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Trade Interactions between Kazakhs and Russian Expatriates in Tacheng in the Middle of the 19th Century and Their Social Influence

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Abstract: This article focuses on the trade interactions between Kazakhs and Russian expatriates in Tacheng in the mid-19th century and their social impact. Driven by the unique geographic environment of Tacheng and the Sino-Russian Treaty on Commerce in Ili Talbakatai, the two sides formed multiple forms of trade, such as the border market, the operation of merchants and foreign firms, and folk trade, which included livestock products, handicrafts and daily necessities, etc. The study finds that the trade interactions between the Kazakhs and the Russians had a significant impact on their society. The study finds that trade interactions have contributed to the transformation of Kazakh society into a semi-commodity economy, cultural integration, and social stratification, while Russian expatriates have contributed to their economic foothold, cultural diffusion, and adaptation, resulting in a complex relationship of integration and conflict with the local society. This paper reveals the historical picture of multi-ethnic trade interactions on the frontier, and provides some references for understanding the socio-economic and ethnic relations on the frontier in modern times.

Keywords: Tacheng; Kazakhs; Russian expatriates

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1. Historical background of trade interactions

1.1. Geo-environment of Tacheng region in the mid-19th century

In the mid-19th century, Tacheng (known as "Talbakhtai" in the Qing Dynasty) was located in the northwestern frontier of China, in the western part of the northern foothills of the Tianshan Mountains, across the upper reaches of the Irtysh River and the Ili River Basin, and was an important land hub connecting Xinjiang in China, Siberia in Russia, and the Central Asian region [1]. Its geographic location has the dual attributes of "frontier barrier" and "trade node": to the north, the Kazakh steppe leads directly to the Siberian towns of Omsk and Tomsk in Russia; to the south, it connects to the hinterland of Xinjiang through the Ili River Valley; to the west, it leads to the Central Asian state of Khojavand and other regions; and to the east, it connects to the Siberian state of Kham in Central Asia. To the south, the Ili Valley connects to the hinterland of Xinjiang, and to the west, it leads to the Hohan Khanate of Central Asia and other regions, and to the east, it connects to the Mongolian steppe, forming the traffic network of "four roads". During this period, the natural environment of the Tacheng area provided the basic conditions for the development of agriculture and animal husbandry [2]. The mountainous

pastures of the Altai Mountains in the north were suitable for nomadic herding, the river plains in the south were suitable for the development of farming, and the water systems such as the Erqis River facilitated irrigation and transport. At the same time, its frontier location made it the frontier of the diplomatic game between the Qing Dynasty and Tsarist Russia. After the signing of the Sino-Russian Ili Talbakatai Treaty on Commerce in 1851, Tacheng was formally set up as a trading port, and the Tsarist Russians were given the privilege of setting up a consulate in Tacheng and exempting the trade from taxes, etc. The change of geopolitical pattern directly promoted the legitimacy and scale of trade in the region, and provided a systematic framework for the trade and commerce between different ethnic groups.

1.2. The development of Kazakhs in Tacheng

The Kazakhs are the main nomadic ethnic group in Tacheng, whose activities in Tacheng can be traced back to the period of the Kazakh Khanate at the end of the 16th century, and a relatively stable settlement pattern has been formed in the middle of the 19th century [3]. In terms of economic patterns, the Kazakhs take traditional nomadic pastoralism as their core, raising horses, cows, sheep and other livestock, as well as engaging in simple livestock product processing, and their mode of production is characterised by the mobility of living by the water and grass, but the scope of their nomadic pastoralism has been relatively fixed in the winter and summer pasturelands around the city of Tacheng, and the formation of seasonal migratory patterns that are compatible with the natural environment. In terms of social structure, the Kazakhs took the "tribe" as the basic unit, with clans and aul constituting the hierarchical organisation, and the tribal chiefs were responsible for the coordination of internal production and external communication, after the unification of Xinjiang by the Qing Dynasty in the middle of the 18th century, the Kazakhs in Tacheng were brought under the jurisdiction of the Qing feudal court, and they paid tribute to the Oing through the "enfeoffment of the chiefs" method. The Tacheng Kazakhs were brought under the authority of the Qing court and maintained their political subordination by "enfeoffment of their chiefs and payment of tributes," while at the same time acquiring the right to nomadise in a designated area. By the middle of the 19th century, as the population of the Tacheng area grew and the nomadic economy developed, the Kazakhs' demand for agricultural products and handicrafts was increasing, and their surplus livestock products also needed to be traded in exchange for production and living materials, thus laying the economic foundation for inter-ethnic trade.

1.3. The emergence and development of Russian expatriates in Tacheng

The emergence of Russian expatriates in Tacheng began in the mid-19th century, and was closely related to Tsarist Russia's expansionist policy towards Central Asia and Northwest China [4]. 1851, after the signing of the "Sino-Russian Treaty of Commerce in Talbakatai, Ili", the Tsarist Russia gained the privilege of designating a "trade circle" in Tacheng, and Russian merchants, craftsmen, and peasants began to move in one after another: Merchants mostly from the Siberian region, in order to operate the purchase of livestock products, daily necessities sales; craftsmen brought blacksmiths, carpenters and other skills, to serve the needs of trade and expatriates; some farmers in the vicinity of the city of Tacheng to reclaim the land, planting wheat, vegetables and other crops. To the 1860s, Tacheng Russian expatriates formed a relatively concentrated settlement, to "trade circle" as the core, and gradually developed shops, workshops, churches and other living and commercial facilities. Although the size of their population was much smaller than that of the local Kazakhs, they occupied a special position in regional trade by virtue of the diplomatic privileges and commercial capital of Tsarist Russia.

2. The form and content of trade contacts

2.1. The Rise and Development of Border Markets

In the mid-19th century, the rise of Tacheng Border Mutual Market, with the 1851 "Sino-Russian Ili Talbakatai Trade Charter" as the starting point, gradually formed a "fixed-point, regular, government and people co-management" mode of trade. Mutual market initially to Tacheng "trade circle" as the core stronghold, and then expanded to the Emin River

and other border areas, the formation of seasonal bazaar network [5]. Every year, during the spring and summer nomadic seasons and the autumn and winter livestock harvests, the Kazakh herders drive their livestock, pack fur and other materials to the mutual market points, and trade with Russian expatriates and Chinese businessmen, and the cycle of the bazaar was gradually fixed from the initial monthly to semi-monthly, and the average number of people participating in the bazaar during the peak period could reach several hundred people per day. The management mechanism of the Mutual Market reflects the characteristics of the frontier: the "Bureau of Trade and Commerce" under the Minister of Counsellors of the Qing Dynasty in Talbahadai was responsible for supervising the market order and collecting tariffs, while the Tsarist-Russian Consul coordinated the affairs of expatriates and merchants, and both sides resolved trade disputes through the system of "meeting and hearing". Mutual trading rules to "barter as the main, currency as a supplement" as the characteristics of the Kazakh herdsmen commonly used sheepskin, wool in exchange for Russian cotton, iron, tea and other materials, the exchange rate of "a sheepskin for a piece of cotton". "ten catties of wool for a handful of iron axe" and other traditional ratio prevail, later with the Russian ruble in the border circulation, gradually appeared currency transactions, but physical exchange still dominates.

2.2. Business activities of merchants and foreign companies

Russian expatriates set up in Tacheng merchants and foreign banks, constituting the core force of large-scale trade, the formation of "hierarchical operation, cross-regional linkage" of the commercial network. 1860s, the Russian businessmen have founded the "Liyuan Xiang" "Jusheng and" and other well-known firms, large foreign banks, such as the Tsarist Russia's "Morozov Foreign Bank" "Kazan Foreign Bank" has also set up branches in Tacheng, its business activities present three major characteristics: First, the Firstly, there was a clear division of labour, with the firms focusing on the purchase of livestock products and local sales, while the foreign banks were responsible for the transshipment of large quantities of goods, transporting Kazakh hides and furs and livestock to Moscow and St [6]. Petersburg via the Siberian Railway, and at the same time importing industrial products such as cloth, sugar, metal products and so on from Russia; secondly, the establishment of fixed purchasing points, and the setting up of temporary cargo stations in winter pastures and summer camps on the Kazakh steppe, and the hiring of Kazakh middlemen ("Bayi") to provide goods to the Kazakhs, and then to provide goods for them. ("Bayi") to purchase goods in pastoral areas, forming a three-tier purchasing chain of "Tacheng Head Office - pastoral sub-points - herdsmen's families"; thirdly, the implementation of the "credit transaction" model, with long-term buyers and buyers being given the opportunity to purchase goods on a "credit" basis. The third is to implement the mode of "credit transaction", to the long-term cooperation of the Kazakh tribes to issue a small amount of credit, agreed to repay the next year with livestock products, this mode not only stabilises the source of goods, but also deepens the economic dependence between the two sides [7]. The scale of operation of the firms and foreign banks continued to expand, to the 1870s, Tacheng Russian merchants annually purchased up to tens of thousands of catties of wool, thousands of sheepskin, exports accounted for more than 60 per cent of the total foreign trade of Tacheng, its sales of Russian cotton cloth, iron in the Kazakh pastoral area of the popularity of the significant increase in the number of some of the foreign firms and even began to get involved in the processing of hides and skins, in Tacheng, to open small tanning workshops, employing the Kazakhs Some foreign banks even began to involve in fur processing, opening small tanning workshops in Tacheng and hiring Kazakh craftsmen to carry out preliminary processing and reduce transport costs.

2.3. Diversity and prevalence of folk trade

As a supplement to the border market and business, the folk trade, characterised by "small, scattered, extensive and active", penetrated into the daily interactions between Kazakhs and Russians and became the most common form of trade. In the main body of the transaction, covering the Kazakh herders, Russian expatriate farmers, craftsmen, small traders and other groups: Russian expatriate farmers will grow wheat, potatoes and other agricultural products sold to Kazakh families in exchange for meat, dairy products; expatriate craftsmen travelling from village to village to repair agricultural tools, making woodwork and other skills in exchange for hides and furs or livestock; the Kazakh women hand-stitched

felt, dairy products and the expatriate families in exchange for Kazakh women, on the other hand, exchange hand-sewn felt and dairy products with expatriate families in exchange for daily necessities such as cloth, needle and thread, forming a pattern of "two-way flow of means of production and living". The places of folk trade are very flexible, in addition to fixed bazaars, nomadic spots on the grassland, streets and lanes of expatriate villages, and even chance encounters on the way to graze, may become the scene of transactions ^[8]. The mode of transaction focuses on "humane credit", and mostly adopts the mode of "verbal agreement and deferred payment", for example, Kazakh herders can first buy tea on credit from a Russian shop, and then pay back with wool when they pass by next time to graze their animals. This interpersonal trade model strengthens the bond of trust across ethnic groups. The content of trade was close to the needs of daily life, from small items such as needles and threads and matches to large items such as horses and agricultural tools, and even the exchange of cultural goods, such as children's books from Russian expatriates that occasionally flowed into upper-class Kazakh families through folk trade, demonstrating the cultural penetration that transcends the economic dimension of trade interactions.

3. Impact of trade interactions on Kazakh society

3.1. Adjustment and change of economic structure

Trade exchanges have promoted the transformation of the traditional nomadic economy of the Kazakhs from "selfsufficiency" to "semi-commodity economy", and the economic structure has been diversified and adjusted. In the field of production, nomadic pastoralism has shifted from purely satisfying its own needs to taking into account the production of commodities, and the selective breeding and processing of livestock products has become a trend. In order to meet the demand for high-quality hides and skins from Russian expatriates, Kazakh herders have begun to pay attention to the improvement of the breeds of sheep and goats, and to increase the proportion of fine-wooled sheep breeding; and at the same time, they have developed the specialised livestock processing, for example, by preliminarily tanning raw hides and selling them again, so as to increase the added value of their products [9]. Some of the Kazakh tribes close to the trade node even appeared "semi-settlement" tendency, in the winter pasture around the reclamation of small pieces of farmland, planting food crops in order to reduce the dependence on external agricultural products, the formation of "nomadic + farming + trade" composite economic model. In the field of exchange, the traditional "barter" was gradually combined with monetary transactions, with the Russian ruble and Qing Dynasty copper coins becoming the medium of trade, and the Kazakh herders began to form the concept of monetary values and the awareness of commodity accounting. The expansion of the trade network involved the Kazakh economy in the regional market system: local livestock products were resold to Siberia and the European part of Russia through Russian expatriates' merchants, while Russian cotton cloth, ironware, tea and other commodities entered the daily life of the Kazakhs through trade, which changed the single economic structure of "dominated by livestock products". Although this adjustment has improved economic efficiency, it has also made the Kazakh economy dependent on external markets, such as the fluctuation of fur prices, which directly affects herders' incomes and brings new uncertainties to economic development.

3.2. Embodiment of Cultural Exchange and Integration

Trade interactions have promoted exchanges and integration between Kazakhs and Russian expatriates at the level of material culture and living customs, forming a unique landscape of cultural interaction. At the level of material culture, the introduction of Russian commodities has changed the way of production and life of the Kazakhs: iron tools (such as scythes and axes) have replaced traditional wooden and bone tools, improving nomadic production efficiency; cotton, tweed and other fabrics have enriched the materials used for clothing, and traditional Kazakh robes have begun to be made with Russian machine-made fabrics, preserving national styles while incorporating the characteristics of the new fabrics; tea, sugar and other foodstuffs are gradually becoming more and more popular among the Kazakhs after being imported through trade. Tea, sugar and other foodstuffs have gradually become an important part of the Kazakh diet, forming the

new dietary custom of "milk tea with naan ^[10]". At the level of language and customs, cross-community trade has given rise to the phenomenon of language borrowing, with Russian loanwords such as "продукт" and "рубль" appearing in the Kazakh language, and some of the Kazakhs engaged in the trade also acquiring simple conversational skills in Russian. Some Kazakhs involved in trade have also acquired simple conversational skills in Russian. Festivals and rituals also show signs of integration: Kazakh tribes close to diaspora settlements take in Russian bread and sweets for weddings and festivals, while Russian expatriates give traditional gifts such as horses and furs to Kazakhs as a sign of friendship during trade transactions. This cultural exchange is not a one-way penetration, but a two-way adaptation based on the demands of trade, which preserves the core of their respective cultures and creates shared cultural elements at the level of daily life.

3.3. Changes in Social Relations and Social Classes

Trade interactions have had a profound impact on Kazakh social relations and class structure, promoting the reconstruction of social networks and class division. At the level of social relations, inter-community trade has broken the closure of traditional tribes and formed new bonds of communication: Kazakh herders have established long-term cooperative relationships with Russian merchants, and have formed stable credit relationships through the methods of "pre-purchase on credit" and "seasonal settlement", etc. Some trading partners have even formed a "trade partnership". Some of the trading partners even became "Anda" (friends), going beyond mere commercial exchanges [11]. Tribal leaders also strengthened their external ties through participation in trade, signing agreements with Russian merchants for the purchase of large quantities of livestock products, and at the same time seeking trade preferences on behalf of their tribes, thus becoming intermediaries connecting the internal tribes with the external market. In terms of social strata, trade has given rise to a new group of economic elites, namely the "trading herdsmen", who, by virtue of their resource advantages and their large-scale participation in the livestock trade and accumulation of wealth, have purchased land, shops, and even hired other herdsmen to engage in production, and have gradually separated themselves from the traditional herdsmen to become both nomadic producers and business operators. They gradually separated from the traditional pastoralists and became a new class with both nomadic production and commercial management capabilities [12]. At the same time, some poor herders earned extra income by serving as guides for Russian merchants and transporting goods, forming "marginal players" dependent on the trade network. These changes in class structure have impacted the traditional social structure centred on tribal bloodlines, and have brought the role of economic ability in shaping social status into sharper focus, injecting new dynamics of mobility and differentiation into Kazakh society.

4. The impact of trade relations on the Russian diaspora

4.1. Economic Entry and Development in Tashkent

Trade interactions have provided the core support for the Russian diaspora's economic roots in Tacheng, which have gradually developed from scattered merchants into an important force in regional trade [13]. Relying on the tax-free privileges of the Sino-Russian Ili-Talbakha Treaty and the advantages of the Siberian market network, Russian expatriates quickly seized the market for livestock products and daily necessities in Tacheng: they purchased Kazakh hides and furs and livestock at prices higher than those of local merchants, and shipped them to Siberia for processing and sale by land, while importing Russian cotton textiles, ironware, sugar and tea into Tacheng, making a huge profit from the price difference. At the same time, they imported Russian cotton textiles, ironware, sugar and tea goods into Tacheng, and used the difference in price to make huge profits.

With the expansion of trade scale, Russian expatriates' business field extends from a single trade to the industrial chain: some businessmen open fur processing factories, employing local Kazakh craftsmen to carry out preliminary tanning and sorting, and enhance the added value of livestock products; there are also expatriates investing in the establishment of blacksmiths, carpenters, and other handicrafts workshops, and the production of horseshoes, tent supports, and other tools adapted to the needs of the nomadic herdsmen, and the products are not only supplied to the expatriate

community, but also sold to the Kazakh nomads through the trade network. The products were not only supplied to the expatriate community, but also sold to the Kazakh nomadic areas through the trade network ^[14]. By the end of the 19th century, the Russian expatriates in Tacheng had formed a complete trade chain of "acquisition-processing-sales", and their economic strength had been significantly enhanced, and some large trading companies even set up branches in Ili, Urumqi, and other cities, building up a cross-regional business network, realising the benefits from the "expatriate merchants". The identity change from "overseas Chinese merchants" to "leading regional merchants" has been achieved.

4.2. Cultural Spread and Adaptation

Trade exchanges have promoted the spread of Russian diaspora culture in Tacheng, and at the same time prompted its adaptation in interaction with the local culture^[15]. At the level of cultural diffusion, Russian expatriates brought their language, living customs and material culture to Tacheng through commercial activities: Russian became one of the common mediums of trade, and Kazakh merchants and herders began to learn basic Russian vocabulary in order to facilitate transactions; Russian food culture was introduced through trade channels, and some upper-class Kazakh families began to accept such dietary habits; Russian carriages, metal utensils and other tools used by expatriates became more and more practical, and gradually adapted to the local culture. Russian-style carriages, metal utensils, and other tools used by expatriates were gradually borrowed and adopted by local communities because of their practicality.

At the same time, in order to adapt to the multi-ethnic environment of Tacheng, the Russian diaspora has also made cultural adjustments: some merchants have learnt the Kazakh language and local etiquette, and respect Kazakh nomadic customs in their dealings; diaspora craftsmen have improved their product designs, for example, by combining the shapes of Russian ironware with Kazakh decorative motifs, to enhance the cultural appropriateness of their products.; in terms of festivals and celebrations, the diaspora has retained Orthodox festivals and celebrations, but they also participate in local events such as the Naadam festival, and so on. In terms of festivals and customs, although the expatriates retain the Orthodox Christian festivals, they also participate in local events such as the Naadam Conference, which brings them closer to the Kazakhs through cultural interactions. This two-way process of diffusion and adaptation has led to the formation of a unique regional variant of Russian diaspora culture in Tacheng, which has maintained its core cultural characteristics while incorporating local elements.

4.3. Integration and conflict with the local society

Trade contacts have led to a complex relationship between the Russian diaspora and the local society of Tacheng, in which "integration and conflict coexist". In terms of integration, business co-operation has given rise to a cross-ethnic economic network of mutual assistance: Russian businessmen have established stable trade partnerships with Kazakh tribal leaders, and some expatriates have even strengthened their business ties through marriage; in their daily lives, expatriates and local communities have shared public resources such as marketplaces and water sources, thus forming a residential pattern of "you and me". In their daily lives, expatriates share public resources such as markets and water sources with local communities, forming a "one-within-another" residential pattern, and some expatriate children grow up playing with Kazakh children, acquiring bilingual skills and becoming cultural intermediaries.

Conflicts arise mainly from the distribution of benefits and cultural differences: economically, Russian expatriates monopolise some areas of trade by virtue of their privileges, squeezing the living space of local merchants and triggering the dissatisfaction of traditional Kazakh merchants, who have repeatedly taken spontaneous action to "boycott Russian goods"; culturally and legally, expatriates are protected by the consular jurisdiction of the Tsarist Russia and often have an advantageous position in the handling of disputes, for example, in the case of a dispute involving a consul. Cultural and legal issues, such as the 1875 "Tacheng Trade Circle Conflict", in which a dispute over the occupation of Kazakh pastures by expatriate merchants ended in favour of the expatriates after the intervention of the Tsarist consulate, have exacerbated mistrust among ethnic groups. In addition, religious differences have occasionally led to friction, which has not resulted in large-scale conflict but remains a potential factor in community relations.

5. Summary

This paper has systematically analysed the history of trade relations between Kazakhs and Russian expatriates in Tacheng in the middle of the 19th century and their social impact. The study shows that the trade interactions in this period were not accidental, but a result of the special geo-environment of Tacheng, the diplomatic game between the Qing Dynasty and Tsarist Russia, and the economic needs of the ethnic groups. The signing of the Sino-Russian Ili-Talbakatai Trade Treaty provided an institutional framework for trade, and the multiple forms of border markets, merchant houses and private trade built up a hierarchical trade network, making the two-way flow of livestock products and industrial goods the norm. In terms of social impact, trade interaction has had a profound and multi-dimensional effect on both societies. For the Kazakhs, economically, it breaks through the closed nature of the traditional nomadic economy and forms a composite model of "nomadic herding+farming+trade", but it also strengthens their dependence on external markets; culturally, it absorbs elements of Russian culture in the levels of material life, language and customs, while retaining its own national characteristics; and in terms of social structure, it gives birth to a trading elite class, which impacts the traditional tribal bloodline. The social structure has given rise to a trade-oriented elite class, which has impacted the traditional tribal blood ties. For Russian expatriates, trade has enabled them to establish a solid economic position in Tacheng and form a transregional business network; culturally, there is a two-way interaction of "spreading and adapting", forming a regional culture that combines core Russian characteristics and local elements; the relationship with the local community shows a situation of integration and conflict, with economic cooperation and marriage promoting integration, and monopoly of interests and conflict of interests. Economic co-operation and marriage have promoted integration, while monopoly of interests and legal privileges have triggered ethnic conflicts.

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