



Capture of the Imam Shamil and the end of Muridism

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Abstract

In the 19th century, the strengthening of sufism in the North Caucasus united various Caucasian sub-ethnic groups, and muridism gave them the idea of independence. The struggle of the North Caucasians against the Russian Empire lasted from 1817- to 1864; and in this battle, a worthy opponent, Imam Shamil, stood out from the highlanders. Shamil knew that only the wise government of the people could be a solid foundation for the successful conduct of the war. He was able to unite the mountain population and manage it with a properly organized and firm administration. The highlanders under his command comprised one military rank, in which muridism played an important role.

This article has processed and presented two documents found in the National Archives of Georgia, which describe in detail the capture of Shamil the end of Muridism and specific facts revealed during the captivity of the imam, which brought the victory of the Russian Empire.

Keywords: North Caucasus; Muridism; Russian Empire; Imam Shamil.

Introduction

The various sub-ethnic groups of the Caucasus were brought together in the 19th century by Sufism, which grew in the North Caucasus, while Muridism inspired in them the idea of independence. The Caucasian mountaineers were totally obsessed with this idea, which made them absolutely incapable of rational thinking. They were deeply devoted to their birthplace and valued their country's independence above everything else. At the same time, war, raids and robbery were the cornerstones of their existence, and in the event of even the slightest offense they defended their honor with bullets and daggers. ((pondi-1087, aghts'era-1, sakme-307 p. 26).

Methods

In the research, archival documents are used, which allows us to present new views on the processes that took place in the North Caucasus in the 19th century, and we rely on the method of comparative analysis.

Results

It is widely known that the driving force behind the ideology of Imam Shamil's irreconcilable struggle against the Russian Empire was muridism. Archival documents prove that Sufism originated in the mountains even before the liberation struggle, which was reflected in their combat skills, organization, tactics and battle strategy, and cohesion. Imam Shamil used precisely this factor and developed it during the fight against the Russian Empire.

In the conquest war of the Russian Empire, each of its military or diplomatic actions was based on the complete and timely possession of accurate information. The Russian Empire's action was based on a correct analysis of current or expected events.

Discussion

Regarding the Russian Empire's war of conquest in the North Caucasus in the 19th century, in order to compare the potential of the

parties involved, it is crucial to bear in mind two things: first, what Frederick the Great [King of Prussia Frederick II, 1740–1772] said about Russians based on his own experience (pondi-1087, aghts'era-1, sakme-353 p. 28) : "They can be defeated, but it is impossible to win", and, on the other hand, the North Caucasians are quite difficult to defeat in an unfair battle because of their fighting mentality, ideology, fighting skills and, most importantly, their unique love for the homeland and freedom. In this regard, the paper examines two archival documents through which the above is analyzed.

An abridged version of the archival document (pondi-1087; aghts'era - 1; dok'ument'i-335) is given as follows: "Ghunib!... This name brings together so many memories of Caucasian elders!... Ghunib signifies the end of Muridism, this is the finale of a bloody rhapsody. For thirty-seven years, the impenetrable forests of Dagestan were filled with the continuous roar of war and the sound of weapons. Here, in Ghunib, the last words of the Caucasian imams were uttered, words that finally shook the heavy chain of Muridism for the people. Ghunib is the grave of Gazavat, just as the village of Kurin was his birthplace and Gimri its cradle.

On August 10, 1859, Russian troops besieged Ghunib: Major General Tarkhan-Mouravi's detachment was positioned in the north; in the east was Colonel Kononovich, in the south - Colonel Radetsky, and in the west is Colonel Tergukasov. The main reserve was positioned atop the Keger heights, from which the commander-in-chief could observe the movements of all Russian columns in the event of an attack, as the whole area of Ghunib was open and clearly visible from these heights. To avoid unnecessary bloodshed, the commander-in-chief decided to start negotiations first and entrusted them to Colonel Lazarev the well-known in Daghestan, who was very popular among the highlanders. On August 19, Lazarev had a meeting with the sons of the imam and explained to them the pointlessness of further resistance, advised them to surrender and accept the offer of the

commander-in-chief. He allowed Shamil, his entire family and suite to freely leave Russia for Mecca. However, Shamil did not think to submit so soon. Hearing what Lazarev said, he calmly replied: May the will of Allah's will be done. Ghunib is a high mountain. I am on the mountain. God is higher than me; The Russians are down: let them attack!".

After capturing Ghunib, Shamil presumably believed that the unreachable peak would probably put a temporary stop to the Russian army's victories-winter would arrive, the snow would melt, communications would cease in mountainous Daghestan, and the Russians would be forced to leave the mountains. "However, the few days that they spent in Ghunib gave Shamil time to reflect thoroughly on his desperate situation. He was aware that Dagestan, with the exception of Ghunib, had already entirely submitted to the Russians with all the villages, where all that was left of Muridism had unified. However, gradually, he realized that his days of ruling were over.

On August 21, he himself made an attempt to resume negotiations. Shamil was told that the only thing that could stop the bloodshed was his complete surrender. In response, he wrote "Shamil cannot accept the offer, there is God in heaven, and in Ghunib his believing Muslims, swords are in their hands for the Divine Ghazavat (jihad)."

With this, the negotiations came to an end, and Ghunib was besieged by Russian forces. On August 24, Prince Tarkhan-Mouravi's column occupied the gardens on the northern side of Ghunib for battle, and another column, under the command of Colonel Kononivich, climbed from the Kara-Kois bed and deployed riflemen on the hill, looking for a place to deploy the cannons.

It was intended to establish a bridgehead for these two columns on the night of the 24th to the 25th, but the army that entered the battle continued to advance without stopping. At night, Prince Tarkhanov's column launched a fictitious attack, which forced the

murids to throw down they had already prepared. The sound of stones falling from the rock buzzed through the mountain for two hours. When the stone rain stopped, Tarkhanov started to move the column. A short while ago, a number of hunters from Colonel Tergokasov's column made use of the pitch-black night to climb Ghunib's highest peak and investigate potential entry points to the mountain's most inaccessible side using ropes. The hunters started climbing through the experienced braves and the battalion as a whole followed suit. Following the courageous soldiers, the hunters started ascending, and eventually the entire battalion.

The battalion of the Apsheron regiment, under the personal command of Tergukasov, was the first to ascend Ghunibsh. Its appearance decided the fate of Ghunib. The Murids, after the shocking message that the Russians were already on the mountain, attacked the Absheronites from all directions and thereby allowed Prince Tarkhanov's column to ascend Gunib without firing a single shot... Together with Tarkhanov, the 2nd battalion of Shirvan (from Kononovich) under the command of Major Stange moved to the defensive wall erected in the eastern part of Ghunib, and after hand-to-hand combat, Shamil's last bastion was captured.

It was midday when the commander-in-chief with his army approached Ghunib and stopped in a birch alley, half a mile from the aul, where Shamil was fortified with the last company of murids. There were 14 battalions standing around the village like a wall, waiting only for the leader's command to go on the attack. At this time, a white flag flashed on one of the huts. Prince Baryatinsky immediately ordered a ceasefire and sent Colonel Lazarev to the village, demanding Shamil's unconditional surrender.

On a little square in front of the aul, Lazarev encountered armed murids, one of whom was a tall man on a gray horse with a gloomy expression. In a commanding posture, it was not difficult to recognize Shamil. Lazarev greeted the murids with the usual oriental greeting,

and without revealing that he recognized the fierce ruler of Daghestan, he asked them to show him Shamil. All the world is known of your valor, and as long as the mountains stand its glory will not be extinguished. When this was done, he approached the imam with trepidation, and after a short but rather heavy silence said: - "Shamil! The whole world knows about your valor, and as long as the mountains stand your glory will not fade". Submit to the will of destiny and trust in Sovereign-Emperor's patience. By doing this, you will save from perdition thousands of people who have remained faithful to you in the worst of difficulties. These people are not just fighters but also civilians, their blind and boundless loyalty deserves this sacrifice from you. Demonstrate that you are great, both in joy and in trouble, and you can accept God's will without complaint.

If it wasn't for Ghunib, Shamil would have been alone with the murids, and maybe he would have decided to fall down with a weapon, protect the remaining loyal aul, but the future of the family would have been doomed in case of his stubbornness. Old Shamil really had something to think about! It was obvious that his entire worldview was called into question, which drove him to battle, one that compelled him to fight the unbelievers to his last breath, as well as his strong bond with numerous family who accompanied him in Ghunib. The latter gain an advantage.

Thus, the fierce ruler of the mountains, the imam of Chechnya and Dagestan, Akhulgo, forest Ichkeria and Dargo, after 30 years of brave defense, was going to put an end to the bloody battle by laying down his arms in front of the winner. It is clear what emotions filled the soul of a soldier fighting in the Caucasus while watching this scene. As soon as Shamil appeared, he was recognized by his tall white turban, - a victorious, uncontrollable "hurray" was heard! He sniffed the air and moved from battalion to battalion with a roar. This sudden excitement almost spoiled the matter, because the confused imam suddenly turned his horse, and only the wise Lazarev, who explained

to him that with this cry the troops pay a deserved tribute, calmed him down, and he decided to continue on his way.

It was precisely three o'clock in the afternoon when Shamil got off from his horse, put one hand on Satevar's saddle, and the other leaned on Gorda, and stopped right in front of Prince Baryatinsky. He was indeed surrounded by only one retinue. Present here were the chief of the main staff, Adjutant General Miliutin, and the most prominent figures of the Caucasian War: Count Evdokimov, Baron Wrangel, Kessler, Prince Mirsky, Tarkhan-Mouravi and Baron Nikolai. Several adjutants and princely officers stood here. The moment when Shamil stopped in front of Count Baryatinsky was truly solemn! All eyes were directed towards the imam, whose face was marked with deep spiritual sorrow. He wore a long chokha, sewn with simple straps, and a green beshmet. On the legs were cheviaks, red tarsicon shin guards, and on the head was a white marmash shawl, the long ends of which were thrown over the back. In addition to Satevari and Gorda, he also had two pistols: one in his holster, the other in his belt. He expected to be asked the question, "A Rao Donghuz (pig), where is your Gorda, which you offered me to take?" And if such was the case, he made a firm decision to disarm himself with a sateru to avoid further humiliation. Of course, nothing of the kind happened, and the speech addressed by Count Baryatinsky to Shamil was so short and dignified that it made a deep impression on everyone around. Baryatinsky said: "Shamil, you did not accept the terms I offered you, and you did not want to come to the camp with me. This time I came. You yourself wanted the fighters to decide the matter, and I decided in your favor. Now we will talk about these conditions. You must go to St. Petersburg and wait there for the Sovereign Emperor's decision on your fate. Instead, you must be the guarantor of your safety and the safety of your family. Hearing these words, Shamil replied: "General! I didn't listen to your advice - forgive me and don't judge me! I am a simple "uzden", I have fought for religion for thirty years, but now my

people have betrayed me, my followers are scattered, and I myself am exhausted from the struggle. I am old: 63 years old. I congratulate you on the conquest of Daghestan and I wholeheartedly wish the ruler success in managing the mountaineers for their own well-being!

“I will immediately send you to His Majesty the Emperor,” said the commander-in-chief, “and one of my adjutants,” he pointed to Colonel Trompovsky, “will take you away so that you do not have to endure unnecessary hardships on the way.”

With these words, the commander-in-chief rose to his feet, mounted his horse, and marched towards the army to hand over Shamil to Count Evdokimov. Shamil looked bewildered, but then after arriving at the camp, he was ushered into a luxurious tent specially prepared for him, and served tea in a silver saucer, only then did he seem to recover. And he came to his senses. In the morning, his whole family was brought from Ghunib, and after one day and night, Shamil was already on the road to Temir-Khan-Shura, from where he had to go to St. Petersburg to appear before the Emperor.

The birch alley where Shamil surrendered was called the alley of Count Baryatinsky, and on the stone where the Commander-in-Chief sat, large words were carved: “1859, August 25, 4 o'clock in the afternoon.” the day and hour of the end of the Caucasian War. A beautiful pergola was built on this stone, which has survived to this day.

According to the following archival document (pondi-1087, aghts'era-1, sakme-407 gv. 1-3. the story of an eyewitness is narrated. Translated from Arabic): When Colonel Lazarev stopped in Ghunib with Daniel-Sultan and other persons, Shamil sent with him his son Kazi-Mukhammed and another person. The negotiations lasted a long time. Kazi-Muhammad said on the orders of Shamil: “You are mukhanat.” How many times have we made peace and entered into battle, but have seen nothing from you except betrayal and lies. We never believe what the Commander-in-Chief and/or any other person

says. We saw nothing but deception and violation of an already concluded agreement in the words of General Grabe, Fez and Klugenau. How can we trust your words? Colonel Lazarev replied: "Don't repeat the past, whatever happened, happened. It's better to look at today and analyze the results! Know that I want to arrange your affairs as best as possible.

After the capture of Ghunib: Shamil first sent an eyewitness to negotiations, who met with General Kessler, Lieutenant Smirnov, Armenian Zakhar, later Baron Wrangel and Lazarev. Prince Baryatinsky received the eyewitness very warmly and asked to introduce Shamil. Shamil initially intended to defend himself and said to the fighters with him: "You should fight, not tell me to go to the Commander-in-Chief!" I want to fight and die today! Qazi-Muhammad said to his father: "I don't want to fight, I'll go to the Russians, and if you wish, fight yourself!" Shamil became extremely angry; even the armed women in the mosque humiliated and quarreled with Qazi-Muhammad for his cowardice, and some cursed him. They were in this state for four hours, and Shamil agreed to go to the commander-in-chief after his son's betrayal. Seeing him, the entire army shouted "Hurray"! Shamil was afraid and thought that he would be deceived and killed. However, Gotsatlinsky told to one of the murids, Muhammad-Khudanat-oglu: "Even if you escape, it will not save you; I'd rather kill Lazarev now and start with Gazava. At this time, Lazarev stood in front of the Russian army, who eased the situation and said: "Where are you returning?" do not be afraid! There will be no betrayal between us." The eyewitness notes that Baron Wrangel ordered him to bring Qazi-Muhammad and Shafi-Muhammad's wives and Shamil's family. Qazi-Muhammad was in the mosque with the murids. He asked an eyewitness: Where did you leave my father? who replied: "Don't you know that I left your father to the Sardar, who dragged him into the tent?" He then asked what he wanted, to which Qazi Muhammad replied: "I want to fight until I am

killed.” “If you wanted to fight, you should have fought before, but now the war is behind us. Get up and follow me.” An eyewitness took him with his brother and family to Baron Wrangel, to whom the baron said: “I am very pleased with your service and will never forget it.” After that, I did not see either Shamil, the commander-in-chief, or Baron Wrangel,” the eyewitness explained.

Conclusion

It should be noted that the long, exhausting war waged by Russia in the North Caucasus, which was also determined by various important geopolitical factors, ended in the defeat of the highlanders, since the resources of the highlanders at that time were limited. As Shamil grew older and more weary, the naibs split up, and following the imam, no one emerged as a leader to uphold the muridism phenomenon and bring the mountaineers together behind it in the struggle against the enemy. The mountaineers were motivated by muridism to battle the common enemy under the imam's guidance and achieve freedom. It should be highlighted, nonetheless, that the concept of the fight for the freedom of the North Caucasians through the capture of Imam-Shamil has not yet been completed.

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