

# Issues Related to the Activities of Princes in the State Administration System of the Khiva Khanate

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## **Abstract:**

This article reflects on the history of State rule of the Khiva Khanate in the XVI–XIX centuries. Based on historical works written between this period, the data of sources and travelogues, representatives of the ruling dynasty are covered by issues related to the development of spiritual and spiritual, physical maturation of crown princes, upbringing as a mature person in every possible way and preparing them for Public Administration. The article focuses on showing general and private aspects in the education of representatives of the young ruling dynasty.

**Keywords:** Khiva Khanate, public administration, legitimization, Prince-Torah, upbringing, etiquette, criterion, oltun qabaq, Sadaq wedding.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the history of Uzbek statehood, the Khiva Khanate played a significant role in developing the governance skills of young members of the ruling dynasty, particularly heirs and princes. Special attention was paid to their comprehensive development as well-rounded individuals. Beyond the general rules of political legitimacy, great emphasis was placed on their personal qualities, from morality to military skills. This article highlights issues related to the spiritual, mental, and physical development of princes and their preparation for state governance.

As emphasized, serious attention was given to princes acquiring comprehensive knowledge. Sometimes, if princes neglected their duties or were indifferent, they were punished. For instance, Muhammad Rahim Khan II punished his 10-12-year-old grandson Nosir Tura with ten lashes for not attending madrasa, a punishment carried out publicly. This served as a lesson not only to other princes but also to people of various social strata [7, p. 85]. Rulers held weekly reading sessions at

the palace, attended by both princes and military personnel [5, p. 257]. Additionally, during examinations of madrasa students, high-ranking officials and scholars, along with the heir prince, participated [3, p. 46; 23, p. 116]. These events were aimed at testing the princes' knowledge and developing their oratory skills and public conduct.

## MAIN PART

Princes read many religious and secular books to enhance their knowledge. Some works were translated from other languages for this purpose. Notably, the court historian Muhammad Rizo Ogahiy (1809–1874) translated works such as Yusuf Khos Khajib's "*Qutadghu Bilig*" ("Knowledge Leading to Happiness"), Kamal al-Din Husayn Va'iz Kashifi's "*Akhlaq-i Muhsini*" [12, p. 7; 26, p. 4], "*Futuvvatnamah-i Sultani yoxud Javonmardlik Tariqati*" (Pandnameh, 15th century), Nizam al-Mulk's "*Siyosatnama yoki Siyar al-Muluk*" ("Book of Government or Rules for Kings"), and Kaykavus's "*Qabusnama*" ("Book of Advice") from Persian and ancient Turkic languages [12, pp. 5–10].

Ogahiy focused primarily on writing and translating historical works, avoiding issues of legitimacy and political intrigue in his writings [17, pp. 51–52]. His divan "*Ta'viz ul-Oshiqin*" ("Talisman of Lovers") includes congratulatory messages, advice, and odes dedicated to newly enthroned rulers and specific princes [20, pp. 86–87]. He also wrote a 92-verse work, "*Ogahnama*" ("Book of Admonition"), dedicated to Muhammad Rahim Khan II [19, p. 55; 18, pp. 19–20] [5, pp. 192–194]. In it, he urged the ruler to be just and warned against the vices that could lead to the decline of the kingdom. This work served as a lifelong guide for Muhammad Rahim Khan II [12, pp. 5–10].

Muhammad Rahim Khan II made significant contributions to the Khorezm translation school. By his order, Bayani translated "*Tarikh-i Tabari*" from Persian to Turkish [5, pp. 207, 246]. Among the Qunghirat dynasty, there were many knowledgeable princes. According to the work "*Shajara-i Khwarazmshahi*" Rahimkulikhon's son, Isa Tura, who wrote under the pen name Khusravi, was intelligent, sharp, and interested in books and literature. In 1886, he sought permission from the khan to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca and returned in 1887 [5, p. 243]. This indicates that the prince also fulfilled the Hajj, one of the pillars of Islam.

The educators of the princes were also well-versed in knowledge. Among them were undoubtedly poets, literary figures, and historians, likely selected from the well-educated madrasa teachers. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, schools (madrasas) taught not only religious sciences but also Sheikh Attar Vali's "*Mantiq kitobi*" (Book of Logic) in Turkish and Khwaja Hafiz's ghazals. Depending on the students' abilities, they also studied the divans of Bedil and Fuzuli [3, p. 43].

During the reign of Muhammad Rahim Khan II, the cultural environment of the court flourished. He allocated funds from his treasury to repair and purchase new books for the palace library. Notably, it is recorded that he allocated eight tangas to Otajan Tura for book repairs [27, pp. 22–24].

Under the leadership of Muhammad Rahim Khan II, a work titled "*Majmuat ush-Shuaro*" ("Collection of Poets"), dedicated to the lives and works of literary figures of the 19th and 20th centuries, was created. This book was compiled by Ahmad Tabibi, son of Ali Mahram (1869–1910) [5, p. 85]. As a result of these efforts, poets such as Sayyid Homid Tura Komyob, Sa'dullo Tura, Sayyid Abdullo Tura, Otabek Tura Okil, and Sayyid Asad Tura emerged from the khan's lineage, each compiling at least one divan [10, p. 5; 29, p. 27; 12, p. 24]. Muhammad Rahim Khan II's grandsons, Abdullah and Nosirjon Tura, also established their personal libraries [27, p. 22].

Russian envoy N. Muraev reported that Khivans hardly engaged in child-rearing and often beat their children for minor reasons. He added that parents focused on teaching only religious practices without paying attention to moral upbringing [16, p. 125]. However, it appears N. Muraev misunderstood the local customs. According to local traditions, child-rearing involved unique methods often intertwined with religious concepts. Education was always accompanied by

upbringing. From the 16th to the early 20th century, educational institutions were systematized, and their number increased. By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there were a total of 120 madrasas in the khanate, with 64 located in Khiva city [30, p. 21]

It is noteworthy that music held a significant place in the cultural and spiritual upbringing of heirs and princes. Interest and attention to music were also recorded in the memories of envoys. In the 18th century, after a meeting with envoy Florio Beneveni, Khiva Khan Shergozikhon hosted a feast at his countryside residence. Attendees included Naib, Khoja, and Dostim Boy, and they were entertained by musicians [22, p. 106]. In the khan's palace, boys aged 14-18 were taught to play musical instruments and perform various dances [2, p. 15].

Not all rulers gave serious attention to music. For instance, although Abdullah Khan (1855-1856) had the talent to play the tanbur and ghijak, music was not emphasized during his reign. This lack of attention continued during the reign of Kutlimurodkhan (1856). Sayyid Muhammad Khan (1856-1864) himself played the dutar and ghijak well, and music became more popular among the people. However, due to turbulent times, no famous musicians emerged [14, pp. 10-11]. A. Vambery (1860s) noted in his memoirs that in Sayyid Muhammad Khan's court, young princes received special music lessons, and their musical knowledge was regularly assessed [6, p. 64].

Similar to the music culture of Bukhara and Kokand, the Khiva palace culture was constantly evolving [8, p. 74]. The local population of Central Asia had a high interest in music and poetry. Particularly, in the Khiva Khanate, this interest was stronger compared to Kokand, Bukhara, and Kashgar [6, p. 161]. During Muhammad Rahim Khan II's reign, musicians who performed poorly were punished by having the roof of their house demolished [28, p. 47].

There were dedicated individuals in the palace responsible for teaching music and dance, and some of their names are preserved in historical sources. Notably, Abdurahmon, Pahlavon, and Khudoybergan sarhangs can be mentioned [2, p. 334].

Physical fitness, military skills, and leadership abilities were also crucial in the upbringing of princes. Traditional games such as "*Oltin Qaboq*", "*Kok Bori*", "*Ot poygasi*", "*Arqon tortish*", "*Kurash*" and "*Kuchkor urushtirish*" organized during weddings, circumcision ceremonies, and other celebrations, helped in their physical development. Mastering the art of archery, an important aspect of military skill, was especially emphasized [13, p. 20]. Consequently, unique martial arts traditions based on "*Oltin Qaboq*," archery ceremonies, and hunting events developed in Khorezm.

In the "*Oltin Qaboq*" competition, participants were required to hit a target with an arrow accurately. The person who hit the target precisely was considered a sharpshooter and received special gifts. Competitions involved tying a coin, button, or similar object to a rope on a tree at a height of 15-20 meters (1 gaz = 0.71 meters) [9, p. 261]. In some cases, a pumpkin with a gold coin inside was placed on top of a 40-50 meter pole [25, pp. 180–181].

Archers would shoot at the pumpkin while galloping on horseback from the starting line. This competition was primarily held among military soldiers. In the 16th century, Bukhara's military also participated in pumpkin competitions before battles [24, pp. 114–115].

After the "*Sadoq Toyi*" ceremony in the khanate, adolescents gained the right to participate in ceremonies and military exercises. Many of them directly participated in battles, often leading the initial attacks. According to the "*Shajarai Turk*" members of the dynasty who reached the age of "*Sadoq bog'lash*" (tying the bow) could directly engage in state governance and were considered of marriageable age. Historical sources indicate that during the reigns of Hasanqulikhan (1519–1524) and Khudoydodkhan (1687–1688), many adolescents tied the bow [4, p. 124].

Eltuzarkhan (1804–1806) also held a "*Sadoq Toyi*" for the people [1, p. 180; 15, p. 193]. These ceremonies served to test and develop the physical and military readiness of the younger generation. They also played a significant role in proving the princes' suitability for state governance.

When princes reached adulthood and were taken on their first journey with the ruler, a celebration was held. For instance, Abu'l-Ghazi Khan's son Anusha Sultan's first journey was to Karmana at the age of fourteen. Upon his return, a grand celebration was held, and he was given the governance of Hazarasp with a banner and troops [4, p. 187].

Eltuzarkhan also hosted a royal "Sadoq Toi" in honor of Prince Rahmonquli Tura's first journey [31, p. 111]. It is evident that after reaching adulthood, princes were taken on long or short journeys. These journeys tested the princes physically and indicated their readiness to be entrusted with the governance of a territory under the supervision of a mentor.

In some instances, adult princes directly participated in battles. The "*Shajarai Turk*" records that Akataykhan (1547–1556) participated in a battle with the Turkmens during his youth. After the battle, he married the daughter of a Turkmen commander [4, p. 149; 11, p. 267]. Although political objectives were the primary motivation, the unique beauty and various skills of Turkmen women were also considered.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the above information indicates that great importance was placed on the moral, spiritual, military, and physical upbringing of young princes, as well as their preparation for state governance. Various ceremonies held in the khanate also reflect the socio-political processes of the time. This approach underscores the practical significance of educating today's youth to be well-rounded individuals, fostering their development in the spirit of historical traditions and national values.

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