

THE ACTIVITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN THE NOMADIC REGIONS OF THE KHIVA KHANATE

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Abstract

This article provides information on the administrative-territorial structure of the Khiva Khanate, the organisation of local authorities in the regions inhabited by Turkmen, Karakalpak and Kazakh peoples, its financing, the positions within it and its activities. Information is also provided on the biys and otaliks, koshe biys, and the beks and katkhudo who organised local administration in the nomadic regions of the Khiva Khanate.

Keywords

hakim, beklik, noiblik, bek, biy, otalik, wakil, katkhudo, oqsoqol, maschitqavm, koshe biy, qo'ng'iro't, mang'it.

Since ancient times, the inhabitants of the Khiva Khanate have lived in oases along the banks of the Amu Darya and the major canals diverted from it. During enemy attacks, the population gathered in towns and villages surrounded by strong walls. Because these places were protected by sturdy walls, they were called qal'as. Later, the khanate was administratively and territorially divided into beklis (qal'a begis).

At the beginning of the 20th century, the khanate was administratively divided into 20 beklis (castle governors) and 2 naiblis [1.161]. The city of Khiva and its adjoining territories formed a separate district under the khan's authority. These beklis and naiblis were administered by hakims and noibs, who were appointed from among the great landowners, the khan's kinsmen and eunuchs. The beyliks and naiblis were as follows: 1) Pitnak, 2) Hazorasp, 3) Khanka, 4) Urganch, 5) Qo'shko'pir, 6) Gazavat (Ghazi obod), 7) Kat, 8) Shohobod (Shovot), 9) Tashhovuz, 10) Anbar-Manoq, 11) Gurlan, 12) Mangit, 13) Kilich-Niyozbiy, 14) Kipchak, 15) Porsu, 16) Ilyali (Ilonli)[2.272], 17) Ko'hna Urganch, 18) Xo'jayli, 19) Shumanay, 20) Qo'ng'iro't; 21) Beshariq, 22) Qiyot-Qo'ng'iro't[3.22-23].

The Beshariq deputyhood was administered by five deputies, based on the five Uzbek clans living there, while the Qiyot-Qong'iro't deputyhood was likewise administered by two deputies, for the same reason[4.50]. Sources list the names of the governors who administered 26 territories during the reign of Asfandiyar Khan[2.271-272].

The khans appointed and dismissed officials. In some cases, when the khans travelled to the regions, they appointed local dignitaries from among the inhabitants to office, and likewise retained and honoured those who were worthy. According to tradition, the posts of hakim were filled by holders of offices and titles such as bahodir, otaliq, mahram, khoja and devan[5.77]. In their own beyliks, the hakims were obeyed only by Uzbek clans. The remaining Turkmen were governed by a Turkman, while the Kazakh and Karakalpak tribes were administered by their own elders. The governors oversaw the above-mentioned peoples living in their own bekdarliks but did not interfere in their internal affairs without the khan's orders. The khans were responsible for tasks such as overseeing the execution of the khan's orders, resolving water-related disputes, collecting taxes and levies alongside authorised officials from the khanate, mobilising the population for public works, irrigation, repairing roads and bridges, arresting criminals, and overseeing the internal order of the principality, among others [3.23].

The Turkmen, Kazakhs and Karakalpak people did not submit to the khans and preserved their tribal traditions. The population of each ethnic group was, first and foremost, divided into various clans and governed by clan chiefs[5.78]. The clan chiefs, however, were subject to the khan. The wealthiest and most influential representatives of the clans were usually the ataliq and

the bils, who in turn served as the clans' elders. They were also confirmed by the khan, who would sometimes appoint a person from another "urug"[2.272].

The term 'elder' was known by various names among the nomadic population of the khanate. For example, among the Turkman-Yovmud they were called bek or wakil, in the other Turkman clans katkhoda, and among the Kazakh and Karakalpak otalyk and biy [3.26–27]. Among the Karakalpak, the structure within the large ovul – the koshe (street) – was governed by koshe biys who did not require confirmation by the aksoqol or the khan [5.280].

All the Karakalpak in the khanate were united by two beklarbegi. They were the Kongrat and Mangit clans, each under its own beklerbegi. They received salaries ranging from 20 to 60 tumans and were also provided with grain on a daily basis.

The scope of authority of the urug' head differed from that of the khokims of the settled population. Their influence was limited by the scale of the population (for example, the Karakalpak ulus), the ovul or the urug'. Biys and elders had the authority to settle negotiations within the clan, resolve issues of land, water and other matters, and conduct judicial proceedings in accordance with customary law norms. In the socio-political life of the nomadic population, a 'council of elders' convened by the tribal biys and composed of representatives of the biys and tribal nobility functioned as an advisory body. In the ovuls there was an ovul council[4.54-55].

The titles of otaliq and biy were usually hereditary, subject only to the khan's confirmation. Otaliqs received an annual salary of 100 to 150 tille from the treasury, and biys from 100 to 300 tille[6.87-88]. Most of the elders did not receive a salary from the treasury for their work and were mainly supported by levies collected from the people[3.25].

In short, in the territories of the Khiva Khanate inhabited by Turkmen, Karakalpak and Kazakh peoples, the local administration was formed on the basis of the historical traditions and customs of these peoples, they were governed on terms that were independent of the other regions of the khanate and were directly subordinate to the khan himself.

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