



Hadji Murat - The North Caucasian "Rind"

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Abstract

In the article, we discuss the Sufism, Mouridism and "Rind" phenomenon in the North Caucasus during the 19th century. This time, we demonstrate the existence of the "Rind" phenomenon and how mountaineers and Hadji Murat were related to it. We offer a sample taken from a processed Georgian National Archive document.

Without the "Rind" phenomenon, I think, Hadji Murat and the mountaineers of North Caucasus would never have overthrown the cruel and unjust imam Khamzat-bek.

Keywords: North Caucasus; Sufism; "Rind"; Hadji Murat.

Introduction

In the 19th century in the North Caucasus the Russian Empire faced Mouridism. Imam Shamil's struggle against the Russian Empire is known as Muridism, because his fighters were also his Sufi followers - "murids" in Arabic, مرید (Кныш.2004:332-333). Comparing processed

documents of the Georgian National Archive with the scientific works of V. Gabashvili, E. Javelidze, M. Vachagaev, H. Danogo, F. Takhnaeva, and etc., it becomes evident that the Mouridism and the “Rind” phenomenon strengthened mountaineers as worthy fighters. By uniting mountaineers, Imam Shamil was able to form a force that the Russian Empire had to be reckoned with (gureshidze, 2024:3).

Methods

We were able to view Hadji Murat from a different way by comparing archive materials with scientific literature and conducting an objective analysis.

Results

Sufism was a character trait, a way of life and an ideology of the mountaineers. "Imam Shamil worked tirelessly to strength his power. There is no doubt that he constantly tried to defend and support the fanatical idea of Ghazawat in mountaineers and constantly strive them for freedom fight against Russian Empire. Kazi-Molla really believed his true teachings, he sought to save both the populace and himself. And Khamzat-bek, as an ambitious man, tried to become the owner of Avaria and all of Dagestan” (Fond-1438, Desc-1, Doc-127, p. 14-15). In regarding to Hadji Murat, I think that he carried the character of “Rind”. As “Rind” phenomenon indicates that “Rind” is not only justice but also strives for its reinforcement and restoration and stands by those who are oppressed.

Discussion

Let's examine the definition of “Rind”. E. Javelidze notes that the dervish's were belonged into different branches and orders. Some scholars think that there were up to 60 dervish orders, Mirza Kazim-Bey considers that there were no more than 35 dervish orders. Typically, these orders were divided into indigenous, main orders and their branches. 12 are considered the main, primary branches, and 36-secondary branches (Javelidze, 2010:8).

To put it briefly, these dervishes had a significant impact on society. "In the eyes of Muslims the dervishes were so sent that they almost ranked above the Koran". That is why they felt comfortable in all Muslim countries and moved freely. They were the most dangerous and untouchable political agitators who opposed the existing government system (Javelidze, 2010:9). Wanderers and free dervishes have been the starting point of every rebellion in the city. All riots and rebellions had anti-Sunni and anti-state character, but they were hidden behind a dervish ideology, however, the common people or the city's lower class was the main driving force behind the insurrection. "Ovbash", "Shutars" represented the small merchants and the poor strata of the city. Additionally, "Airuns" (wanderers, vagrants) who were particularly active in Iran cities belonged to this stratum. Later, in the Turk-Seljuk era, first appears the term "Runud" (singular "Rind"), the semantics of which also changes in a certain way over time: free, willful, fearless, rebellious, etc (Javelidze, 2010:9).

The most active groups in the Near and Middle East cities in the eleventh century were the "Ayar", "Ovbash", "Rind", and "Isma'ilis". Even though they didn't have a formal program, they had similar beliefs and goals, and the most significant of which were raids of the nobles and merchants. Wanderers and free dervishes were the starting point of every rebellion in the city. One note-worthy aspect is that the "Ayars" and "rebellious vagabonds" damaged and set fire the wealthy people's caravans, huts, and houses, but never oppressed the "weak and poor." So it is quite natural that they were very well-liked and loved by the populace, but at the same time simultaneously caused intense resentment and abhorrence in the upper class (javelidze,2010:13).

"Ayrun", "Ovbash", "Shutar", "Rind", "Fithian", and "Javanmard" were the members of the same social circle that has developed strong relationships with the city's lower class. Moreover, most of them came from these strata and actively participated in the uprisings. They supported the common, unjustly oppressed people and mercilessly

attacked the rising feudal lords, burning and destroying their houses and property (Javelidze, 2010:164).

According to V. Gabashvili, "the Rinds were merchant-artisans, and their social and legal standing set them apart from large merchants." By ideology, they were Sufi followers and entered into the craft corporations to safeguard themselves against exploiters and to maintain unity. They also had Shiite attitude, which was usual for small-time traders and craftspeople who were involved in the urban social movements (Javelidze, 2010:172).

Although "Rind's" social face is thoroughly reflected in V. Gabashvili's works, but according to E. Javelidze, this term needs some clarifications and comments. The "Rind's" were not engaged in trade or crafts, notwithstanding the possibility they were among tiny merchants and artisans. The fact is that the so-called "Rind" is not identified as a master or disciple of any craft, in "Fütüvvet-nâme" "Rind" is not mentioned as artisan. This makes us think that their connection with artisans and small traders was temporary and arose during times of unrest and riots. In such a situation, the "Rinds" became active, supported the rebellious lower class, and even led their uprising. However, after the rebellion was suppressed, they disappeared as quickly as they had suddenly appeared. According to the historical information that has reached us, we can conclude that the "Rinds" were a group of armed young men belonging to the "Fütüvvet" brotherhood, who, along with their physical abilities, were well versed in martial art (Javelidze, 2010:172-173). As far as known, the "Rinds" were a group of young people with weapons or a military unit; 2) They took part in riots and struggles; 3) They opposed the oppressors and fought against injustice; 4) They attempted to resolve the issue through the use of force; 5) They maintained their own ideological stance and did not compromise their principles (Javelidze, 2010:177). J. Trimmingham observes how the mystical brotherhoods were socially structured. The impoverished, the dispossessed, and the urban middle class-traders, peasants, craftsmen, civil servants, students

from religious schools, low-ranking clergy, etc.-were undoubtedly the social base core of Sufism (at least since the 10th century) (ТРИМИНГЭМ, 1989:7-8).

M. A. Mamatov thinks that political and socioeconomic factors had a direct impact on the rise of Sufism. The intense ideological conflict that emerged between the 9th and 11th centuries involved the interests of the widest range of social classes, including dervishes, artisans, and members of the feudal nobility (МАМАТОВ, 2011:87).

Several British orientalists discovered a remarkable religious event that radically changed their understanding about the East. Successful scientists were associated with the British East India Company, Sir William Jones (1794) and Sir John Malcolm (1833). In their historical and literary discoveries about the East, they began to look for some kind of mystical form of religion. So-called Sufis met them in every mosque; they looked much more attractive than the Turks of the Ottoman Empire, who at that time threatened to conquer Christian Europe. The aforementioned Sufis were poets who wrote poems to happiness and wine drink. They also loved dancing and music and were filled with love (ЭРНСТ, 2002:29). "Rind's" whole philosophy of life is in Hafiz's laconic phrase: "Not a single second without wine, not a single hour without love", analysts claim, that alcohol represents a spiritual ecstasy, loved person in his poetry is a symbol of God (Abd-aladze, L:152).

The documents from the National Archive of Georgia, an article of Simon Esadze, the scientific studies and Islamic encyclopedia (энциклопедический словарь 1991:126; ХАДЗИЕВ 2018:22), shows that Sufism was prominent in the North Caucasus prior to the mountaineers war for independence in XIX century. The "Rind" phenomenon found expression in the liberation war led by Imam Shamil, because the "Rind" phenomenon already existed in the freedom-loving character of Naib Hadji Murat and mountaineers combat skills and selfless fighting. Imam Shamil was able to consolidate the Chechens and turn them against the common foe. The National Archive of

Georgia maintains the following historical paper, which serves as an example of the “Rind” phenomenon. We present the small part from the article: **A plot against Khamzat**. A plot against Khamzat-bek was prepared in Khundzakh at the same time as he was hoping to take over Dagestan⁶⁵. Osman and Hadji Murat, the two brothers who lived in Khundzakh, were renowned for their bravery and heroism in a variety of situations. One day, the brothers started praising themselves in front of their father, recalling their own accomplishments. P. Takhnaeva (Тахнаева 2019:158), based on M. Alikhanov (Алиханов, 1895-1896:172), states that the identity of the head of Khamzat-bek’s plot is unknown; nevertheless, given that the father of Haji Murat passed away four years prior⁶⁶.

The father replied: "My children should be ashamed to boast your bravery in front of me, as I see you as nothing and do not want to acknowledge you as my children. I think you are rather a coward and poor in spirit."⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Moshe Gammer, in his book "Шамил Мусульманское Сопrotивление Царизму", talks about the activities of Khamzat Bek and notes: "Despite this, the Russians perceived the Imam as a growing threat, especially after he recognized and sided with the Indiria” kumik” Hadji-Tasho, a prominent military leader in Chechnya. The Russians began to prepare for a military campaign against the new imam, which soon became unnecessary. On September 19, Khamzat-bek, who had come to perform the Friday afternoon prayer, was killed at the entrance to the mosque in Khundzakh. The murder was motivated by personal, not political, interests: The murder was led by sun of the nurse Avari Khan, whose motive was the tradition of revenge. I disagree with Moshe Gamer’s assertion that this deed was a result of the slaughter tradition and that the Russians were preparing for an attack against the Imam. Because of the following factors, the mountaineers already carried a negative charge in the direction of Khamzat-bek: 1. The Imam's defeat of the Avaria khans. 2. The mother of the Khan was cruelly and unfairly murdered, and customs in the mountains were disregarded. 3. The primary one is the well-known “Rind” phenomenon which was in the character of the mountaineers. And the Imam's murder was organized in the forge. М.Гаммер. Шамил Мусульманское Сопrotивление Царизму. Завоевание Чечни и Дагестана — М.: «КРОН-ПРЕСС», 1998. (стр. 83-107)

⁶⁶ An examination of Hadji Murat's life and struggles reveals that “Rind's” phenomenon served as the murderous act of retaliation against Hamzat-bek. Thus, it is unnecessary to debate whether or not a certain personality preceded this retaliation. (Note of- M. Gureshidze)

⁶⁷ Following detail, which Takhnaeva mentions, states that Hadji Murat told Loris Melikov that he was afraid and fled after Khan’s murder, but this humiliation was continually served as motivation to become more brave in the future. П.И Тахнаева. ХАДЖИ-МУРАТ ХАДЖИМУРАД ИЗ ХУНЗАХА. Москва 2019. (стр. 122)

The children asked their father to tell them what they were guilty of. They couldn't understand why he was insulting them in this way.

Children, pay attention to me. "The finest Khan was Sultan Ahmad. I became Umma Khan's father, and you became his brothers. He left us son to nurture. He raised us up to his family's level. After Hamzat killed Umma Khan, how do you look into our friends eyes and grow so proud of your achievements in front of your own father? I am old and weak, but despite this, tomorrow I will kill Khamzat; let him kill me too; and you, brave men, who are like women, live in peace."

The children were deeply affected by father's remarks; they cried and replied, "Well, tomorrow we will go and kill Khamzat, and if we survive, we will appear before you with a bright face."

The father complimented their decision and said: "congratulations, children, on your good deed; Allah will be your helper.

After that, two brothers went into the settlement to invite all their friends. They saw them inside the forge and entered there. Khamzat's treasurer visited their forge at that time, saw the cigarette butt, and inquired who was smoking. The Imam issued a harsh ruling; locals who drank alcohol and smoked cigarettes were put in a "pit" and thrashed forty times; In order to distinguish Mourids from munafiqs (Muslims who trusted the government), Mourids had to shave their moustaches at the level of the upper lip; Mourids, according to Sharia Law, had to wear a turban, and older people had to dye their beards. Among other things, "Maclatch" was appointed to enforce the published rules.

At the forge, "Maclatch" received no answer about the tobacco ball, made a search, found no tobacco, took scissor from his pocket and cut off everyone's beards, and then slowly walked away.

The situation sparked a sharp protest among people who lived in Hundzah. And one of them remarked: "What will happen the next time, if we now, for this first time, don't have peace from the

Mourids." "Yes," answered Magoma-Osman, and turned to the brothers Osman and Hadji Murat, "Khamzat-bek mercilessly killed Nutsal-khan and your wet-nurse Umma-khan. Our late lord, Sultan Ahmad Khan, was a great man, and we had a good life under his rule. Now look at yourself; the usurper wants to show his power and/or care for our lives. Brothers, it is no better to kill Khamzat-bek right now, when his vile Mourids are no longer with him." This speech aroused complete sympathy among the listeners; they gloomily handshake and agreed to meet in Hadji Murat's house. At night, forty participants in the conspiracy, with caution, one by one, entered Hadji Murat's house. The murder was scheduled to take place in the mosque on Friday, September 19, at the next day.

At noon, after the mullah's call, residents began to gather in the mosque; the conspirators managed to get into the mosque, and they had weapons hidden under the felt cloak. They were positioned near the side of the door. With three pistols and at the head of 12 sword-wielding Mourids, Hamzat-bek entered the mosque, reached its middle, noticed the people in felt cloak, stopped, and addressed them; At this time, all the participants were kneeling, ready to pray. Osman-Murat noticed Khamzat's fiery look, stood up, and shouted loudly: "Hey, brothers. Why don't you stand up when the great Imam comes to your mosque?" This call was a conventional sign. Having understood the essence of the matter, Khamzat headed to the exit, but at that moment, Osman and Hadji Murat fired from a pistol and wounded him. Then there was a volley that caused the mosque to tremble, and the Khans murderer died (Fond-1438, desc-1, Doc-127).

Conclusion

Hadji Murat and the mountaineers were distinguished by their rebellious spirit, amazing fighting prowess, freedom-loving character, defense of the oppressed, and commitment to justice. The act of revenge in the forge also points to the "Rind" phenomenon. He used to offer widows and orphans alms prior to leaving on a campaign. (Доного·Статья; Доного, 2021:220-227)

However, Hadji Murat is an odious figure. He possesses many of the noble qualities that have made him a folk hero, but a close examination of his life reveals that he is not an absolute Sufi/"Rind." He is a power-hungry and ambitious Naib (Gureshidze, 2024:18).

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