

MILITARY-STRATEGIC GOALS OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE ON THE AMU DARYA

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Annotation: This article covers the issues of studying the waterways of Central Asia of the Russian Empire, sending traders, ambassadors, spies to the region, who were entrusted with studying the possibility of using the waterways of the Amu Darya, strengthening Russian-English competition in Central Asia in the 20-30s of the 19th century, and also issues of increasing the military-strategic status of the Amu Darya.

Key words: Amudarya, waterway, crossings, Amudarya flotilla, customs points, trade, transportation, trade and transit communications.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern era of globalization, the integration of regions and countries cannot be imagined without networks of transport and communication systems, trade and transit connections. According to the effectiveness of projects implemented in New Uzbekistan, the waterways and crossings of the Amu Darya, which are of great strategic importance for the region, not only in the history of Central Asia, but also in the history of Uzbekistan, are the main means of communication between peoples, as well as an important issue of special significance for the study of problems in trade and transit relations. Especially "... since ancient times, the Great Silk Road, according to the geostrategic location of Central Asia, located on the Great Indian Trade Routes, has remained for thousands of years at the center of important processes on a global scale. Our region served as a kind of bridge connecting Europe, the Middle East, South and East Asia" [1, p.38]. In this regard, at the beginning of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the study of shipbuilding, navigation of water transport, logistics and services, as well as internal and external trade and transit connections in the Amu Darya remains one of the most pressing problems in the history of the region.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The article studies military-strategic goals of the Russian empire on the Amu Darya in the late XIX - early XX centuries based on the principles of generally accepted historical methods - historical, comparative and logical analysis, consistency, objectivity.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Since ancient times, the Amudarya River has served as a cradle in the economic way of life and joint relations of the peoples of Central Asia; it is clear from history that rivers have long been considered a unifying means, and were never considered an obstacle separating the peoples of the two coasts [2, p . 23-27]. Therefore, one people lived on both banks of the Amu Darya, between whom there were constant connections. The Amudarya, like other large rivers in the region, was formed in the second half of the Tertiary period, approximately 22 thousand years ago, that is, at the end of the Holocene period. Around the beginning of the first millennium, the formation of the current Amu Darya basin was completed [3, p.19-23 .].

The banks and bottom of the Amu Darya were unstable, which is why the shore was sandy, and the river bed changed frequently. Vessels built according to certain requirements could sail a distance of 1400 versts, this is approximately the confluence of the Kukcha River - the place of the depression in the Amu Darya to the Aral Sea (if you count to the northern part of the Aral Sea - this was 1750 versts) [4, p.596] . At a distance of 402 miles of the Amu Darya, flowing through the Bukhara Emirate, steamship traffic was established [5, p.228]. The choice of crossings across the river depended on narrow and convenient natural crossings across the river, from the nearest settlements, and transit trade routes passing along the oasis.

The Russian ambassador N.Muravyov, who visited Khiva in 1819, distinguished the strategic importance of the Amu Darya waterway in his thoughts and put forward the idea of conquering the Khiva Khanate and commented: "If Khiva were in our hands, then thanks to the Amu Darya trade ties would appear between Russia and India. All the wealth of Central and East Asia would pass into the hands of Russia, and the will of Peter I would come true" [6]. Starting from the 20-30s of the 19th century, due to Anglo-Russian rivalry, Great Britain also began sending special missions and expeditions through India. Initially, the English mission under the leadership of A. Borns, sent in 1831-33 to Kabul and Bukhara, was given the task of opening a new trade route from India along the Indian River to Central Asia in order to deliver English goods along the river. A. Borns' thoughts on the Amu Darya waterway were considered important information for that time: "The local population uses the Amu Darya much less than its capabilities, there are only 200 ships on the river, to increase trade opportunities across the river. It is necessary to build a whole flotilla, the river can be used for commercial, and most of all for military purposes" [7, 8]. These data will further increase the economic and geostrategic importance in the region, thereby further increasing the interest of Russian ruling circles in the Amu Darya.

In the 40-50s of the 19th century, the political and economic importance of the Amu Darya in the region increased even more, and for the ruling circles of Russia this became one of the most important tasks. This goal was also the focus of attention of the head of the diplomatic mission, Colonel N. Ignatiev, who was sent to Khiva and Bukhara in 1858 [9, p . 30, 135, 214].

The development of internal and external relations in Central Asia, the continuous movement of caravans, were directly related to the Amu Darya and the trade routes that passed through it. The military of the Russian Empire, drawing attention to the fact that many British goods, produced not only in Afghanistan, but also in India, came through the Bukhara Emirate, began to take anti-measures. In particular, special attention is paid to improving trade routes. In addition, after the establishment of the Russian Empire in Central Asia, the demand for cotton, which was considered an important raw material for industrial needs, increased. Therefore, there is increasing emphasis on expanding and speeding up trade routes. First of all, they tried to use

waterways as much as possible. First, robberies on waterways occurred less frequently than on land. Secondly, transporting goods by waterways was relatively cheap [10, p .331]. Due to the above factors, the Russian Empire paid serious attention to the waterways in the oasis.

Russian military officer A.I. Glukhovsky expressed his opinion “The entire Amu Darya basin must be kept from the influence of England, and cotton raw materials, as an important source, these territories must be brought under Russian control” [11, p.27], which sets out the true goal of the policy of the Russian Empire in the region. After the Russian Empire established a protectorate over the Bukhara Emirate and the Khanate of Khiva, the treaties signed (in 1873) practically from a legal point of view strengthened the authority to use the Amu Darya by Russian shipping.

After the khanates of the region became vassals of the Russian Empire, work on the study of the Amu Darya was somewhat revived. In particular, work was carried out to study shipping traffic along the Amu Darya. The final positive decision to use the Amu Darya as a means of water communication is associated with the expedition of the Admiral of the Russian Imperial Navy Baturin. As a result of hydrogeographic observations of the upper reaches of the Amu Darya and the lower reaches of the Pyanj rivers, Baturin made the following conclusion: “The Amu Darya and Pyanj rivers are completely suitable for flat-bottomed vessels from April 1 to November. If in November-March (over five months) the water level is more than 2.5 feet, then within a year the ship can sail from Kerki to Fayzabad-kala” [12]. This expedition confirms that the Amu Darya and lower Pyanj can be used as a means of complete water communication.

One of the true goals of the policy pursued by the Russian aggressive empire is to establish the supremacy of its interests in the Amu Darya. In accordance with the law adopted on July 6, 1894, with the establishment of Russian customs points at the Amu Darya crossings, trade and transit ties of the region with Afghanistan, Iran, and India were subordinated to the interests of the ruling circles of the empire.

On November 13, 1887, the Amudarya military flotilla was created to meet the vital needs of the garrisons in Termez and Kerki, to transport troops, government and personal cargo and passengers between Petro-Alexandrovsk (the present city of Turtkul) , Termez, Kerki, and Charjou [13]. In this regard, in order to prevent the entry of contraband through the control customs posts of the Amu Darya, the flotilla was tasked with studying the control strip with Afghanistan.

When the military flotilla began its activities, steamships and barges called “Tsar” and “Tsaritsa” transported cargo of up to 600 thousand pounds every year. In 1887-1899, the flotilla expanded somewhat; large and small steamships and boats began to move in the Amu Darya. This was also carried out for military purposes and to develop trade. By 1895, the Russian flotilla of the Amu Darya included the steamship "Tsesarevich", in 1897 - "Velikiy knyaz", 1899 - "Velikaya knyajna Olga", in 1901 the steamship "Emperor Nicholas II" was added. In 1904-1905, the flotilla included 6 steamships, 13 iron barges, 1 steam launch and 2 iron boats , the total price of which was 1,342,039 rubles 45 kopecks [14, p.86 .].

The flotilla satisfied the needs of a military institution, in which the share of their transportation was in large numbers, while the share of passenger transportation was not very large. In 1910, passenger and freight revenues from withholdings, the annual provision amounted to 450 thousand rubles. With such activities, the flotilla worked to the detriment of the treasury 300 thousand rubles a year, and over the 23-year navigation period this loss amounted to a total of 10

million rubles [15]. But if the amount of transportation of government cargo and military passengers, as well as the benefits from transportation on the flotilla's personal boats and from the activities of the security service on the Afghan border were translated into money, then the flotilla would undoubtedly fully cover its expenses.

Despite the fact that the Amudarya flotilla was created for military purposes, its significance in the development of regional transit and trade relations cannot be denied. For example, in the directions Chardzhou - Petro- Alexandrovsk, Petro-Alexandrovsk - Khiva - Chardzhou - Termez, Chardzhou-Kerki - Termez - Saray, it had a positive impact on the development of regional connections in steamship navigation.

CONCLUSION

The main goal of studying the waterways of the Russian Empire was to expand trade relations with the Eastern states, access to the Indian Ocean through the waterways of Central Asia, the mastery of underground and above-ground wealth in the khanates, in particular, the establishment of a cotton monopoly. That is why the waterways of the Amu Darya were deeply studied by Russian scientists. The Amudarya Flotilla, created for military purposes, played an important role in the development of transit and trade relations. The Amudarya flotilla is considered a convenient means of communication; military garrisons, customs and border checkpoints, and cargo transported by boats accounted for 1/4 of the total cargo turnover of the Amudarya.

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