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**DAGESTAN AND IRAN: HISTORICAL EXCURSUS AND
MODERNITY**

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Abstract

The article deals with the historical aspect and the current state of trade and economic cooperation between Dagestan and Iran. Iran has been and remained a major trade and economic partner of Russia and the trade volume has been constantly growing. Dagestan is a link between Russia and Iran. The development of trade and economic relations in the 19-21 centuries is of relevance. The article represents the role of Derbent, Kizlyar as trade centers within Dagestan, Russia, the Trans-Caucasian region and Iran. Historical relations of Dagestan and Iran have been known for centuries. Beginning from the 3rd century, from the reign time of Sassanid dynasty kings up to Nadir Shakh marches (1730 - 1747), Dagestan did not cease to be the object of Iranian politics strategic plans. The sphere of Iran's greatest influence included South Dagestan, particularly, Derbent. Judging by documents stored in the CSA of RD, Persian immigrants led active trade, had their own shops, stores, adhered to national customs and traditions. The authors have also analyzed main patterns of current trade development and economic relations between Dagestan and Iran. The article concludes that creation of a free economic zone in Dagestan will contribute to enhancing trade economic and scientific technical cooperation with Iran and other foreign countries, to ensuring a favorable environment for attracting foreign and domestic investment and modern and highly efficient technology to Dagestan. In our time, a revival of Dagestan - Iranian economic, cultural and religious ties is taking place.

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Keywords: Iran, Dagestan, history, collaboration, trade, relations.



1. Introduction

Russian-Iranian relations have a centuries-old history. Russian-Iranian relations history shows that the main task of two countries is to preserve and maintain a positive process of bilateral relations, giving them a sustainable character, since they have gained valuable experience of collaborative work in multilateral cooperation. Iran, by virtue of its geostrategic position, economic and military potential, is a very important foreign policy ally of Russia in the south. Dagestan is a link in collaboration between Russia and Iran. Dagestan-Iranian cultural ties go back to ancient times. Many written, archaeological, epigraphic, lexical, ethnographic sources and monuments attest to the wide spread among the Dagestan peoples of the Iranian culture. An increase among the Iranian population in South Dagestan was observed in XVII - XVIII centuries. The resettled nations carried their culture, namely, language, literature, customs, traditions, cultural mode of life, etc.

There was a mutual influence and mutual enrichment of cultures. A powerful factor contributing to the development of cultural relations and the culture integration of different peoples is trade relations. The spread of the Persian language in Dagestan environment was also facilitated by the trade relations of our peoples. In the study period, we can point out the trade development in the domestic and foreign markets of the country. In Derbent, the population was engaged in the growing of madder, saffron; so as carpet weaving, silk fabrics production, weapons, and tanning were developed. Metalworking also achieved significant development in the Derbent Khanate. (Magomedov, 2001). In addition to Derbent, Kizlyar, Tarki, Andirey and Aksay became the trade centers both within Dagestan and Russia, the Trans-Caucasian region and Iran.

The population of Kazi-Kumukhskij Shamkhalism also took an active part in transit trade. Kazi-Kumukhsk people traveled to Iran, bought silk on the Iranian markets, various silk products, sold in Terek, Astrakhan, Kabarda, Crimea. They bought in exchange fabrics, furs, firearms, iron, copper, which were resold both in Shamkhalism and in the markets of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Iran. Persian merchants came to Derbent, Astrakhan, Russian cities with their goods (natural paints, silver, carpet products, etc.). The Iranian money were in circulation in Dagestan. Until the middle of the 19th century, the entire merchant, business, and diplomatic correspondence in Derbent was conducted mainly in Persian. (Kizlyarsky commandant, 1762).

Kizlyar city acquired the particular importance as the center of Russian-Dagestan trade in the second half of the XVIII century. (Inozemtseva, 2001). Political, diplomatic, trade and cultural relations between Russia and the Caucasus, and the countries of the Middle and Near East were carried out through Kizlyar. "Interested in trade not only with the peoples of the North-Eastern Caucasus, but also with Iran, which was carried out through Primorsky Dagestan and across the Caspian Sea, Russia created a trading company or a "merchant society trading" in Persia to encourage trade with Iran and Asian countries. It owned a monopoly right to trade Russian and foreign goods through Astrakhan and Kizlyar with Iran and Caucasus feudal possessions. (Inozemtseva, 2001). "The company for goods sale and exchange with Iran on a dry route through Kizlyar and water - across the Caspian Sea" was created in 1758 in Russia. (Mamedova, 2001).

Many peoples lived in Kizlyar in XVIII century: Russians, Armenians, Jews, Persians, Nogais, etc. The city was divided into eight blocks (Armenian, Georgian, Tatar, Circassian, Kazan Tatars and Persian).

The Persian Block was called Dezik-aul (Tezik-aul) (Aliyev, 1999). The old name of Absiyahkent city is of some interest to us; ab-e syjyakh is translated from Persian as “black water” (Orazaev, 2003).

It should be noted that the spread of the Persian language and literature in Dagestan was associated with the appearance of Iranian sewage-disposal worker from the middle of XIX century. Political and economic dependence on industrialized countries is observed in Iran in XIX century. The difficult economic situation forced Iranian people to work as seasonal workers. According to official figures, between 15 and 62 thousand migrant workers from Iran were registered in 1891-1905 in the Caucasus (Gods, 1994). A quarter of all workers in industry and transport were Iranians in Dagestan (History of Dagestan, 1968). Many Iranians settled in Dagestan, took Russian citizenship. According to the Statistics Committee of the Dagestan Region, the Persians lived not only in the cities of Derbent, Port-Petrovsk, Temir-Khan-Shura, but also in Kaitago-Tabasaran, Kyurinsk, Samursk and other regions. According to the family lists of Dagestan city residents for 1886 the total number of Persians was 9242 people. (Nagieva, 2005). Persian population at the census of 1926 was 3448 people in the Agrarian ASSR (Nagieva, 2005).

An interesting material is provided by archival sources about the field of the Iranians activity in Dagestan. Some of them were engaged in traditional fruit-growing and gardening for their country. E.I. Kozubsky notes: “In Shura, Persian citizens living by renting land, through diligence and knowledge, achieved good results” (Dagestan collection, 1904). Among Iranians, laborers, bakers, shoemakers, capers, watchmakers, traders, merchants of different guilds, mullahs, cadians, teachers could be found. (Family list, 1886). Persians owned land plots in Kafyr-Kumukha, Kumtorkala, Chiryurta, Tarki, Dzhengutaya (List, 1886a), had factories. For instance, brick factories in Port-Petrovsk (List, 1886b), soap and brick factories in Temir-Khan-Shura belonged to the Iranians; Tobacco Factory "Dagestan" belonged to Haji Alesker Mammadov; the confectionery factory of “Firuze” trade and industry partnership was owned by the Persian submitted Aga Adzhibekov, the Port-Petrovsk soap factory was owned by Ismail-bekh Adzhibekov, Jafar-Muhammad Hasan-ogly owned the brick factory. Temir-Khan-Shura kept a bakery, Persian submitted Ibrahim Asadov conducted an extensive trade in groceries and fancy goods (Office of governor, 1902).

2. Problem Statement

The article investigates a new, not introduced into scientific circulation material related to the spectrum of Iran-Dagestan relations at the present stage. New archival sources describing the historical process under consideration were included, in particular, documents of the Central State Archive of the Republic of Dagestan, funds 2, 21, 379. It should be added to the above that the article based on the analysis of a significant number of domestic and foreign authors scientific works, using documents and other materials, provisions have been substantiated that make a significant contribution to expanding the understanding of the historical aspect and the current state of trade and economic collaboration between Dagestan and Iran.

The theoretical and practical significance of the study is determined by the fact that the study results can be widely used in the preparation of fundamental scientific works on the history of the Republic of Dagestan, in general, the North Caucasus peoples, in further studying the problems of complex and contradictory modern geopolitical processes in Caspian region. The materials of this project may be useful

for specialists in oriental studies; they are also used in the preparation of special courses and special seminars at the history departments of state universities and other humanitarian universities of the North Caucasus, the Russian Federation.

3. Research Questions

Based on the analysis of available sources and literature of domestic and foreign origin, the research work sets the goal of a complex and comprehensive coverage of this topic, paying particular attention to the source study and historical graphical base. Reaching this goal is provided by the solutions of the following issues:

- study, systematize and summarize the available source material;
- identify the role of Dagestan in Russian-Iranian relations as a factor of stability in the Caspian region;
- conduct a comprehensive study of the historical experience of Russian-Iranian cooperation in order to identify the main problems and contradictions which it is faced with, as well as to reveal the most important trends in the development of this cooperation.

4. Purpose of the Study

Based on the analysis of available sources and literature of domestic and foreign origin, the research work sets the goal of a complex and comprehensive coverage of this topic, paying particular attention to the source study and historical graphical base.

5. Research Methods

The methodological and theoretical basis for the study and coverage of complex issues and research work problems will serve as the basic principles and methods of historical research, being complementary to each other.

The main one is the method of historicism, which involves the study of any historical fact or phenomenon in specific historical conditions, in the strict relationship and interdependence of the studied events, their organic connection with the past and prospects in the future. A certain place in the study of various topic aspects was taken by the method of retrospection, without implementing of which it seems to be difficult to recreate the complex picture of international relations of the given period in the dialectical interconnection and chronological sequence, especially among frequently encountered discrepancies between different sources and literature.

Equally important significance belongs to the comparative analysis method, which enables to identify the characteristic features of past and present events, to find similarities and differences in the opinions of various domestic and foreign authors. The appropriate combination and integrated use of the advantageous aspects of these methods allow to illuminate the problem posed in this project entirely..

6. Findings

Dagestan-Iranian historical ties, dating back to ancient times, continue in our time. Iran is the main trading partner of Dagestan. According to the Republican Ministry of Economic Development, in 2017 the

foreign trade turnover between them amounted to \$ 34.5 million, including exports - \$ 2.6 million, imports - \$ 31.9 million (Rogulin, 2018). For comparison, the analysis of customs data shows that in the first half of 2011, Dagestan's foreign trade turnover with Iran amounted to \$ 102233 thousand, including exports - \$ 14282.2 thousand, imports - \$ 87950.8 thousand ([http : //news.iran.ru/](http://news.iran.ru/), 2012).

The Memorandum on trade, economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation signed on 13, December, in 1997 between the government of the Republic of Dagestan and the Ministry of Development of the Islamic Republic of Iran plays a significant role.

Iranian companies are interested in establishing contacts with representatives of the Republic of Dagestan and creating joint ventures.

In September 2004, a delegation of representatives of large oil refineries from Iran and Cyprus headed by the chairman of the Iranian tanker company Mohammed Suri and the chairman of the board of "Green Shipping Holding" Jan Bonde Nilsson visited Makhachkala with a working visit. Members of the foreign delegation examined the object territory of Makhachkala tank farm and Makhachkala international seaport. An agreement was reached on the supply of Russian oil to the oil refineries of Iran. In addition, the joint Iranian-Cypriot company "Caspian Maritime Ltd" put forward an initiative to create a special installation of the so-called "marine" or "offshore" loading and unloading of oil products near Makhachkala without transport directly to the onshore terminal. This reduces the transporting oil cost from \$ 30 to \$ 20 per ton. Within the framework of the project, large tankers are planned to be built with a displacement of at least 63 thousand tons, which can transport oil products (9–12 million tons per year) from Makhachkala to the ports of Iran. In recent years, cooperation has been actively developing at the regional level with such provinces as Gilyan and Mazandaran. Thus, in 2010, during the visit of Gilan Province official delegation to Dagestan, an agreement on trade, economic, scientific, technical, cultural and humanitarian cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Dagestan and the Governorate of Gilan Province was signed. In 2011, a delegation of businessmen visited Iran with a return visit, which concluded 20 memorandums with the Iranian provinces.

In 2012 on April 11, Gilyan province official delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, headed by Governor Saadati Mehdi arrived in the Republic of Dagestan to participate in the first specialized exhibition of Iran in Dagestan, which took place on April 12, 2012 (My Dagestan, 2012) .

During the meeting, the Iranian delegation outlined the main areas in which Gilyan Province would like to develop cooperation with Dagestan. In particular, the Makhachkala International Sea Trade Port is of great interest for the Iranian side. As noted, the implementation of this project is important for both parties. Also the interaction in such areas as energy, animal husbandry, fish farming was disputed. A great potential for collaboration in tourism field was discussed.

In the period from 11 to 16 of April, 2016, the Iranian delegation, representing the largest investment company in the Islamic Republic of Iran "Hamrahian" visited the Republic of Dagestan. Six agreements were signed between the Republic of Dagestan and the Islamic Republic of Iran with the aim of expanding and strengthening the Dagestan Iranian trade and economic relations (Materials, 2008; Materials, 2017):

- an agreement between the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Republic of Dagestan and the Iranian Arsh economic group (stone and marble processing);

- an agreement between the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Republic of Dagestan and the “Hamrahian” Investment Group on the cooperation development in the field of industry and trade;
- an agreement on cooperation intention between the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Republic of Dagestan and the “Hamrakhian” Investment Group on the expansion and development of trade and economic relations between organizations and businesses operating in the territories of the Republic of Dagestan and the Islamic Republic of Iran;
- an agreement of intent between the Ministry of Agriculture and Food of the Republic of Dagestan and the “Hamrahian” Investment Group on the cooperation development in the field of agriculture and food;
- an agreement between the Iranian Investment Group “SHASTA” and the Ministry of Tourism and Folk Arts and Crafts of the Republic of Dagestan;
- an agreement between “Yugagroholding” company and the Iranian trading company “Tadzharat Gostar Astara Khazar”.

According to the Ministry of National Policy RD, on May 2, 2017, representatives of Iranian companies “Daboo Sanal”, “Mr. Chemical”, “Ross Polymer” visited the Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Dagestan with the aim of establishing direct contacts between the business circles of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Dagestan, in particular, the possibility of producing polymer products from “Ross Polymer” on the territory of the Republic of Dagestan, on the joint production of heating systems in vacant production sites of industrial enterprises of the Republic of Dagestan, on the consideration of the promoting possibility the production of “Zavod im. Gadzhyev” (“The plant named after Gadzhyev” (pumps, shut-off fittings and etc.).

One of the evidences of improved performance in the international relations field with the Islamic Republic of Iran was adopted by an order of the Head of the Republic of Dagestan on April 20, No.60 “On the formation of the interdepartmental commission on ensuring the unimpeded turnover of agricultural products between the Russian Federation and the Islamic Republic of Iran through Makhachkala sea trade port” within the project “Green the corridor”.

The creation of the so-called “green” customs corridor for Iranian goods following through the FSUE “Makhachkala Sea Trade Port” will accelerate the clearance of customs procedures and simplify the overall subject work of foreign economic activity.

FSUE “Makhachkala Trade Sea Port” transports goods in the direction of Makhachkala - the seaports of Iran Amir- Abad, Enzeli, Neka, Nov Shakhr - Makhachkala. The table of key performance indicators for the processed cargoes item by JSC “MMTP” for 2010 - 8 months of 2018. (<http://mmport.ru>) is presented in Tables 1, 2 below.

Table 01. Key performance indicators of the processed cargo items by JSC “MMTP” for 2010 - 8 months of 2015

Indicator		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		8 months of 2015	
		to Iran	from Iran	to Iran	from Iran								
1	CHO Volume bulk-carrier in total	706.9	2.6	531.7	70.7	514.6	255.5	111.4	333.1	349.0	337.4	217.3	82.8
	including:												
1.1	bulk	183.7	0.0	200.2	44.4	167.6	253.7	11.0	330.7	12.6	335	4.7	81.9
	including:												
*	coal, chark, concentrate	180.4	0	193	9	163.6		11.0		3.8			
*	others	3.3	0	7	11	4.0	14.6		11.9	8.8	4.4	4.7	0.0
*	cement		0		24		239.1		318.8		330.6		81.9
1.2	corn	158.1		57.1		164.3		91.9		306.1		164.8	
1.3	timber loads	3.8	0.0	3.9	0.0	5.8		7.9		21.1		18.2	
1.4	General cargo total:	361.3	2.6	270.5	26.3	177.0	1.8	0.6	2.4	9.2	2	29.7	0.9
	including:												
*	metal is not in deal	361.1		270		176.5				8.5		29.1	
*	cargo on ferries	0	0										
*	cargo in large containers	0.2	2.6	0.5	2.6	0.5	1.8	0.6	2	0.7	2	0.6	0.9
	perishable		0		23.7				1				

Dagestan and Iran are important links in the development of the international North-South transport corridor. Makhachkala Trade Sea Port is the only non-freezing port in the Caspian Sea. With the implementation of the North-South transport corridor, it will enable to turn a part of the cargo traffic that passes through the Suez Canal towards the Caspian region, and thereby increase the traffic volume up to 100 million tons annually.

Table 02. Key performance indicators of the processed cargo items by JSC “MMTP” for 2015 - 9 months of 2018

Indicators		2015			2016			2017			9 months of 2018		
		total	including		total	including.		total	including		total	Including	
			to Iran	from Iran		to Iran	from Iran		to Iran	from Iran		to Iran	from Iran
1	CHO Volume bulk-carrier total:	423.2	254.1	96.6	414.9	412.6	2.3	365.6	333.3	32.3	328.4	290.8	37.6
	including:												
1.1	bulk	102.6	4.2	95.9	28.2	28.2	0.0	32.3	0.0	32.3	40.4	2.8	37.6
	including;												
*	coal. chark. concentrate	3.6	3.6		0.0			7.8		7.8	5.0		5.0
*	others	8.3	0.6	5.2	0.0			5.8	0.0	5.7	6.4	2.8	3.6
*	cement	90.7		90.7	28.2	28.2		18.8		18.8	29.1		29.1
1.2	corn	194.8	194.8		332.1	332.1		326.7	326.7		283.4	283.4	
1.3	timber loads	21.9	21.9		18.2	18.2		6.6	6.6		4.5	4.5	
1.4	General cargo - total:	103.9	33.2	0.7	36.4	34.1	2.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	including:												
*	metal is not in deal	102.2	32.2		32.7	32.7		0.0			0.0		
*	cargo in large containers	1.7	1.0	0.7	0.4	0.4		0.0			0.0		
*	equipment				3.3	1.0	2.3	0.0			0.0		

In our opinion, the creation of a free economic zone in Dagestan would contribute to enhancing trade economic and scientific technical cooperation not only with Iran, but also with other foreign countries, providing favorable conditions for attracting foreign and domestic investment to the Republic of Dagestan, modern and highly efficient technology, the infrastructure development in the territory of the free economic zone and adjacent territories, the creation of new jobs.

Today, the main task of our countries is to preserve and maintain a positive process of bilateral cooperation, making it sustainable, since we have gained valuable experience of collaborative work in trade and economic relations.

7. Conclusion

In the course of the study, the following has been established.

The provisions making a significant contribution to the idea expansion of Dagestan- Iranian cooperation in economic and political matters from the 18th to the 21st centuries are substantiated.

The facts confirming the conclusions about significant stabilization of Dagestan- Iranian relations at the beginning of the 20th century, and the Russian approach to cooperation with Iran having become more consistent, thoughtful and reasonable are explicated.

The basic development patterns of trade and economic relations between Dagestan and Iran are revealed.

The economic and political aspects of Dagestan- Iranian relations with the identification of their patterns, specifics and prospects, the degree and importance of both the Russian Federation and Iran in geopolitical processes of the region, and further prospects for mutually beneficial cooperation are studied.

New archival sources that characterize the considered historical process, in particular, the documents of the Central State Archive of the Republic of Dagestan, funds 2, 21, 379 are introduced.

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