

## **The Analysis of the Foreign Relations of the Kokand Khanate Based on European Sources**

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**Abstract:** This article considers the issue of modern trends in the placement of household service enterprises in modern conditions. The analysis shows that the principles of the development of the network of household service enterprises in the areas of new buildings have changed, as well as the need to improve approaches to the planning of retail and household infrastructure of residential areas. According to the results of the survey, the author studied the factors affecting the behavior of consumers of individual services.

**Keywords:** Kokand Khanate, diplomacy, foreign relations, European sources, Russia, China, “Great Game”.

### **Introduction**

In the history of Central Asia, the Kokand Khanate (1709–1876) occupies a special place due to its political, economic, and cultural activities. Emerging in the early 18th century, during the decline of the Shaybanid and Ashtarkhanid dynasties’ political power, this state rapidly unified the Fergana Valley and its surrounding regions, becoming one of the major political centers of Central Asia at that time. The Kokand Khanate achieved remarkable success not only in its internal socio-economic development but also in establishing foreign relations. The foreign policy of the Khanate was primarily determined by its geographical location. The Fergana Valley, historically one of the key branches of the Great Silk Road that connected East and West, played a crucial role in this regard. After the formation of the Kokand Khanate in this region, it sought to control international trade routes and expand its diplomatic relations. In particular, its political and economic interactions with the Russian Empire, China, and neighboring Muslim states became essential tools for ensuring the Khanate’s independence and strengthening its position in the region. The study of the foreign policy of the Kokand Khanate holds particular significance when examined through European sources. While local historical records primarily focus on internal political processes, the works left by European travelers, envoys, Orientalists, and military officers provide detailed information about the Khanate’s international relations, its role in foreign diplomacy, and its economic potential.

In the 19th century, amid the global geopolitical rivalry known as the “Great Game,” the Kokand Khanate became an arena for the conflicting interests of the Russian Empire and Great Britain, which further complicated its position in international politics. The relevance of this topic lies in the fact that studying the foreign relations of the Kokand Khanate not only helps to better understand the diplomatic processes of the past but also provides valuable insights into the historical roots of modern Uzbekistan’s foreign policy.

## Methods and Methodology

The methods and methodology applied in this research serve to ensure the accuracy, objectivity, and source-based reliability of the scientific investigation. Considering the nature of the topic, historical analysis, comparative, and systematic approaches were utilized.

Firstly, through the historical analysis method, the diplomatic relations between the Kokand Khanate and the Russian Empire were studied according to their chronological stages. This approach made it possible to identify the sequence of political processes and the cause-and-effect relationships between them.

Secondly, by applying the comparative method, the similarities and differences in foreign policies between the Kokand Khanate and other regional states were examined. This helped to reveal the unique diplomatic strategies characteristic of the Khanate.

Thirdly, the systematic approach was used to analyze the relations between the Russian Empire and the Kokand Khanate not only from a political perspective but also in terms of economic, cultural, and geopolitical factors. This allowed the topic to be explored in a broader and more comprehensive manner.

As a methodological basis, the principle of objectivity in historiography was followed. European archival sources, Russian diplomatic documents, and the works of contemporary researchers were analyzed to ensure an impartial approach to the topic. Moreover, a comprehensive approach was adopted in studying historical events, interpreting them as phenomena shaped by both internal and external factors. As a result, the application of these methods and methodologies enhanced the scientific value of the research and provided a deeper understanding of the Kokand Khanate's diplomatic activities.

## Results and Discussions

Part I. The Foreign Political Interests and Diplomatic Traditions of the Kokand Khanate. In the late 18th and the first half of the 19th century, the Kokand Khanate, as one of the emerging states of Central Asia, paid special attention to establishing and maintaining foreign relations. During this period, the Khanate's foreign policy was closely linked to its economic interests, particularly the need to control and secure trade routes. Ensuring dominance over the remaining branches of the Great Silk Road and maintaining the functioning of caravan routes passing through the Fergana Valley were among the key directions of the Khanate's foreign policy. The khans of Kokand made use of various forms of diplomatic practice. Their envoys were dispatched to neighboring states to conclude trade agreements, negotiate border issues, and strengthen political alliances. Letters of correspondence, exchange of gifts, and religious-moral messages were among the main instruments of diplomacy of that time. These practices are also recorded in European sources, where the diplomatic culture of the Kokand Khanate was highly evaluated. The foreign political interests of the Khanate were shaped by two main factors: Economic factor – the need to access trade routes and markets; Geopolitical factor – the necessity to maintain a balance between major powers such as Russia and China. Therefore, the Kokand khans sought to develop diplomatic relations both with the Russian Empire on one side, and with the Chinese Empire and neighboring Muslim states on the other. Religious aspects also held a prominent place in the Khanate's diplomatic traditions. The rulers of Kokand positioned themselves as defenders of Islam, relying on religious unity in their relations with the Emirate of Bukhara and other Muslim rulers. Thus, economic interests and religious-ideological values were harmoniously integrated into the Khanate's foreign policy. Another crucial aspect of Kokand's foreign policy was the need to maintain internal stability. Internal uprisings, conflicts, and struggles for power directly affected the effectiveness of foreign relations. Consequently, the khans often sought to strengthen their domestic political position through compromises with external powers. According to the works of European travelers and Orientalists, the envoys of the Kokand Khanate were known for their refined diplomatic etiquette. They authenticated

correspondence with special seals and strictly adhered to established protocol norms, which demonstrates that the Khanate developed its own distinctive school of diplomacy.

Part II. Relations between the Kokand Khanate and the Russian Empire. In the first half of the 19th century, the expansion of the Russian Empire into Central Asia became one of the most important foreign policy issues for the Kokand Khanate. Russia, seeking to advance its economic and strategic interests, began to penetrate the Turkestan region through the Orenburg, Siberian, and later the Ak-Mechet (Fort-Perovsk) directions. The Kokand Khanate, in turn, closely monitored these developments and sought to defend its own interests. Initially, the Kokand khans were interested in developing trade relations with Russia, as Russian markets offered great opportunities for Kokand merchants. Cotton, silk, leather, and precious stones were exported to Russia in large quantities, while metal goods, weapons, paper, and other industrial products were imported into Kokand territories. Although these trade relations were mutually beneficial at first, they gradually took on a political dimension as Russia's political pressure increased. Diplomatic exchanges played a vital role in bilateral relations. The Kokand khans sent letters and gifts to the Russian emperor with the aim of securing recognition of their independence and gaining trade privileges. In return, Russia sought to strengthen its influence within Kokand territory. Envoys sent via Orenburg and Tashkent served as important instruments for defining Russia's policy in Turkestan. Documents preserved in Russian archives illustrate the complex nature of Kokand–Russia relations. On the one hand, the Khanate benefited economically from Russia, but on the other, it feared Russia's territorial expansion and military pressure. These contradictions eventually led to military clashes in the mid-19th century. According to European sources, although Russian diplomats welcomed Kokand envoys warmly, their real aim was to politically weaken the Khanate. Consequently, the Kokand rulers alternated between rapprochement with Russia and distancing themselves by seeking alliances with other states. The deterioration of relations was most evident during the 1840–1850s, in the battles for Ak-Mechet and other fortresses. These confrontations were not only military but also reflected diplomatic rivalry. To preserve its territories, the Kokand Khanate was forced to balance military and diplomatic measures.

In conclusion, Kokand–Russia relations were dual in nature: on one side, there was cooperation based on trade and economic interests; on the other, political rivalry and territorial disputes. This complexity eventually paved the way for the Russian Empire's policy of subjugating the Kokand Khanate.

Part III. Relations of the Kokand Khanate with Bukhara, Khiva, and Other Muslim States. In the foreign policy of the Kokand Khanate, relations with Muslim states—particularly the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanate of Khiva—held a special place. These relations were shaped not only by economic and political considerations but also by religious and ideological foundations. Although the shared Islamic faith and common historical heritage of the peoples of Central Asia created a basis for cooperation among neighboring states, territorial ambitions and political rivalries often led to conflicts. Relations with the Emirate of Bukhara: The relationship between the Kokand Khanate and the Emirate of Bukhara had deep historical roots. Both states were located within the region of Mawarannahr (Transoxiana) and were closely linked economically and culturally. However, political interests frequently caused friction. The Bukharan emirs sought to regard Kokand as part of their natural sphere of influence, which forced the rulers of the Fergana Valley to defend their independence. In the early 19th century, the diplomatic correspondence between Khan Umar of Kokand and Emir Haydar of Bukhara reflected both the desire for cooperation and underlying territorial rivalry. Economic ties were particularly strong: Kokand merchants used Bukhara as a gateway to the markets of Iran and Afghanistan, while religious and scholarly texts from Arab countries were brought to the Fergana Valley through Bukhara. This intellectual and cultural exchange significantly contributed to the development of spiritual and educational life within the Khanate. Diplomatically, alliances were occasionally formed between the two states. For instance, negotiations were held on joint resistance against

threats from Russia and Khiva, though such alliances often proved short-lived, as both states prioritized their own geopolitical interests.

**Relations with the Khanate of Khiva:** The Kokand–Khiva relationship was more complex and conflict-ridden. Both states competed to control the main trade routes along the Aral Sea and the Syr Darya, which frequently led to clashes. The Khivan rulers often exerted political pressure on Kokand, claiming territorial dominance. As a result, numerous military confrontations occurred between the two khanates. Nevertheless, trade relations continued. Kokand merchants accessed the Khwarazm and even Caspian markets through Khiva. Diplomatic correspondence and exchange of envoys were maintained, with both sides sending gifts and appealing to Islamic unity in an effort to ease tensions. However, the growing Khiva–Russia alliance posed a serious threat to Kokand and further intensified hostilities.

**Relations with Other Muslim States:** Beyond its immediate borders, the Kokand Khanate also sought to build relations with other parts of the Muslim world, particularly Afghanistan and Iran. Trade caravans from Kokand reached the markets of Kabul and Herat, importing textiles, weapons, and other essential goods. In the spiritual sphere, the Kokand khans supported pilgrimages to Mecca and Medina, with hundreds of pilgrims traveling annually from the Fergana Valley to the Hijaz. These religious initiatives helped strengthen the Khanate's standing within the broader Islamic world.

### **General Conclusions:**

The Kokand Khanate's relations with Muslim states were twofold in character: on one hand, they were driven by religious unity, trade, and cultural exchange; on the other hand, they were marked by territorial rivalry and political conflict.

4. **Economic and Cultural Factors in the Foreign Policy of the Kokand Khanate** Economic interests and cultural factors played a significant role in the foreign policy of the Kokand Khanate. In its external relations, the Khanate focused not only on political and military matters but also paid great attention to economic benefits. In particular, controlling trade routes, concluding customs agreements with neighboring states, and gaining access to European and Russian markets were integral parts of the Khanate's foreign policy. Although the Kokand Khanate did not establish direct diplomatic relations with European states, their economic influence was felt through various intermediaries. For example, European goods entered the territory of the Khanate through Russia, while in return, the Khanate exported cotton, silk, and precious stones. This exchange played a vital role in the development of the Kokand economy. Cultural factors were also among the important aspects of foreign policy. Alongside promoting Islamic values, the Kokand khans paid great attention to the development of science and literature within their domain. This contributed to strengthening ties with other Muslim states. Thus, the Kokand Khanate sought to present itself not only as a regional political power but also as a cultural and intellectual center.

### **Conclusion**

The foreign policy of the Kokand Khanate was one of the most complex and multifaceted processes in nineteenth-century Central Asia. The Khanate's diplomatic activities were aimed not only at preserving its independence but also at protecting its economic, cultural, and regional geopolitical interests. Relations with the Russian Empire, as well as with China and neighboring Muslim states, were the main factors shaping the Khanate's foreign policy strategy.

The analysis shows that the Kokand Khanate sought to develop its economic resources, control trade routes, and expand connections with international markets. At the same time, by promoting cultural and scientific activities, the Khanate succeeded in strengthening socio-cultural relations with other Muslim countries. This made Kokand not only a political but also a cultural center. Research based on European sources reveals the complexity of the Khanate's external relations, their strategic planning, and their deep connection to global geopolitical processes. The study also shows that the activities of the Khanate during the period of the "Great Game" between Russia and Britain had a significant impact not only on local but also on regional and

international politics. Furthermore, the study of the Kokand Khanate's foreign policy is important not only for analyzing historical sources but also for understanding the historical roots of Uzbekistan's current regional and international diplomatic strategy. This research made it possible to view the Khanate's diplomatic, economic, and cultural activities as an integrated whole and provided an objective approach to the topic through a renewed scholarly analysis of historical sources. As a result, the foreign policy of the Kokand Khanate holds great scholarly significance for a deeper understanding of nineteenth-century Central Asian history. Its study serves as a valuable source not only for historiography but also for regional geopolitical research. The research offers a broader and deeper understanding of the Khanate's role in maintaining regional political balance, managing international relations, and contributing to cultural and intellectual development.

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