

The Kazakhs in the Muslim Rebellions of 1864-65

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Studies of the Muslim revolts against the Qing Empire, which occurred in northwest China in the 1860s, have focused on the Hui, or on the Taranchis (Uyghurs) and Dungans in Xinjiang (Kim 2004). However, we do not have much research exploring the involvement of nomadic peoples, like the Kazakhs (Qazaqs), Kyrgyz, and Kalmuks (Oyrats) in such activities. Analyzing the participation of the Kazakhs in the 1860s rebellions enables us to clarify the close relationship between the Xinjiang disturbances and border issues. At that moment in history, negotiations were conducted to decide the border between the Qing and Russian Empires in Central Asia, an area across which various peoples moved.

This paper analyzes Kazakh activities in Xinjiang in the 1860s and their relations with the Qing and Russian Empires. The evidence presented supports my argument that Kazakh migrations during the Muslim rebellions influenced relations between the Qing and Russian Empires, and especially their territorial negotiations and definition of a mutual border.

Background

The Kazakhs, whose khans had already sent envoys to Moscow since 1730, also sent delegations to Beijing beginning in 1757, thus establishing simultaneous diplomatic relations with both the Qing and Russian Empires. Elsewhere I pointed out the ambiguity of the Kazakhs' submission to the two empires (Noda 2005). A portion of the Kazakh pastures lay within the supposed border of the Qing government, covering the Balkhash watershed. Additionally, they were under the "tribute system" of the Qing Empire. The Qing government came to realize that "the Kazakhs had been claimed by both Qing and Russia" (*Chouban yiwu shimo* 1971: vol. 10, p. 52).

Kazakhs and Muslim Rebellions

With this historical background, we consider Kazakh activities in the 1860s. Both Russian and Chinese official documents reported that Kazakhs, as

Muslims, were sympathetic to the rebellions by fellow members of their faith, whose uprisings began in 1862 in China's Shanxi and Gansu Provinces (TsGARK, f. 44, op. 1, d. 38257, l. 27). "Muslim rebels struggled jointly with fellow members of their faith, the Russian Kazakhs" (*Chouban yiwu shimo* 1971: vol. 49, p. 28). The Kazakh nomads were principally concerned with the struggles in northern Xinjiang: the revolts at Ili (Kulja) from 1864 and at Tarbagatai (Chuguchak) from 1865.

Tavārikh-i khamsa-yi šarqī, a local Islamic source written by a Tatar mullah living in Tarbagatai (Xinjiang), gives us the most detailed description of Kazakh history in the region. This source narrates that many Kazakhs died as Islamic martyrs (*shahīd*) in the holy war (*ghazā*) (Qurbān 'Alī Khālidī 1910: 318, 324), allowing us to assume the rebellions also had the characteristics of a Kazakh "holy war."

Despite their religious identity as Muslims, Kazakhs did not appear to have an ethnic or national identity. Kazakh clan groups took part in the rebellions separately. For this reason, it is difficult to identify the Kazakh nation as a whole in the rebellions. To put it concretely, the Baijigit and Quzay groups moved to the Tarbagatai region, and the Suan and Alban groups left for Ili to join in battles. A sultan¹ of the Alban group, Tezek, kept in frequent contact with Dungans and Taranchis of Ili (TsGARK, f. 3, op. 1, d. 372, l. 34ob-35; Khafizova 2002). Meanwhile, the Kerey group led by Aji Sultan moved to the southwest of the Altay Mountains, and even supported the Qing authority and cooperated with its collaborator Kungajalsan (*Kungazhalasan*) from the Kalmuks (Kataoka 1986: 107).² This group, thereafter, continued to subject itself to Qing authority until the Revolution of 1911. The diversity of these movements confirms that each group primarily depended on decisions made by their respective group chiefs. Each group's

¹ "Sultan" or "tore" means a descendent of Chinggis Khan, and thus a member of the Kazakh khan's family.

² He is also called Chagan-gegen.

migrations are described in detail in memoirs by Russian officers G. Geins and Gutkovskii (TsGARK, f. 44, op. 1, d. 38257, l.2-34).

Kazakh Migrations and the Border Problem

As mentioned above, several Kazakh groups participated in the rebellions in northern Xinjiang. Importantly, at the same time, the Qing and Russian Empires were conducting negotiations about the region's border. The Chuguchak Protocol on the demarcation of the Russo-Chinese boundary (Skachkov and Miasnikov 1958: 46-49) was concluded on September 25, 1864, complementing the 1860 Treaty of Beijing.³ As a result, in the Tarbagatai and Ili regions, the new boundary ran along the line of the Chinese permanent outposts (*changzhu kalun*), which used to be located on the inner side. That is, the border was moved towards the east and Kazakh pastures were divided by the two Empires. Details were to be discussed in further negotiations. Notably the area around Lake Zaisan was transferred to Russia (Babkov 1912: 372).⁴ Additionally the fifth article of the 1860 Treaty provided that the subjecthood of people should be decided depending upon the state to which their lands belonged. For example, the Kazakhs who had had their pastures within Russian territory were supposed to become subjects of the Russian Empire.

Chinese documents published in *Chouban yiwu shimo* state that, since the beginning of the 1860s, Russians tended to cross the supposed boundary into Qing Empire territory. Russia had constructed the Kopal and Vernyi fortresses in the Semirechye region by 1854, arrayed troops close to Ili, and occupied Qing outposts. The Russian army occupied the Borokhujir Outpost near Solon cantonments in July 1864 (*Chouban yiwu shimo* 1971: vol. 28, p. 5). The Russian army was also advancing to the north, to the Chingistai Outpost under the direction of the general of Khobdo (Mongolia) (*Chouban yiwu shimo* 1971: vol. 16, p. 1). This Russian advance drove Kazakhs to Qing territory, while due to the disorder caused by the rebellions in Xinjiang, other Kazakhs fled from China to the Russian Empire. Regarding these migrations, the Russian bureaucrat and orientalist Aristov observed, "Russian authorities could not

possibly cut off relations between the Kazakhs of Ili and the Russian Kazakhs" (Aristov 2003a: 283). This means that, after the conclusion of the Protocol, Kazakhs in both Empires remained closely connected to each other and moved back and forth across the border. Such Kazakh migrations caused disturbances in the border area, particularly during the winter of 1864-65, when Russian troops temporarily withdrew from the border area around the Ili region. Russian local authorities attempted to keep the Kazakhs in Russia, within their own territory (Aristov 2003a: 279).

Several Kazakh groups whose sultans petitioned the Russian authorities moved to Russia and avoided the disorder in northwest China. For instance, in 1865, Buteke Sultan of the Quzay group complained to the Russian local administration that, after the battles between the Dungans and the Chinese, his group became uneasy and he had heard of the peaceful situation in the Russian Empire. For this reason, he decided to come to Russia (TsGARK, f. 15, op. 1, d. 153, l. 25ob.). In addition, Han Chinese and Mongols, like the Kalmuks and Torguts, often attacked Kazakhs, especially the Baijigit group, claiming that Kazakhs were responsible for the Muslim revolts in Xinjiang: in 1867, Kungajalsan Lama led a punitive expedition to exterminate Kazakhs following the order of the Qing Grand Councilor in charge of Outer Mongolian military affairs (*canzan dachen*) (*Chouban yiwu shimo* 1971: vol. 51, p. 3; TsGARK, f. 44, op. 1, d. 38257, l. 21). As a result, Kazakhs sought refuge from the Qing administration. The migrations of Kazakhs explain that they also recognized the newly drawn boundaries and the Russian territory. A request by the heads of the Baijigit group written in September 1865 contains the following text: "The agreement was concluded between the Russian and Chinese emperors, which provided that our summer and winter pastures belong to Russia" (TsGARK, f. 15, op. 1, d. 133, l. 2). The Russian general, probably G. A. Kolpakovskii, also believed that the Zaisan and Bakht areas and the Baijigit group were under Russian rule (*Chouban yiwu shimo* 1971: vol. 51, p. 1-2).

These circumstances required the Qing Empire to control Kazakh nomads according to the 1860 Treaty and 1864 Protocol. Otherwise, the local Qing administration could not demand that Kazakh criminals fleeing to Russian territory be returned to Qing, as provided for in the eighth article of the 1860 Treaty (Skachkov and Miasnikov 1958: 37). As an example of how the Qing Empire tried to

³ For the text in Chinese, see Yuan 1963.

⁴ Chinese scholars believe that the Russian movement towards the Zaisan region went against the Protocol (*Xinjiang shehui kexueyuan minzu yanjiusuo* 1980: 86).

maintain control over Kazakhs, the Qing government ordered Kazakh sultan Aji of the Kerey group to protect a hedge against the Russian invasion and overcome the temptations of Russia (*Chouban yiwu shimo* 1971: vol. 16, p. 22-23).

Russo-Chinese Relations and the Kazakhs

Aside from border conflicts, there were two other problems between the two empires. The first problem was that the Qing Empire requested Russian troops. The General of Ili (*Yili Jiangjun*) had repeatedly asked the local Russian administration for help, since the Ili fortress (*Huiyuan cheng*) was surrounded by Muslims during the rebellion in 1864. As the Russian scholar Moiseev has noted, up to that point, Russia's policy was not to intervene in the internal affairs of the Qing government (Moiseev 2003: 77-78). Thus, the Russian government refused its requests several times.

The second problem was the issue of Chinese emigrants fleeing into Russian territory (Aristov 2003b: 250; Moiseev 2003: 87-88).⁵ The emigrants primarily consisted of the Kalmuk, Sibo and Solon people, who, under attack by Muslim rebels, fled to Russia. The local Russian authority created committees to address this problem and negotiated with the Qing Empire's counterpart, the General of Ili, and the central government through the minister in Beijing. Because the Qing government regarded these emigrants as its subjects and had requested their return to the territory of Qing, negotiations focused on settling the costs of their accommodations and the return trip to China. In fact, many of the emigrants remained in Russia and some even converted to Russian Orthodox Christianity (TsGARK, f. 44, op. 1, d. 3, l. 278ob.).⁶ This process reinforced the Qing Empire's recognition of the boundary between the "Russian" and the "Chinese" territories. The recognition of the boundary determined by the Protocol of Tarbagatai was a gradual process. For instance, in the Tarbagatai and Khobdo regions, it would take three complementary

protocols signed between the two empires, to make the Protocol of Tarbagatai a reality.⁷

In conclusion, I draw attention to the following points: First, in this period, "Russian Kazakhs" and the "Qing (or Chinese) Kazakhs" were defined. In other words, Kazakh nomads were divided into two groups (Babkov 1912: 353). The Russian and Qing governments began to recognize the newly demarcated border mutually through their reactions to the 1860 Treaty and the 1864 Protocol, including managing the problem of Kazakhs migrating across the boundary. Paradoxically, the above-mentioned migrations of nomads (Kazakhs at the northern and Kalmuks and others at the southern boundary) helped to stabilize the border between Russia and the Qing Empire.

Second, the Muslim rebellions in Xinjiang, to which the Kazakhs' migrations were strongly related, marked the turning point of Russian policy towards Chinese Turkestan. After the formation of the Turkestan Governor-Generalship in 1867, the border problem was transferred to the Governor-Generalship's domain (TsGARK, f. 44, op. 1, d. 3, l. 278ob.) and management began to reflect the intention of Tashkent. Gaining a foothold in the disorder of Xinjiang, Russia, in rivalry with Great Britain for influence in this region, attempted to intrude actively into the internal affairs of the Qing Empire. There is no doubt that this resulted in the Russian occupation of the Ili region in 1871. Thus, when researching the history of this region at that time, we cannot ignore the activities of such nomads as Kazakhs and the role of the Russian Empire behind them.

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⁵ Paine seems to describe this incident from the Russian viewpoint (1996: 119).

⁶ In Modern China there is a critical perspective to the effect that emigrants suffered from Russian mistreatments (Xinjiang shehui kexueyuan minzu yanjiusuo 1980: 87); however, the emigrants petitioned to remain within Russia (TsGARK: f. 22, op. 1, d. 52, l.42).

⁷ The Uliasutai and Khobdo Protocols in 1869, the Second Tarbagatai Protocol in 1870.

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Allegiance to Tsar and Allah: Crimean Tatars in the Russian Empire, 1783-1853

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This paper explores the question of whether or not a Muslim could be accepted as a loyal subject of the Russian Empire, particularly in the southern borderlands, where the Romanov and Ottoman empires struggled for dominance in the Black Sea region and the Caucasus. The central theme of the paper is the tension between religious and political

identity. Based on the nature of the sources, it focuses less on establishing whether the Crimeans were in fact loyal to the Russian sovereign — or to the tenets of Islam, for that matter — than on the way their actions and words were interpreted by Russian officials in Tavrida province (i.e., Crimea and adjoining territories).