

Centralization of Power in Iran by Agha Mohammad Shah in the Late 18th Century

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Abstract: In the second half of the 12th century (Arabic), great land of Iran went to the decentralization of government and the Iranian Monarchy became feudal practice. After approximately half a century, the centrifugal tendencies have subsided and people interested in the formation of large central power. Agha Mohammad Shah of Qajar era who had perceived lack of focus, thought about big centralization of power in Iran and establishing the Kingdom of Iran at least as the size of Safavid government. In this regard, he attempted integration of different areas including the Zand rule to the north of the Aras and Georgia as well as Khorasan and in this way, did the measures that thought should be done. He also established the institution of monarchy as a symbol of integrity that had vanished from the past half century.

Key words: Concentration of power, Kingdom of Iran, Agha Mohammad Shah of Qajar, people demand, century

INTRODUCTION

By the victim of Nadir Shah by the people around him, decentralization of power was created in the land of Iran, such that Karim Khan of Zand who after about 16 years after the death of Nadir by eliminating rivals to each other and stability shown, captured the most of Iran and did not take the title of “king” and took the title of “lawyer”.

Karim Khan had an understanding that the period of the great empires is over so, did not try in vain to seize the whole empire as Nadir Shah. Perhaps, he realized that if people wanted empire, they keep Nadir, rather than by doing all plots, led to blindness and crown of prince and going mad of Nadir and eventually murdering him.

Karim Khan sufficed to a large khanate. He had an opposed behavior of an empire including being public and do not creating a great treasure for his government, leaving the crown on the head and not determining the successor and all other his behavior leading that after him, Iranian people still remember him kindly.

After the death of the lawyer, Khan of Qajar had attempts to rebuild the great Iranian Empire that almost till his death beside the castle of Shush in Karabakh, pursued this goal. Of course, some violent behavior of Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar such as that in the cities of Kerman and Tbilisi which if it is seen with the standards of today, it is unacceptable and should be studied and the behavior must be decoded.

To enter the discussion, the centralization process will be discussed from two views, first public demand for the formation of the focus and second efforts that Agha Mohammad Khan did in this area.

PUBLIC DEMAND TO THE END OF THE FIEFDOM

It must be said that the centrifugal desire creating a state of decentralization gradually subsides and on the contrary, the congregation wants the country to be vast.

John Malcolm says that he asked Haj Ibrahim Kalanar Shirazi about not allowing Lotfali Khan to enter Shiraz and he said that: Except for a number of armies, it is not different for people whether a Zand or a Qajar guy is the ruler but the people want peace and the country being vast (Malcolm, 1983).

Ho wever, before him, Mirza Mohammad Kalantar Fars has written it around the year 1200 BC: Shame on the Iranian people, I wish that same as Russia, a woman-Catherine II be the ruler and half of Iraq and (Kalantar, 1983).

In the following, it will pointed out that Agha Mohammad Khan was consulted in a campaign to Georgia and execute the young people idea. The new generation wants power and greatness of Iran.

Leader behaves based on the understanding from the will of the people: According to an expert in political science:

It may seem that a leader is someone that submit others to his will but the leader is someone who has skill and sleight in coordinating himself/herself with the massive popular ideas and adapting with their demands (Galbraith, 1991)

It was the will of the people, who heard this from the tongue of his head, i.e., Agha Mohammad Khan said and did something in the way of people will.

To explain this question that the public atmosphere was also in favor of centralization, we refer the letter of Mirza Qomi to Agha Mohammad Khan.

He also advising the king to piety and asceticism and world-aversion in governance and respect people, did not deserve punishment for practices from Kingdom in order to carry out the duties.

If people be punished by the king, the people is guilty and it is right but if not guilty, they caught the king's cruelty and its degrees will be promoted, as disasters such as cholera and plague bother good and faithful people with bad people at a time when the number of killing was hundreds and thousands. This letter which in all probability, before proceeding of Khan of Qajar in Kerman and Tbilisi could have been a sort of license to practice in politics.

ACTIONS FOR THE CENTRALIZATION BY AGHA MOHAMMAD KHAN

Agha Mohammad Khan was born in the seventh of Muharram in 1155 (Arabic) at Astrabad. His father is Mohammad Hassan Khan Qajar and his mother is Turkmen. In the year 1171 that his father was engaged in leadership campaigns with his rivals including Karim Khan, he was appointed by his father to the Azerbaijani government with the capital of Tabriz. But year later with the death of his father, he went to the Turkmen desert.

He wanted to capture Astrabad in 1175 BC by his colleagues but was defeated and after three days adrift was arrested by Mohammad Khan Savadkuhi and incarcerated presence of Karim Khan in Tehran.

By the order of Karim Khan, Agha Mohammad Khan and Hosseingholi Khan were forced to stop in Shiraz and other descendants of Mohammad Hassan in Qazvin was deployed and two of them that their mother was the same, stayed in Astrabad.

Karim Khan had treated him well and paid him a toman a day and put him as one of his advisers and nicknamed him as "Veise old" and used his gold idea in the country affairs and although Agha Mohammad Khan was upset from Karim Khan and always knew him as the murderer of father but did not betray on consultation.

It seems that Karim Khan had a good understanding of the Khan Qajar. As a result, Khan of Zand late in his life allowed him to take any horse from the stall and even go out of town.

Thus, Karim Khan was arranged in such a program so that after his death Khan Qajar will not be in Shiraz, because he knew that after his death, something will be refined.

In connection with the alleged reign of Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar, it is said that when he lived under the view of Karim Khan in Shiraz, a day, he had a discussion with a grocer.

The grocer told him that if one day you're king, tore my belly and Khan Qajar in 1206 BC as entering the Shiraz, the same thing (Hedayat, 1960) while almost did no rough something including killing anyone.

When Agha Mohammad Khan's behavior in such a way that the grocer had an understanding of him, Karim Khan did not understand what was going on in his head?

Actions for integrating land of Iran

Seizing areas from beginning to capture Shiraz: After the death of Karim Khan, Agha Mohammad Khan went from Roknabad of Shiraz to Isfahan to reach Astarâbâd. In any case, at the entrance of Astarabad, he confronted the opposition and resistance of his brother, Morteza Qoli, where the government was in his hand.

Agha Mohammad Khan dent Jafar-Qoli Khan another brother for appeasement. Of course, Agha Mohammad was captured by his another brother Reza Qoli Khan but other brothers released him (Alsaltane and Ali, 1991). What was in the mind of Agha Mohammad Khan, of course, prevents his hurt.

In other words, when his brothers realized his ideas in relation to the whole Iran, did not damage to him, while if his demand were just Astarâbâd, their behavior may be different with their brother and even thought to his removal, as he removed some of his brothers.

In any way, with the death of Alimorad Khan whom Agha Mohammad Khan understood him well, he took a sigh of relief and from the Mazandaran, he entered Qazvin and Tehran (Hedayat, 1960). However, he continued making process of the country, so that in June of that year, entered Esfahan and passed its government to Jafar-Qoli Khan.

About 2 years later, he sent his brother Jafar-Qoli to fight with another brother Murtaza Qoli going to win the support of the Russian queen and then returned and captured Rasht. Jafar-Qoli was able to submit Morteza Qoli.

Agha Mohammad Khan, as the fear of Mustafa Khan for joining the brother Morteza Qoli Khan, ordered that in Rasht, his eyes were whipped.

In August of 1205 that Lotfali Khan Qajar moved to Chaman Gandoman to fight with Qajar army, because Haj Ibrahim, the Sherriff of Shiraz, considered Lotfali action in raising his son "Mirza Muhammad" as a hostage and knew this as evidence of bad faith of Zand Khan and by inviting Barkhorda Khan and Mohammad Ali Khan Zand Ishyk Agassi for consulting about state affairs, arrested them and captured Shiraz. Envoy of Ibrahim Haji noticed Shiraz story to Abdul Rahim and Mohammad Ali Khan and the brothers of Ibrahim Haji and Mirza Mohammad and his son in the camp of Lotfali (Hosseini, 2009).

Abdul Rahim Khan Zand caused disrupting camp. Lotfali returned the city of Shiraz but he did not allow him. His Semirom camp was looted too. Haj Ibrahim by threatening those people in Lotfali Khan's camp led that not >10-12 people stayed.

He also appealed Agha Mohammad Khan to send troops to Shiraz and Agha Mohammad Khan by sending forces to Shiraz finally went there and were welcomed by Haji Ibrahim Sheriff (Alsaltane, 1367).

Capturing Kerman: Kerman has been very important city since the ancient period to the present of Iran. It is natural that this city has special condition to the South East and Sistan and Baluchistan and even has interactive communication with Afghanistan.

At the time of Karim Khan, Kerman citizens led by Taqi Durrani rebelled against Karim Khan and by sending some armies, could crush them. Kerman was one of the cities that had fallen to the forces of Qajar and Fath Ali Shah ruled it by his uncle and received taxes and sent them but their domination of the city was fragile.

However, at this time, Lotfali Khan moved to Kerman but did not enter Kerman, then moved towards Tabas. Amir Hassan Khan advised him that to be helped by Afghan Timor Shah then, he moved to Cain but when he was there, heard that Timor Shah died some time ago (Hedayat, 1960) but envoy of Mohammad Khan, the great son of Afghan Azam Khan and Jahangir Khan, son of Mohammad Khan al-Sistani's son living in Normashir and Bam reached there and demanded from Zand Khan that by his commitment, wanted to conquer Kerman (Hedayat, 1960).

In Rabi al-Awal 1208 AH, Lotfali entered Narmashir and the ruler granted him 500 Afghans to capture Bam and he also captured Bam (Hosseini, 2009). Lotfali Khan then captured Kerman and struck coins in his name. At Shawwal, Agha Mohammad Khan moved from Tehran to Kerman to fight with Lotfali Khan (Alsaltane and Ali, 1991). From Khordad 1173 equaled with Zi Qadeh 1208 AH, he besieged Kerman for five months and even ordered a castle to conquer the city.

He ordered Baba Khan next Fath Ali Shah to capture the Normashir and Bam Afghans. Followed by famine and leaving tens of thousands of Kerman and betrayal of Najaf Khan in Rabi al-Awal 1209, Kerman was crashed and Lotfali Khan took refuge in Bam.

A few days later, Sistanis arrested Lotfali Khan to change with Jahangir Khan whom thought arrested in Kerman by Khan Qajar. Jahangir Khan came but they surrendered Lotfali Khan to the Qajar. It seems that the behavior severity showed by Khan Qajar in Kerman represented that form the fear, brought Zand Khan.

Agha Mohammad Khan blinded Lotfali and sent to Tehran and he went to Shiraz. About a month later, from Shiraz, he wrote a letter to the governor of Tehran and asked him to make Lotfali killed and buried in the shrine of Zaid. Maybe, placing in Shiraz made him realize that despite surviving Khan of Zand, it is not possible for an integration in mind, so you can say that he was forced to remove the Khan of Zand.

HIGHER THAN ARAS AND GEORGIA

In Dhu al-Hijjah 1209 AH and during summer, he surrounded Ibrahim Khalil Javanshir in Shushi castle. But Shushi Khan by sending a mail obeyed and sent one of his sons as hostages to Khan Qajar and Agha Mohammad Khan avoided to attend him.

After this, the other Khans of higher Aras including Iravanian Mohammad Khan Qajar, Javad Khan Ganjei, Malek Gholi and Malek Ismail, the head of the Armenian Caucasus and Sheikh Ali Khan, son of Fath Ali Khan and the Dome of the Hosseingholi Khan Badkoobehi attended to the Khan Qajar all with gifts and confirming obey.

Agha Mohammad Khan wrote a letter to Oracle Khan as governor of Georgia and said that there should also be incorporated into the kingdom of Iran (Alsaltane and Ali, 1991).

By refusing the governor of Georgia, the Khan Qajar decided to go to Georgia. He then consulted with others to decide about continuing war in Tbilisi.

Some voted to return to Tehran, some Ardebil and to continue operations next year and finally he accepted young people ideas to continue the operation.

Agha Mohammad Khan forces was about forty thousand people who went to the Ganje and from there toward Tbilisi. Oracle also came out. Oracle retreat and then out of the city. Agha Mohammad Khan entered there and ordered to kill 70 people and get princes and their relatives as hostages. In October, he returned to the Gnaje. He gathered young people and caress them and said I was your lawyer and did as your consulting.

Khorasan: After returning from Georgia in the Ordibehesht of 1175 equivalent of Shawwal 1210 AH, was crowned in Tehran and after a few days moved to Khorasan. But the severity of the behavior that he showed in Kerman led that as going to Mashhad, He confronted no resistance from the remnants of Nadir as Shahrukh and his children but also welcomed Agha Mohammad Khan Army.

Mirza Mohammad Mehdi along with Shahrukh welcome them. Afghan Timor Shah children have together

full of ups and downs but we can say that because of fear, responded to correspondence Agha Mohammad Khan positively.

Khan Qajar as reaching Mashhad wrote a letter to the son of Timur Shah as the ruler of Kabul and asked him to grant Balkh to the Iran. Also he wrote a letter to the governor of Herat, another son of Timur and called him to obey the central government. They were grandchildren of Ahmad Khan Abdali and the relatives of Nader, so that after the death of Nadir, Ahmed Khan went to Kandahar and he died before Karim Khan and his son Timur was the successor and now his sons were ruling.

Both brothers obeyed (Alsaltane and Ali, 1991) and then wrote a letter to Uzbek Shahmorad Khan who saw the behavior of Agha Mohammad in the city of Kerman and Marv and since the ruler is one of the Khans of Qajar and the government took a long time to settle, in this letter, Agha Mohammad Khan complained his behavior. The letter has this content: Balkh Bami and Marv and Shahyjan and Zamin Davar and Sistan and Kandahar and Kabul have been parts of Iran's king and the old Kane of Iran and Turan will not be renewed.

Establishing a reign: Karim Khan did not use the title of King and did not chose the Crown or Prince. After his death, the king was not used by the Khans of Zand but they found little favor in such a way that Alimorad Khan changed the center of government from Shiraz to Isfahan and the used the word king to himself. But actions by Agha Mohammad Khan to establish a reign in addition to the integration include:

Determining the coronation and Crown Prince: Khan Qajar since the year 1200 BC stand on the throne Crown Prince several times and then determined his nephew, Fath Ali Shah as his successor. It is noteworthy compared to the fiefdom in which we do not see that Khan, though Karim Khan, tries to determine the crown prince. The exact point in his behavior is that to call himself as the king and only after the year 1210 BC it is posed. This is because that it did not want to use this before extending its dominance to the whole of Iran and it would be trying to mislead anyone. After the assassination of Nadir Shah, everyone told himself as king such as Ibrahim Shah and Adil Shah, while each lasted a year or most of them were captured by another Khan. The two documents at the National Archives about Agha Mohammad Khan show this topic.

In the document before following October 1210 BC, his signature is seen under the letter and in a document related to 1211 BC, the stamped is on the top of the letter.

The first picture is related to the rulers of the states and territories, etc., while the second is related to the king.

In the spring of 1200 AH (Hedayat, 1960) while capturing only Mazandaran and Tehran, on Farvardin 1204 AH (Alsaltane and Ali, 1991) and in year 1209 he did ceremony of enthronement and appointing successor. In total, as he completed his work in any amount, the question of succession is done and also further consolidate the trend.

Killing possible contenders for his succession: One of the individuals claiming to be the rule and had a great effort for Qajar empowerment was his brother Jafar-Qoli Khat that killed him at Muharram 1205 AH (Hedayat, 1960). Agha Mohammad Khan deceitfully led him to Tehran and after meeting order several people to catch him and kill him. Khan Qajar took the dead brother and hit his face and then turned to Fatali Khan and said that I killed him because of you, because if he were alive, he would not allow you to be the crown on your head and Iran became since the fight. I killed him and I am ashamed against God and the people (Malcolm, 1983).

Religious politics and respect for the scholars charisma of kingdom: Karim Khan's religious policies should be considered as a tolerance against religion, i.e. the trend that started from Nadir period and then continued that can also be interpreted as a kind of de Safavid. For example, Karim Khan refused to pay stipends to students (Asif and Hashim, 1969).

One of the things that Agha Mohammad Khan in addition to Shariah, was respect to scholars and holy. Respect for scholars more likely than their personal beliefs is related to religion and scholars for social cohesion. He banned drinking because the use of opium is high and asked religious scholars to issue a fatwa to forbid the use of opium.

The king has been approved by God and he is their backup and it is used as a kingdom of glory in most cultures and in the ancient Iranian, has mythical culture. About the Khan Qajar, it is also quoted that: In Tbilisi fight with a mass offog, Agha Mohammad Khan put his head bowed and said that the Lord I am not worthy of the kingdom and displaced the Muslims and brought with me and I hope your bounty and people saw how quickly the fog is removed.

Agha Mohammad Khan also satisfy society's religion and behaviors. For example, Agha Mohammad Khan in Qom in Ordibehesht of 1204 AH lost its path and to find water, Khan Qajar for more two consecutive days did not break his fast (Hedayat, 1960).

In Shawal 1204 ordered to repair the tomb of Imam Ali (Alsaltane and Ali, 1367) and gilded shrine of Imam Hussein in 1206 AH.

THE USE OF VIOLENCE AND SHOWING DETERMINATION

The power uses three punitive, encouragement and persuasion tools and three institutions of personality, property and organization grant the right to use and apply it (Galbraith, 1991).

The pressure and the threat of coercive power to implement actions that will bring painful results to study of the submission of success.

On the contrary, the incentive power by proposing reward and positive behavior by giving something with value given, reach its goal.

Power of persuasion is applied through a change of idea. Encourage and promote, education and social or other appropriate measures that are natural, clean and rightly, led to surrender and pleasure for another person or people (Galbraith, 1991).

Punitive power tool is the use of physical force. (Galbraith, 1991). It is better to obey from the fear than obey from the bonuses.

Submission that was achieved through the promotional power of obedience and submission is weaker than fear of punitive punishment (Galbraith, 1991).

So you have to think that this was the way to dominate and rule is creating fear. So we see consider violence.

But the volume of work that has been done should be compared to people's living conditions and we should consider computer the relations between people and violence probably among the Institutionalized and misery that people had also taken. The scary behavior should be so that the necessary authority is shown.

John Malcolm says that I asked Haj Ibrahim whether Agha Mohammad Khan had courage or not and he replied:

His courage is not in doubt but as far as I remember, he did not put something for his hand and as far as he could take things forward deceitfully (Malcolm, 1983). He was smart enough, so that some researchers noted him as wily character and they even wrote a book on this topic.

CONCLUSION

In the great Iranian nation's history, there has been a period of centralization and decentralization of power.

Centralization of the Safavid period led to the decentralization of power in the Nadir period. Karim Khan as seeing great interest in the people opposed to the empire, neglected to put the crown on his head. Decentralization continues until the people want the more broad and powerful government. So, Agha Mohammad Khan by understanding this, begin integrating Iran.

Given that power tool depends on the person and obeying different areas with a feeling of fear was better than the other cases and on the other hand, given that in that period there was rudeness in minds and behaviors and probably not in this way, the ruling could not prove his authority, violent behavior can be seen.

If he did such behavior in Kerman early to assume these people, it must be concluded that he is murderer and his practice has been in this condition. But this was done in the early months of the year 1209 AH, i.e., in the period of consolidation, he might come to the conclusion that establishment of empire is possible. So with this behavior, any rebellion and independence is eliminated as well as in distant countries from Iran, fear be created.

Agha Mohammad Khan had the great aim to revive the Persian Empire and we have seen how this objective is pursued and finally was killed in the same way.

And the last thing is that some people suggest that a certain tribe is Turkish or Persian or Lor or other people. There is no doubt in these reports. But it should be noted that all of people considered themselves Iranians such as we see in the letter of Agha Mohammad Khanto Shahrmorad Beg Khan Uzbek and called himself as the King of Iran. Iran is a big country and of course, the way one of the strengths is existing many tribes there.

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