

POLITICAL EVENTS IN THE WORKS OF ABULG'OZIY BAHODIR KHAN

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Abstract: This article examines the political events described in the works of Abulg'oziy Bahodir Khan, focusing particularly on the events among the Turkmen people. The study explores the historical, economic, and cultural context of Khiva under his rule, as well as aspects of governance, taxation, agriculture, education, and law reflected in his writings. Special attention is given to his major works "Shajara-i Turk" and "Shajara-i Tarākima", which provide valuable insights into the political and social life of Central Asia and neighboring regions such as India, Russia, Turkmenistan, and Mangyshlak.

Keywords: Abulg'oziy Bahodir Khan, Khiva Khans, economy, culture, agriculture, taxation system, legislation, madrasa, India, Russia, Turkmenistan, Mangyshlak, Chaghatay, ataliq, naib, mutavalli, Shajara-i Turk, Shajara-i Tarākima.

Abulg'oziy Bahodir Khan stands out among the Khiva khans for his entrepreneurship, organizational talent, and profound knowledge. His life was marked by intense struggles aimed at centralizing the Khiva Khanate, developing the country's economy and culture, expanding and securing its borders, and subjugating the Turkmen tribes under Khiva's rule. His political career was full of significant and adventurous events.

During his twenty-year reign (1644–1664), Abulg'oziy Bahodir Khan undertook numerous reforms to elevate Khwarazm politically, economically, and culturally. He implemented administrative, legislative, and tax reforms; promoted agriculture, animal husbandry, and architecture; and initiated the construction of madrasas, schools, and mosques, as well as the advancement of science and learning. He also sought to establish broad economic, cultural, and diplomatic relations with neighboring states.

Through his envoy Davlatmand, he addressed the Russian Tsar, requesting the strengthening of trade relations between Russia and the Khiva Khanate. Similarly, Abulg'oziy sent ambassadors Shohbobo and Shohjahon to India to enhance diplomatic and commercial ties between Khiva and India. In 1648, he dispatched envoys to Shah Abbas II of Iran to promote trade and friendship between the two states. These diplomatic efforts demonstrate Abulg'oziy Bahodir Khan's prudent policy in building a centralized state and safeguarding the interests of his citizens.

Upon ascending to power, Abulg'oziy focused primarily on consolidating the state system. He removed Turkmen officials from administrative positions, confiscated their property and land, and expelled them from the khanate. Many Turkmens were forced to migrate toward southern Turkmenistan and Mangyshlak. All high-ranking positions in the khanate were entrusted to representatives of the Khivan Shaybanids. A total of 360 individuals from this dynasty were appointed to various administrative roles.

In addition, thirty-two central administrative posts were established and distributed as follows: 2 shaykh al-Islam, 1 mutavalli (trustee), 1 parvonachi (court official), 2 a'qā (supervisors), 2 arbob (managers), 4 Chaghatay inoqs, 1 naib (deputy), 4 otaliqs (guardians), 1 inoq, 4 mirobs (water managers), 4 biys (judges), 1 vizier (or mehtar), and 1 qushbegi (chief of staff). By involving

influential representatives of the Shaybanids and local elites in governance, Abulg'oziy achieved a certain degree of political stability.

In his state administration, inoqs, otaliqs, biys, and other officials played significant roles. Each tribe was assigned one inoq as its leader; lower classes and clans were headed by biys, who were subordinate to the otaliqs. Occasionally, an inoq would be appointed as the head of several otaliqs. During the enthronement of a new khan, the inoqs would lift the future ruler three times into the air on a white felt carpet — a ceremonial and honorable duty.

Government positions were divided into administrative, political, legal, religious, and military categories, with officials receiving corresponding salaries and rewards. Judicial affairs were managed by qozis (judges) based strictly on Sharia law. Salaries for inoqs ranged from 50 to 500 tillos (gold coins), while senior officials titled ulug' inoq or inoqbek received between 300 and 500 tillos.

At official court ceremonies, four seats were reserved for the inoqs. Only one of them, known as the Ulug' inoq, was entitled to sit immediately to the left of the khan after the Amir ul-umara (commander-in-chief). Other inoqs sat further down, starting from the twentieth position. Four otaliqs were also seated to the khan's left: one next to the khan, while the remaining three sat in the ninth, eleventh, and fourteenth positions. The title otaliq was granted not only to Uzbeks but also to representatives of other groups, including Karakalpaks, Turkmens, and Uyghurs. Holders of this title wore golden swords and daggers and dressed in richly embroidered robes, receiving salaries ranging from 10 to 150 tillos. Four biys sat beside the khan after the otaliqs, enjoying various privileges and remuneration.

One of Abulg'oziy's most significant domestic policies was his effort to settle the nomadic tribes of Dasht-i Qipchaq across the fertile lands of the oasis. The nomadic tribes, who called themselves "Uzbeks," were divided into four groups based on kinship and were settled across the territory stretching from Darganata to the Aral Sea. The first group, mainly composed of Uygur-Naiman tribes along with smaller clans such as Dorman, Yuz, Ming, Shaykh, and Burloq, was settled near the Aral region. The second group included the Qongiroi-Qiyot tribes along with Jaloyir and Alieli clans, while the third consisted of the Nukus-Manghit tribes, joined by Kanagas and Khojaeli groups.

Abulg'oziy Khan's second major work, *Shajara-i Turk* ("The Genealogy of the Turks"), was completed between 1663 and 1664. It is a unique historical source describing the socio-political situation of Khwarazm in the second half of the 16th and 17th centuries. When composing this work for future generations, Abulg'oziy sought to avoid fabrications and distortions and to adhere strictly to historical truth. He based his narrative on eighteen Persian and Turkic sources, as he himself states:

"I have before me eighteen chronicles recounting the names of the sons of Chinggis who ruled in Iran and Turan."

Abulg'oziy was fluent in his native Turkic language as well as Persian, Tajik, and Mongolian. He wrote his works in his mother tongue, explaining:

“I have written this book in the Turkic language so that both the learned and the simple may understand. I have added no words from Chaghatay Turkic, Persian, or Arabic, and I have written in such a clear style that even a five-year-old boy could comprehend it.”

The works of Abulg’oziy Bahodir Khan attracted the attention not only of Eastern historians and scholars but also of Russian and Western researchers. Beginning in 1770, his “Shajara-i Turk” (“The Genealogy of the Turks”) was translated from Oriental languages into Russian and became part of the corpus of translated historical literature in Russia. The work was first published in Kazan in 1825 by N.P. Rumyantsev, later in 1854 by G.S. Sablukov, and again in 1871 by P.I. Demizon. His other major work, “Shajara-i Tarākima” (“The Genealogy of the Turkmen”), was published several times in Russian, in 1898 and 1966.

The Russian translation of “Shajara-i Turk” had a significant impact on the teaching of Oriental languages and the history of Eastern peoples in Russian higher education institutions. For instance, Professor I.N. Berezin of Kazan Imperial University relied heavily on Abulg’oziy’s works in his lectures on Turkic history and in his textbook “Turkic Chrestomathy”, explicitly acknowledging “Shajara-i Turk” as a key source.

Many other scholars have studied and evaluated Abulg’oziy’s historical legacy. Munis and Ogahiy, in their “Firdavs al-Iqbol”, S.P. Tolstov in “In Search of Ancient Khwarezm Civilization”, Ya. G’ G’ulomov in “The History of Irrigation in Khwarazm”, and Bayani in “Shajara-i Khwarazmshahi” all expressed high regard for Abulg’oziy’s work. Similarly, Russian and Soviet scholars such as P.P. Ivanov and A.K. Borovkov (“Reflections on Sources of Turkmen History of the 16th–19th Centuries”), B.V. Lunin (“Essays on the History of Central Asia”), M.I. Yuldoshev (“Land Ownership and the State Structure in the Khiva Khanate”), B.V. Bartold (“The History of Cultural Life”), Q. Mumirov (“Historical Works of Munis, Ogahiy, and Bayani”), and B.A. Ahmedov (“The State of Nomadic Uzbeks”) all gave high scholarly evaluations to Abulg’oziy Bahodir Khan’s contributions.

In Western Europe, his works were translated into German, English, and French—and even published in the United States. Europe first became acquainted with Abulg’oziy’s writings in the second quarter of the 18th century. After the Battle of Poltava, Swedish officers exiled to Siberia encountered his manuscripts in Tobolsk and began translating them. The main initiator of this scholarly effort was Philip Johann von Strahlenberg. With the help of a Bukharan scholar named Akhund, who explained the contents in Russian, the Swedish orientalist Schenström succeeded in translating the work into German.

This German edition, titled “Abulgas Bahadur Chan’s Geschlechtsbuch der Mongalischen Chanen, aus einer türkischen Handschrift übersetzt von Dr. D.G. Messerschmid”, was published in 1780 under the editorship of Messerschmid. Before that, the work had appeared in French in 1726 in Brussels under the title “Histoire Généalogique des Tatars, traduite du manuscrit tartare d’Abulgasi Bahadur-Chan, et enrichie d’un grand nombre de remarques sur l’état présent de l’Asie septentrionale”, with commentary by Bendik. The French version, in turn, served as the basis for the English translation published in 1780.

The Russian scholar V. Trediakovsky also translated the French version into Russian under the title “Genealogical History of the Tatars, Translated into French from the Tatar Manuscript by

Abulgasi Bahadur Khan, and from French into Russian by the Imperial Academy of Sciences” (1770), published in two volumes.

According to G.S. Sablukov, however, not all translations of Abulg’oziy’s works are equally reliable, as none fully clarify specific historical issues. Even scholars who knew Turkic tried to render the text as accurately as possible, though interpretations varied. In order to clarify obscure phrases and verify historical data, Count N.P. Rumyantsev allocated funds for a new edition of Abulg’oziy’s work, which was printed by the Kazan University Press.

In Uzbek historiography, Abulg’oziy Bahodir Khan (1603–1663) holds a special place for his remarkable scholarly and historical legacy. He was not only the ruler of the Khiva Khanate but also a distinguished historian who documented the key political and cultural events of his era. His most famous works—“Shajara-i Tarākima” and “Shajara-i Turk”—are invaluable sources for studying the origins, political history, and ethnic composition of the peoples of Central Asia. In addition, he authored a medical treatise titled “Manāfi‘ al-Insān” (“Useful Things for Human Beings”).

Abulg’oziy’s historical writings not only depict the events of his time but also provide valuable information about the origins of Turkic peoples, their statehood, customs, and traditions. Although he employed traditional Eastern historiographical methods, he relied on precise facts and both oral and written sources, distinguishing him as not merely a ruler but also an independent historical thinker. A distinctive feature of his works is that they were based on firsthand observations and direct testimony, which gives them exceptional authenticity.

“Shajara-i Turk” and “Shajara-i Tarākima” thus remain unique sources that illuminate the ethnogenesis, genealogy, and political history of the Turkic peoples. Their significance extends beyond Central Asian historiography, contributing to the broader understanding of the historical and cultural identity of the entire Turkic world.

The most significant work of Abulg’ozī Khan is known as “Shajara-i Turk” (“The Genealogy of the Turks”). The main part of this work was written between 1663 and 1664. It serves as a rare and valuable source describing the socio-political history of his time. When Abulg’ozī began writing a work that he intended to leave as a legacy for future generations, he sought to avoid fabrications, exaggerations, and false glorifications of rulers. His aim was to remain faithful to historical truth. In “Shajara-i Turk”, Abulg’ozī Bahodir Khan presents events objectively — not as a ruler, but as a historian.

In creating this work, Abulg’ozī relied on eighteen sources written in Persian and Turkic languages. He himself states: “From the histories of Iran and Turan about the descendants of Chinggis Khan, eighteen volumes are now before this poor servant.” Abulg’ozī was fluent not only in his native Turkic language but also in Persian, Tajik, and Mongolian. Importantly, he wrote his works in his native tongue. As he wrote: “I have written this history in Turkic so that both the good and the bad may understand it. I did not mix in a single word from Chaghatay Turkic, Persian, or Arabic — it is plain and clear.”

Although “Shajara-i Turk” was left unfinished at the time of Abulg’ozī Bahodir Khan’s death, his son Anusha Muhammad Khan (1663–1687) ordered the historian Mahmud ibn Mulla

Muhammad Zamon Urganji of Urgench to complete it, adding and revising some sections. Regarding the creation of his work, Abulg'ozzi wrote: "Because of our ancestors' negligence and the ignorance of the Khwarazm people, they did not record our history from the time our ancestors separated from the descendants of Abdullah Khan (Abdullah II) until it reached us. We sought a person to whom we might entrust this work, but finding no suitable one, it became necessary for me to write it myself."

The work consists of a preface and nine chapters.

Among Abulg'ozzi Bahodir Khan's writings, "Shajara-i Tarākima" ("The Genealogy of the Turkmens") holds special importance. According to the author, this work was written at the request of Turkmen elders and leaders, in a language simple enough for ordinary Turkic people to understand. Composed between 1660 and 1661, "Shajara-i Tarākima" describes the political struggles between the Turkmen tribes and the Khiva Khanate, the campaigns aimed at bringing the Turkmens under control, and the establishment of unity between the Uzbek and Turkmen peoples.

Written in Old Uzbek, the work combines religious legends about Adam with historical facts about the Oghuz-Turkmen tribes, narrating events grounded in historical reality.

Created in the 17th century, "Shajara-i Turk" is one of the most important local sources documenting the history of the Khiva Khanate from its formation up to the second half of the 17th century. In this work, Abulg'ozzi presents significant information about the foreign policy of the Khiva Khans and their relations with other states. Relations with Iran are frequently mentioned; after Shah Ismail's death, Khiva–Iran relations improved somewhat. For instance, during the reign of Buchghak Khan, Shah Tahmasp sent an embassy to Khiva — an event of considerable importance. Shah Tahmasp is quoted as saying: "I wish to become a son to the Khan. Temurbiy became a son-in-law to the descendants of Chinggis Khan, and they still call him Temur the Son-in-Law. I, too, desire to be a son-in-law to the Chinggisid lineage. Let even my great enemy say that Shah Tahmasp took a daughter of the Uzbek ruler — a good alliance indeed."

This statement reveals that the Shah of Iran sought to strengthen political ties through marriage, much like Amir Temur's alliance with the Chinggisids. It also indicates that during this period, the Khiva Khanate's authority was relatively strong.

During Dinmuhammad Khan's rule, the situation changed. Abulg'ozzi writes: "Dinmuhammad Khan was not one to sit in peace; he was always fighting the Qizilbash, and thus Shah Tahmasp sent his army." Under Khiva Khan Hoji Muhammad Khan (Hojimkhan), correspondence and relations with the Iranian court intensified and became more regular. The worsening relations between Khiva and the Bukhara Khanate encouraged the strengthening of Khiva–Iran political ties. Against powerful rivals like Abdullah Khan II, such alliances or at least the neutrality of a third power were essential.

At the beginning of the 17th century, as in Bukhara, dynastic conflicts also intensified within the Khiva Khanate. After Hojimkhan's death, serious power struggles erupted among Arab Muhammad Khan and his sons, Elbars and Habash Sultan.

From these accounts, it becomes clear that although the relations between the Khiva Khans and the Shahs of Iran were not always stable, they were continuous and mutually beneficial. During the khanates' era, relations with Russia were also established. Although most of these contacts took place in the late 17th and 18th centuries, trade relations between Central Asian khanates and Russia had already begun earlier. However, "Shajara-i Turk" contains little information about such trade. Only one passage mentions: "In the early spring of the year of my birth, seventeen men went to Russia for trade." Yet, it remains unclear what kinds of goods were imported or exported between the Khanate and Russia.

In summary, "Shajara-i Turk" and "Shajara-i Tarākima" are not only valuable historical sources but also literary monuments that reflect Abulg'ozī Bahodir Khan's dedication to historical truth, linguistic purity, and the political realities of his time.

In "Shajara-i Turk", Abulg'ozī Bahodir Khan describes in detail the causes, course, and outcomes of wars between the Khiva and Bukhara Khanates. For instance, he explains that Ubaydullah Khan's campaign against Khiva was largely a result of internal conflicts within the Khiva Khanate at that time. Taking advantage of this favorable situation, Ubaydullah Khan formed an alliance with the descendants of Abulkhair Khan — Baroq Khan in Tashkent, Javonmard Khan in Samarkand, and the grandsons of Mamza Mahdi in Hisor — before launching his military campaign.

Regarding Abdullah Khan II's invasion of Khiva, Abulg'ozī lists three reasons for the campaign in the section titled "On the Second Coming of Abdullah Khan."

In his work, Abulg'ozī Bahodir Khan seeks to present detailed information about the social life of the Khiva Khanate — the daily life of the people, the taxation system, the activities of the khans with both their strengths and shortcomings, as well as internal and external conflicts and wars. When addressing issues of foreign policy, he mainly focuses on the political and military relations of the Khiva Khanate. However, information about the Khanate's foreign economic relations and trade contacts is scarce. The increase in political conflicts during Abulg'ozī's lifetime may have led the author to focus more on political aspects than on economic ones. Nevertheless, his work provides valuable insights into the foreign relations of the Khiva Khanate.

Conclusion

Abulg'ozī Bahodir Khan's works "Shajara-i Turk" and "Shajara-i Tarākima" are not only essential written sources illuminating the history of Turkic peoples but also outstanding examples of oral tradition, literary and artistic thought, state governance, and genealogical scholarship. Through these works, we see Abulg'ozī — the 17th-century ruler of Khwarazm — as a learned historian, writer, and enlightened thinker deeply devoted to the fate of his people.

The main ideas of his works emphasize strengthening the historical memory of the nation, honoring ancestors, promoting patriotism, and preserving traditions and beliefs as cultural values. By tracing the genealogical history of ancient Turkic rulers, Abulg'ozī sought to reinforce the political and legal foundations of his own era.

"Shajara-i Turk" and "Shajara-i Tarākima" are not merely historical chronicles; they are moral and didactic works that encourage reflection and learning from history. Even today, these works

retain their relevance, playing a significant role in fostering historical consciousness and national pride among younger generations.

Thus, Abulg'ozī Bahodir Khan's legacy is an invaluable treasure that deserves continued study within the fields of history and literary scholarship in Uzbekistan. Through his writings, we gain a deeper understanding not only of history but also of the intellectual worldview, cultural values, and heritage of our ancestors.

Both “Shajara-i Turk” and “Shajara-i Tarākima” stand as remarkable historical, literary, and spiritual monuments of their time. They provide valuable information about the origins and development of Turkic peoples, while also reflecting oral traditions, national values, patriotism, justice, leadership qualities, and timeless moral lessons.

Employing a genealogical method, the author vividly portrays historical figures and highlights the interconnectedness and unity of Turkic nations. In “Shajara-i Tarākima”, particular attention is paid to the rulers of Chinggis Khan's lineage, providing important insights into the political events, administrative structures, and internal conflicts of that era.

These two works are crucial sources for shaping historical memory and national identity. Their contemporary relevance lies in nurturing respect for ancestral heritage among the youth. Therefore, Abulg'ozī Bahodir Khan's legacy serves as a priceless academic source not only for historians but also for scholars of literature, linguistics, and cultural studies.

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