

RELIGIOUS POSITIONS IN THE EMIRATE OF BUKHARA

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Abstract: This article discusses the state administration systems in the Emirate of Bukhara, providing analysis and considerations, and subjects the religious positions and their systematic organization within it to scientific examination.

Keywords: Bukhara, emirate, administration, religious, beklik, title, position, Amir Shohmurod, ulama, otaliq, qozi, shaykh al-Islam.

In the Emirate of Bukhara, the central authority was held by the court elites: the Amir as the head of state, the Qushbegi as the chief vizier (assistant to the Amir), the Otaliq, the finance department, the Minister of War, and the judicial department (qozilik mahkamasi). Local governance was in the hands of provincial deputies (viloyat noiblari). Provincial governors (beks) were appointed by the Amir, primarily from representatives of the Manghit tribe.

In Bukhara, the highest titles (positions) and roles were granted to representatives of the "32 Uzbek tribes," Sayyids, Khojas (najib attaraf), and the ulama. During the reign of Amir Shohmurod, the status of the ulama (Islamic clergy) was very high. The ulama were also the first to congratulate Amir Haydar upon his ascension to the throne.

According to S.S. Raupov's information, he emphasizes that the holders of four main and high-ranking positions in the central administration of the emirate were considered individuals connected to the government. These were also religious titles:

1. Shaykh al-Islam – one of the religious titles, responsible for managing and overseeing religious affairs.
2. A'lam – individuals who issued fatwas on fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) matters in the state.
3. Muhtasib – an official who monitored units of measurement, scales in markets and trading rows, as well as the quality and price of artisans' products.
4. Educator-Mudarris – great importance was placed on the holders of this position in the emirate; their main duty was to teach students and educate them based on the path of Sharia.

In the Bukhara Emirate, the highest titles were Amir al-umara, Otaliq, Hakim (Wali, Bek), Qushbegi, and Diwanbegi. "Otaliq" was a person who served as guardian and tutor to a prince or princess (mainly the heir to the throne). Over time (this position was introduced during the Golden Horde), the authority and duties of this role changed; during the Manghit period, the "Otaliq" became the main representative in military and administrative affairs, as well as an advisor and trusted agent of the person who appointed the Otaliq.

During Amir Shohmurod's reign, the powers of the Otaliq were limited; he was entrusted with controlling the distribution of water from the Zarafshan River, the Bukhara canal (Rud-i Shahr), and the duties of a darughha.

When the rule of the Manghitis was established (the dynasty's rule begins from Doniyolbiy), Muhammad Hakimbiy, the father of Muhammad Rahimbiy, held the position of



"Otaliq" during the time of Abulfayzkhan. Besides this position, he also held the honorary title of Amir al-umara. According to Y. Bregel's findings, he was also addressed with attributes such as "Umdat al-Mulk," "Umdat al-A'yan," "Umdat al-Umara," and "Amir-i Kabir." Tribal leaders also held the title of Amir and were required to provide a certain number of armed soldiers from their tribesmen during campaigns and battles.

There was also the position of Diwanbegi at the court. In Bukhara in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, this official held powers equivalent to a minister. The Diwanbegi was responsible for fully overseeing financial matters, revenue and expenditure, and tax collection. Religious titles and positions included Qazis, Muftis, Muhtasib and Ra'is, and Mudarris; they were mainly appointed from among Sayyids, Khojas, and the ulama. The highest religious position was Shaykh al-Islam.

Local administration, in turn, consisted of provincial governors (bekhs) – beks and the officials subordinate to them.

In the emirate, there existed an "Upper Treasury" (omborxonayi bolo) where valuable items and goods traded by the Amir were stored, managed by the "Upper Qushbegi" (qushbegiyi bolo). The treasury where items from zakat were stored was called the "Lower Treasury," managed by the "Lower Qushbegi" (qushbegiyi poyon).

In the second half of the 19th century and early 20th century, the position of Shaykh al-Islam was replaced by Qazi Kalan.

Religious representatives participating in the council in the Amir's presence included Qazi Kalan, Shaykh al-Islam, Naqib, and Ra'is (Muhtasib).

Many scholars who have conducted research on the history of the Bukhara Emirate and its state system, when discussing religious titles, have sometimes incorrectly included Mufti, Qazi, and others. In other words, they have confused titles with positions.

In fact, in the Bukhara Emirate, there were officially three religious titles: 1) Uroq, 2) Sudur, and 3) Sadr.

Historical information indicates that a person who completed madrasa could hold positions such as Mulla, Qazi, and Ra'is. After working in the aforementioned positions for several years, based on their achievements in the field of fiqh, such individuals were first given the title of Uroq, then Sudur, and finally Sadr.

The individual who attained the last—the highest religious title—could hold religious positions such as Qazi Kalan, Mufti A'lam, and Okhun.

The power and influence of religious representatives in the Bukhara Emirate were quite significant. Regarding this, A. A. Semenov noted, "In many cases, religious representatives expressed their objections to certain decisions of the Amir, forcing him to change them, which put the Amir in an uncomfortable position." Religious representatives in the Bukhara Emirate were responsible for controlling and administering the judiciary, people's morals, and education.

All civil courts (mahkamasi) in Bukhara were administered according to Sharia, and this administration was in the hands of individuals called "Qazi."

The Chief Qazi, Qazi Kalan, was the chief Qazi of the capital and simultaneously



considered the head of all other Qazis in the emirate.

In the administrative system of the Bukhara Emirate, the "Ra'is" occupied a unique place. This role was semi-religious, semi-regulatory in nature.

In the Bukhara Emirate, the Chief Ra'is was usually called Eshon Ra'is or Ra'is Ush-Shariat. All local ra'ises were subordinate to the Chief Ra'is. The Chief Ra'is kept them under review before the Amir.

Amir Muzaffar is considered the sixth Amir to ascend the throne in the Manghit dynasty. By this period, a unique system of state administration political structure had already emerged based on Manghit rule.

The official next in rank after Qazi Kalan was considered Ra'isi Kalan. He was also known as Eshon Ra'is. His apparatus included temporary deputies (khalifa), deputies (naib), durradast, assistants (mulozim), secretaries (mirza), mirakhorboshi, diwanbegi, tarakachi, investigator, and shahar mirab.

In the presence of Amir Muzaffar, along with the aforementioned high-ranking officials, the following officials also served: the Parvonachi who delivered the Amir's decrees, the Hidoyachi who constantly accompanied the Amir, the Shig'ovul who served as the Amir's advisor and received foreign guests, the Tongotar who protected the Amir's peace and tranquility, the Salom Og'asi who received and responded to all salutations and respects directed at the Amir, the Dasturxonchi responsible for the Amir's table, the Imomi Jilov who called to prayer during the Amir's travels, the Mufti Jilov who dealt with legal matters during the Amir's travels, and the group of the Amir's advisors – Jamg'a, among others.

Bekliks, in turn, were divided into lower administrative management systems, governed by aksakals, while in rural areas, the position of Amin was introduced, who managed the water economy of the beklik.

Governing the state, developing it, ensuring the prosperity of the people, and providing them with a peaceful life largely depend directly on this state system, the historical figure who led it, the proper organization of state administration, and by whom and in what manner this system was managed.

The capital of the emirate, Bukhara, and its surrounding districts were governed directly by the Amir. Provincial beks were considered relatively small territorial divisions, amlok properties, and their administrators were called officials. The lowest link in the emirate's administrative structure was the rural communities, governed by aksakals.

Starting from the period of Amir Muzaffar, all legal norms in the emirate were decided by Qazis. All civil, economic, and criminal cases were considered based on the Quran, and punishments were prescribed. Qazis were appointed by the Qazi Kalan according to the will of the Amir. Administration according to Sharia was in the hands of Qazis. The Qazi Kalan, while being the chief Qazi of the emirate's capital, was also considered the head of other Qazis in the state.

If we focus on the administrative management in the educational process of the Bukhara Emirate, at the top of the management stood the ruler of the country – the Amir. Documents of large waqf properties were often confirmed with their seals. Furthermore, in the 19th century, other petitions related to the appointment and teaching of mudarris were also addressed in the name of the country's ruler. The second highest link in educational administration was the



oversight of the Qazi. All organizational work was fully entrusted to the Qazi. All types of documents related to the educational system were presented to the attention of the supreme ruler through Qazi ul-Quzzot. The position after Qazi was Sadr, responsible for resolving issues in the management of waqf properties located within Bukhara city and its surroundings at a distance of 1 farsakh. He also inspected the economic activities of educational institutions entering the city area. Until the Soviet revolution, the duties of this official remained unchanged.

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