE SOUTHERN ARAL SEA REGION

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Abstract:

The Russian government's attempts to explore and study the Central Asian khanates began in the early 18th century, during the reign of Peter the Great, when the Khanate of Khiva became the object of Russia's close attention.

Introduction

The main purpose of Russia's intensified policy in Central Asia for Peter the Great was to secure a waterway (via the Caspian Sea and the Amu Darya River) to India for trade purposes. The concept of a waterway to India remained attractive in Russia's geopolitical plans for Central Asia for many years. As a consequence, various missions and embassies were sent to Central Asia, including the Southern Aral sea region, during the 18th-19th centuries.

Before the beginning of the Khiva campaign in 1873, the Russian Geographical Society instructed the secretary of the Archaeological Commission, Pyotr Ivanovich Lerkh, to draw up an instruction for the organisation of scientific work. This instruction, under the title "Questions proposed by the Imperial Russian Geographical Society in the study of the Khiva Khanate and neighbouring territories in geographical, ethnographic and cultural-historical respects", was published in St. Petersburg in 1873 and widely distributed among the participants of the Khiva campaign.

According to this instruction, the participants of the Turkestan detachment of the Khiva campaign under the leadership of orientalist Alexander Kun visited the Southern Aral sea region in July 1873.

Orientalist Alexander Ludvigovich Kun was born in 1840 in the family of a teacher. He was a mestizo by origin: his father was a Prussian from Memel, his mother was an Armenian from Tavriz. He received his primary education in a gymnasium in Stavropol province, then entered the Faculty of Oriental Languages of St. Petersburg University, which he graduated in 1865 with the degree of candidate in Arabic-Persian-Turkish. A.L. Kun began his career in 1866 as the chief of the chancellery of the Orenburg Governor-General's Office, and in November 1868 he moved to the Turkestan Governor-General's Office as an official at the disposal of the Governor-General. On 1 May 1874 he was appointed a senior official of special assignments on the educational part under the Governor-General of Turkestan. When the Directorate of Educational Institutions of the Turkestan Region was established in Tashkent, A.L.Kun became its first inspector. He stayed in this position from 1 January 1876 to 20 September 1882. During the years of service in Turkestan he was awarded the Order of St. Anne 3rd degree (1872), St. Stanislaus 3rd degree (1873), the medal "For the Khiva campaign" (1873) and the Order of St. Vladimir 4th degree swords (1874) [1].



In June-August 1873, A.L.Kun together with zoologist M.N.Bogdanov, botanist I.I.Krause, guide Mirza Abdurakhman travelled along the route: Kungrad, Kunya-Urgench, Khojeyli with its surroundings, Nukus and others. As a result of this trip, A.L.Kun published a number of articles in periodicals in 1873-1874, which contain very valuable information about the crafts, tax system, cities and population of the Southern Aral Sea region [2].

In particular, very useful data for the study of the history of the peoples of the Southern Aral sea region were made by A.L.Kun in the town of Kungrad. It should be noted that Kungrad is one of the ancient cities of the Southern Aral sea region, which has been the centre of political, cultural, religious and historical events for many times, as it has long been known as a link connecting the eastern countries with the western ones. Political and economic, trade and cultural relations of Russia, North Caucasus, South Uran with Khorezm, Bukhara, Samarkand and further passed through the territories of Kungrad.

A.L.Kun made records "Kungrad clans" and "Legend about Kungrad" in Kungrad. Based on these records, A.L.Kun assumes that the clan "Kungrat", which gave its name to the fortress and later to the city, received its name during the time of Saint Hakim-at from the red colour of horses, which abounded in their shoals and, in his opinion, the city of Kungrad appeared in the second half of the XVII century.

In his works, A.L.Kun describes the cities of the Southern Aral sea region. Among the sights of these cities A.L.Kun singles out mosques, which are an attribute of any Central Asian city and are considered an integral part of the architectural ensemble of the city. According to his statement, there were 2 mosques in Kungrad, 16 mosques in Khojeyli, 5 mosques in Mangit, and 7 mosques in Kipchak [3].

Also, according to A.L.Kun in 70th years of XIX century in Kungrad there were about 300 economic, 120 trading places and workshops, several maktabs. The bazaar in Kungrad, as in many cities of the khanate, was specialised, i.e. its territory was divided into separate parts, into smaller bazaars. Thus, a certain order was achieved in the items of trade. For example, there were separate rows or bazaars that specialised in selling clothes, foodstuffs, fruits and vegetables, stone, wooden and metal utensils, grain crops, cattle bazaar, etc. Between the shops there were also workshops: blacksmiths, bakeries, barbershops, as well as a teahouse. Wednesday and Sunday were bazaar days in Kungrad [4].

A.L.Kun's articles also reflect the tax system of the Khiva Khanate, which included the cities of the Southern Aral sea region. According to his data, it turns out that while all dekhkans of the Khiva Khanate paid the tax salgyt - money, depending on the size of the plot, the peoples of the Southern Aral sea region had to pay a conditional tax (salgyt-kesme), i.e. salgyt of a predetermined size, regardless of the size of the cultivated area and the amount of harvest. Thus, the residents of Kungrad paid 2000 tillas, the residents of Khojeyli paid 1184 tillas, and the right-bank Karakalpaks paid 20,000 tillas. The total collection from bazaars in the towns of Kungrad, Hazarasp and Chimbay was 4,800 tilya, in Kunya-Urgench and Khojeyli - 1,260 tilya [5].

Zyaket was levied both on the livestock of nomads constantly travelling in the khanate and those who were temporarily nomadic within the khanate, as well as on the herds of settled inhabitants and on livestock brought to the bazaars of the khanate. Cattle brought to bazaars for sale were charged 0.5 tenge per sheep, 2 tenge per camel and horse, and 1 tenge per horned cattle. The zyakat tax on cattle of the residents of Kungrad and its neighbourhood was 700 tillas, from the right-bank



Karakalpaks - 10444 tillas [6].

According to A.L. Kun, in the 19th century the towns of Kungrad, Chimbay, Klych-Kara and Khojeyli were famous for their fish markets. Large quantities of fish were sent from these towns to other towns of the Khiva Khanate. Besides, local fishermen not only provided the khanate with fish, but also exported it to neighbouring states. From Kungrad and Khojeyli, 50 to 200 boats of dried fish, mainly carp and catfish, were annually rafted upriver to Bukhara Khanate and transported from Bukhara to Samarkand, Karshi, Shakhrisabz and Gissar [7].

At the same time, other participants of this expedition M. Bogdanov and I.Krause also collected important information, in particular, about the occupations of the inhabitants of the Southern Aral sea region, hunting, fishing, fishing tools and other data, which were later published by him in the press [8].

Thus, the famous orientalist A.L.Kun made a great contribution to the study of the history and culture of Turkestan, and his rich and diverse information about the peoples of the Southern Aral sea region is invaluable for the study of the history and ethnography of his native land.

References

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