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DESCRIPTION OF CENTRAL ASIAN CITIES IN THE SOURCES OF TURKISH AUTHORS

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses description of Central Asian Cities in the sources of Turkish Authors. The author notes that the largest, populous, trading city after Khiva is New Urganch. It even gives information that it is ahead of Khiva in terms of the development of trade, and trade caravans are constantly passing from the cities of Orenburg and Bukhara.

KEYWORDS

Description of Central Asian Cities, Turkish Authors, Khiva, New Urganch, development of trade, Orenburg and Bukhara.

INTRODUCTION

Information about the history of political, economic and cultural relations between the Central Asian khanates and the Ottoman state has reached us through a series of memoirs, travelogues, and scientific studies. One of them is “Mirotul Mamolik” (Mirror of Countries) by Seydi Ali Rais and “Journey from Istanbul to Central Asia” by Mehmed Amin Efandi. In these works, the authors provide valuable information about

the cities of Samarkand and Khiva, which are of great importance on the Great Silk Road.

Mahmud Amin Efandi’s “Journey from Istanbul to Central Asia” was published in Istanbul in 1295 AH (1878 AD). Mehmed Amin Efandi was originally from Central Asia and left Istanbul in 1295 AH (1878 AD) to travel to his native land. A tourist coming through the Black Sea first comes to the Caucasus and then to Central Asia.

The author writes down valuable information during his travels to the Khanate of Khiva.

The main findings and results

The author notes that the largest, populous, trading city after Khiva is New Urganch. It even gives information that it is ahead of Khiva in terms of the development of trade, and trade caravans are constantly passing from the cities of Orenburg and Bukhara. At this time, Urganch merchants had trading partners in famous cities such as Orenburg and Moscow, as well as in the countries of Iran and India. Each merchant had his own special seals.

In New Urganch, houses are built very big. Each house has a shop and storerooms. Also, each house has its own mills. It is occasionally walked with a horse or a donkey.

Seydi Ali Rais is a Turkish author who lived and created in the 16th century. He arrived in Central Asia under the name “Kotibi Rumi”. Seydi Ali Rais is also the author of the work “Environment” on geography [10]. He also translated Ali Kushchi’s works into Turkish.

Seydi Ali Rais is the founder, theoretician and famous Turkish admiral of the navy of the Ottoman state. In 1548, he participated in the military campaigns of the Ottoman sultan Sultan Suleyman the Righteous (1520-1566) to Iran, and in 1552, he participated in the battles of Cyprus. Due to the great military skills Seydi Ali Rais showed in these battles, he deserved the immense respect of Sultan Suleiman the Righteous, and later he was appointed as the Sultan of Aleppo [6, P. 82].

Seydi Ali Rais was appointed commander of Egypt and sent to fight the Portuguese fleet in the Suez Canal. But the Turkish fleet was defeated in the battle and went to North India with the remaining ships. Seydi Ali Rais was in India and met Humayun Mirza, the son of

Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur [5, P. 185]. Seydi Ali Rais traveled through Sindh, Punjab, Afghanistan, Central Asia, Khorasan, Azerbaijan and Iran, after four years of hardships, he reached his homeland in 1556 and wrote the work “Mir’atul Mamolik”.

Seydi Ali Rais writes about his arrival in 1555 to Choganiyan, over the Sangardak mountain to Shahrizabz, and then to Samarkand in the section of his work “The description of the events that happened in the land of Turan, i.e. Mowaraunnahr”. The author points out that on Sangardak mountain, drops of water fall continuously as if it were raining and it forms a big stream.

He also meets Navroz Ahmad Khan (Baraq Khan) and presents his gifts. Navroz Ahmad Khan gives him a horse as a gift. Navroz Ahmad Khan tells Seydi Ali Rais that the Ottoman sultan, Sultan Suleyman the Righteous, has sent some archers and cannons.

Seydi Ali Rais also talks about the political situation in the country, the death of Abdulatif Khan, the struggle for the throne of Bukhara, the capture of Samarkand, Shahrizabz, Bukhara by Navroz Ahmad Khan, and the death of several leaders of Turkish soldiers in the battle in Shahrizabz. When Navroz Ahmad Khan returned to Samarkand, part of the Turkish soldiers returned to Rum with Ahmad Chovush. Some of the remaining janissaries (Turkish soldiers) remained in Bukhara, and about one hundred and fifty remained with Navroz Ahmad Khan [11, B. 97-106]. Initially, there were three hundred Turkish soldiers with Navroz Ahmad Khan [4, P. 29; 6, P. 34].

In 1551, Sultan Suleyman sent a certain number of archers and horsemen to Abdulatif Khan the Lawful through Ahmad Chovush [1, P. 82]. When they arrived, Navroz Ahmad Khan was ruling the country. When Navroz Ahmad Khan gained power, he sent an

ambassador to Sultan Suleiman Qonuni informing him that Abdulatif Khan (1540-1551) had died and that 300 archers, artillerymen and cavalry had arrived from Istanbul.

Novroz Ahmad Khan allows Seydi Ali Rais to leave and sends with him Sadri Olam Sheikh, a descendant of Ahmad Yassavi, as an ambassador. Later in 1556, Navroz Ahmad Khan wrote about the capture of Bukhara in a letter sent by his ambassador Qutlug Polat and asked for help to march against the Safavids [7, P. 530]. But the Ottoman state says it cannot help because it signed the Treaty of Amasia with the Safavids in 1551. The Ottoman sultan declared that he was against it even if the Safavids were to attack Central Asia. Iranian-Ottoman relations remained friendly until the death of Shah Tahmasp (1525-1576).

Seydi Ali Rais writes that he saw an old copy of the Qur'an in Samarkand. He visits the graves of Abu Mansur Motrudi, Shahi Zinda, and Khoja Ahror in Samarkand. After crossing the Zarafshan river to Karmana, he comes to Gijduvan, and after visiting the grave of Abdukholiq Gijduvani, he comes to the city of Bukhara. He will spend fifteen days in Bukhara visiting the graves of Bahavuddin Naqshbandi, Chorbakr, Sayid Mirkulol, Ismail Somani, Hazrat Ayyub, and in Khorezm Pahlavon Mahmud, Najmuddin Kubro, and Zamakhshari. Mehmed Amin Efandi's "Journey from Istanbul to Central Asia" was published in Istanbul in 1878. It was published for the second time by Riza Akdemir in Ankara in 1986.

Mehmed Amin Efandi left Istanbul in 1877 to travel. A tourist coming through the Black Sea first comes to the Caucasus and then to Central Asia. From the author's book, we can know that it was in many European countries.

The author describes Khorezm as a city known for its beauty and wealth. The tourist writes that he started his new day by seeing the high and famous minarets and tombs of Ancient Urganch. "On the way to Ancient Urganch, one of the passengers gave me his horse. I was on the road for 25 days. He felt sorry for me. In this case, I felt like I was walking in the rich and luxurious Khorezm during the reign of Sultan Mahmud Jaloluddin Khorezmshah" [3, P. 113].

Mehmed Amin Efandi writes that Khiva carpets represent themselves as examples of fine art all over the world. In the XIX century, striped gold and silver patterned pieces, satin, adras and products made from them, coracle leather, and carpets made in Bukhara and Khiva could be found in the markets of Iran, Turkey, and China [9, P. 51].

The tourist will be a guest in one of the apartments in Ancient Urganch. About this, he said that "these people were open-handed people to such an extent that no other people in the world can show the honor and respect they show to their guests [3, P. 123]" he writes. He insists that a sheep was slaughtered in his honor, that he chose the best melons and put them on the table, that Khiva does not know not only coffee, but also its name, and tea imported from India is drunk. During this period, Palampur blue tea, Bombay and Calcutta black teas were brought from India to Central Asia [7, P. 191]. During this period, wheat, rye, and sesame were planted a lot in Khiva. People mainly used sesame oil. The mulberry tree, which is the main food of the silkworm, is also widely planted. Khiva watermelon, soap was very popular in the review countries. One Khiva watermelon was sold in the markets of Baghdad for 700 dirhams [4, P. 91-92].

The author notes that Urganch is the largest and most populous city of Khiva Khanate after Khiva. Trade caravans regularly traveled from Orenburg and

Bukhara to Urganch, city merchants had many trade partners in famous cities such as Orenburg, Moscow, Iran, and India. The connections of Central Asia with Iran were carried out by Marv and Mashhad or Khiva-Mashhad road passing along the Caspian Sea. Since the Mashhad-Marv road was dangerous, pilgrims from Central Asia preferred the long, but safe route through Orenburg-Astrakhan-Turkey on their way to Mecca. Astrakhan has long been a convenient trade center in foreign economic relations of Khiva. They went to Astrakhan through the desert to Khiva, from there to Mangishlaq, and went on ships to the Caspian 28, P. 165-166.

Mehmed Amin Efandi said that horses were given great importance in Khiva, nicknamed “Kitne Togas”, their price is one hundred gold (two hundred and fifty lira) he saw a horse, he writes that he was surprised to see that horses are so expensive. In Istanbul during this period, the most valuable horses were sold for fifteen or twenty liras. Khiva writes that Kazakh and Yabu horses are not like Istanbul horses, they are hardy and fast even though they are small.

Mehmed Amin Efandi also met Khiva Khan Muhammad Rahim Khan II (1865-1910). He said about Khan Khiva: “He is tall, healthy, well-built, handsome, dignified. “He is a king with an open hand, there is no fault in his respect for the scholars”. Muhammad Rahim Khan II and Mehmed Amin Efandi talk about the political situation in the world, technical inventions. The author notes that there were sixteen mosques and two madrasahs in Khiva at that time 3, P. 121. The houses are built of bricks in the Baghdadi style, and the doors and walls of the house are decorated with exquisite carvings.

At the end of Mehmed Amin Efandi’s work, he writes that he went to Tashkent, Kokand and Kashgar in addition to Khiva, passed through Afghanistan to India,

and then returned to Istanbul. The author says that he will provide detailed information about the details of these trips in his next book.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Seydi Ali Rais’s “Mir’otul Mamolik” and Mehmed Amin Efandi’s “Travel from Istanbul to Central Asia” are important sources that provide valuable information about political, economic, diplomatic relations, geographical, ethnographic, caravan and communication routes related to the history of Central Asia in the XVI-XIX centuries.

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