

SCIENCE
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Актуальные проблемы социальных и гуманитарных наук

Ijtimoiy-gumanitar fanlarning dolzarb muammolari

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2026

SCIENCEPROBLEMS.UZ

**IJTIMOIIY-GUMANITAR FANLARNING
DOLZARB MUAMMOLARI**

№ 5/2 (6) - 2025

**АКТУАЛЬНЫЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ СОЦИАЛЬНО-
ГУМАНИТАРНЫХ НАУК**

ACTUAL PROBLEMS OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

TOSHKENT-2026

BOSH MUHARRIR:

Isanova Feruza Tulqinovna

TAHRIR HAY'ATI:

07.00.00- TARIX FANLARI:

Yuldashev Anvar Ergashevich – tarix fanlari doktori, siyosiy fanlar nomzodi, professor;

Mavlanov Uktam Maxmasabirovich – tarix fanlari doktori, professor;

Xazratkulov Abror – tarix fanlari doktori, dotsent;

Tursunov Ravshan Normuratovich – tarix fanlari doktori;

Xolikulov Axmadjon Boymahammatovich – tarix fanlari doktori;

Gabrielyan Sofya Ivanovna – tarix fanlari doktori, dotsent;

Saidov Sarvar Atabullo o'g'li – katta ilmiy xodim, Imom Termiziy xalqaro ilmiy-tadqiqot markazi, ilmiy tadqiqotlar bo'limi.

08.00.00- IQTISODIYOT FANLARI:

Karlibayeva Raya Xojabayevna – iqtisodiyot fanlari doktori, professor;

Nasirxodjayeva Dilafruz Sabitxanovna – iqtisodiyot fanlari doktori, professor;

Ostonokulov Azamat Abdukarimovich – iqtisodiyot fanlari doktori, professor;

Arabov Nurali Uralovich – iqtisodiyot fanlari doktori, professor;

Xudoyqulov Sadirdin Karimovich – iqtisodiyot fanlari doktori, dotsent;

Azizov Sherzod O'ktamovich – iqtisodiyot fanlari doktori, dotsent;

Xojayev Azizxon Saidaloxonovich – iqtisodiyot fanlari doktori, dotsent

Xolov Aktam Xatamovich – iqtisodiyot fanlari bo'yicha falsafa doktori (PhD), dotsent;

Shadiyeva Dildora Xamidovna – iqtisodiyot fanlari bo'yicha falsafa doktori (PhD), dotsent v.b.;

Shakarov Qulmat Ashirovich – iqtisodiyot fanlari nomzodi, dotsent.;

Jabborova Charos Aminovna - iqtisodiyot fanlari bo'yicha falsafa doktori (PhD).

09.00.00- FALSAFA FANLARI:

Hakimov Nazar Hakimovich – falsafa fanlari doktori, professor;

Yaxshilikov Jo'raboy – falsafa fanlari doktori, professor;

G'aybullayev Otabek Muhammadiyevich – falsafa fanlari doktori, professor;

Saidova Kamola Uskanbayevna – falsafa fanlari doktori;

Hoshimxonov Mo'min – falsafa fanlari doktori, dotsent;

O'roqova Oysuluv Jamoliddinovna – falsafa fanlari doktori, dotsent;

Nosirxodjayeva Gulnora Abdulkaxxarovna – falsafa fanlari nomzodi, dotsent;

Turdiyev Bexruz Sobirovich – falsafa fanlari doktori (DSc), Professor.

10.00.00- FILOLOGIYA FANLARI:

Axmedov Oybek Saporbayevich – filologiya fanlari doktori, professor;

Ko'chimov Shuxrat Norqizilovich – filologiya fanlari doktori, dotsent;

Hasanov Shavkat Ahadovich – filologiya fanlari doktori, professor;

Baxronova Dilrabo Keldiyorovna – filologiya fanlari doktori, professor;

Mirsanov G'aybullo Qulmurodovich – filologiya fanlari doktori, professor;

Salaxutdinova Musharraf Isamutdinovna – filologiya fanlari nomzodi, dotsent;

Kuchkarov Raxman Urmanovich – filologiya fanlari nomzodi, dotsent v/b;

Yunusov Mansur Abdullayevich – filologiya fanlari nomzodi;

Saidov Ulugbek Aripovich – filologiya fanlari nomzodi, dotsent;

Qodirova Muqaddas Tog'ayevna - filologiya fanlari nomzodi, dotsent.

12.00.00- YURIDIK FANLAR:

Axmedshayeva Mavlyuda Axatovna – yuridik fanlar doktori, professor;

Muxitdinova Firyuza Abdurashidovna – yuridik fanlar doktori, professor;

Esanova Zamira Normurotovna – yuridik fanlar doktori, professor, O'zbekiston Respublikasida xizmat ko'rsatgan yurist;

Hamroqulov Bahodir Mamasharifovich – yuridik fanlar doktori, professor v.b.,;

Zulfiqorov Sherzod Xurramovich – yuridik fanlar doktori, professor;

Xayitov Xushvaqt Saparbayevich – yuridik fanlar doktori, professor;

Asadov Shavkat G'aybullayevich – yuridik fanlar doktori, dotsent;

Ergashev Ikrom Abdurasulovich – yuridik fanlari doktori, professor;

Utemuratov Maxmut Ajimuratovich – yuridik fanlar nomzodi, professor;

Saydullayev Shaxzod Alixanovich – yuridik fanlar nomzodi, professor;

Hakimov Komil Baxtiyarovich – yuridik fanlar doktori, dotsent;

Yusupov Sardorbek Baxodirovich – yuridik fanlar doktori, professor;

Amirov Zafar Aktamovich – yuridik fanlar doktori (PhD);

Jo'rayev Sherzod Yuldashevich – yuridik fanlar nomzodi, dotsent;

Babadjanov Atabek Davronbekovich – yuridik fanlar nomzodi, professor;

Normatov Bekzod Akrom o'g'li — yuridik fanlar bo'yicha falsafa doktori;

Rahmatov Elyor Jumaboyevich — yuridik fanlar nomzodi;

13.00.00- PEDAGOGIKA FANLARI:

Xashimova Dildarxon Urinboyevna – pedagogika fanlari doktori, professor;

Ibragimova Gulnora Xavazmatovna – pedagogika fanlari doktori, professor;

Zakirova Feruza Maxmudovna – pedagogika fanlari doktori;

Kayumova Nasiba Ashurovna – pedagogika fanlari doktori, professor;

Taylanova Shoxida Zayniyevna – pedagogika fanlari

doktori, dotsent;

Jumaniyozova Muhayyo Tojiyevna – pedagogika fanlari doktori, dotsent;

Ibraximov Sanjar Urunbayevich – pedagogika fanlari doktori;

Javliyeva Shaxnoza Baxodirovna – pedagogika fanlari bo'yicha falsafa doktori (PhD);

Bobomurotova Latofat Elmurodovna — pedagogika fanlari bo'yicha falsafa doktori (PhD).

19.00.00- PSIXOLOGIYA FANLARI:

Karimova Vasila Mamanosirovna – psixologiya fanlari doktori, professor, Nizomiy nomidagi Toshkent davlat pedagogika universiteti;

Hayitov Oybek Eshboyevich – Jismoniy tarbiya va sport bo'yicha mutaxassislarni qayta tayyorlash va malakasini oshirish instituti, psixologiya fanlari doktori, professor

Umarova Navbahor Shokirovna– psixologiya fanlari doktori, dotsent, Nizomiy nomidagi Toshkent davlat pedagogika universiteti, Amaliy psixologiyasi kafedrasini mudiri;

Atabayeva Nargis Batirovna – psixologiya fanlari doktori, dotsent;

Shamshetova Anjim Karamaddinovna – psixologiya fanlari doktori, dotsent;

Qodirov Obid Safarovich – psixologiya fanlari doktori (PhD).

22.00.00- SOTSILOGIYA FANLARI:

Latipova Nodira Muxtarjanovna – sotsiologiya fanlari doktori, professor, O'zbekiston milliy universiteti kafedra mudiri;

Seitov Azamat Po'latovich – sotsiologiya fanlari doktori, professor, O'zbekiston milliy universiteti;

Sodiqova Shohida Marxaboyevna – sotsiologiya fanlari doktori, professor, O'zbekiston xalqaro islom akademiyasi.

23.00.00- SIYOSIY FANLAR

Nazarov Nasriddin Ataqulovich –siyosiy fanlar doktori, falsafa fanlari doktori, professor, Toshkent arxitektura qurilish instituti;

Bo'tayev Usmonjon Xayrullayevich –siyosiy fanlar doktori, dotsent, O'zbekiston milliy universiteti kafedra mudiri.

OAK Ro'yxati

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MUNDARIJA

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07.00.00-TARIX FANLARI – HISTORICAL SCIENCES

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Article / Original Paper

**KHIVA (KHOREZM) STATE AS AN ACTIVE AGENT:
DIPLOMACY, ECONOMY, AND RUSSIAN INTERACTION, 1806–1825**

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Abstract. This article reexamines Russo Khivan relations during the reign of Muhammad Rahimkhan I (1806–1825), integrating newly uncovered archival sources from RGIA, RGVIA, Ottoman BOA, and hitherto unpublished Khivan chancery records. It argues that Khiva was not a passive frontier polity but an actor with agency, strategically mobilizing frontier diplomacy, economic negotiations, and institutional frameworks to retain autonomy. Drawing on diplomatic codices, border surveillance reports, and prisoner exchange protocols, the article demonstrates how Khiva manipulated asymmetrical power relations, navigated imperial pressures, and deployed temporal strategies to its advantage. This study contributes to a reconceptualization of early nineteenth century Central Asian interstate dynamics and highlights the analytical value of “negotiated sovereignty” in frontier contexts. This article explores the diplomatic, political, and economic relations between the Khorezm State and the Russian Empire during the reign of Muhammad Rahimkhan I (1806–1825). Drawing on previously underutilized Persian and Chagatai manuscripts, Russian archival correspondence, and Ottoman reports, the study highlights Khiva’s strategic use of frontier diplomacy, negotiated sovereignty, and temporal management in preserving autonomy. The analysis challenges traditional narratives of passive Central Asian polities, demonstrating that Khiva actively shaped interactions with Russia through institutionalized negotiation, economic leverage, and multilateral engagement. The findings contribute to a nuanced understanding of early nineteenth-century Eurasian diplomacy and frontier governance.

Keywords: Khorezm State, Russian Empire, Muhammad Rahimkhan I, frontier diplomacy, negotiated sovereignty, archival analysis.

**XIVA (XORAZM) DAVLATI XALQARO MUNOSABATLARNING
SUBYEKTI SIFATIDA: DIPLOMATIYA, IQTISODIYOT VA ROSSIYA
BILAN HAMKORLIK, 1806–1825 YY.**

Saparbayev Bunyod Xurrambek o’g’li

Tarix fanlari bo’yicha falsafa doktori (PhD), dotsent

Abu Rayhon Beruniy nomidagi

Urganch davlat universiteti

“Tarix” kafedrasi dotsenti

Annotatsiya. Mazkur maqola Muhammad Rahimxon I (1806–1825) hukmronligi davridagi Rossiya-Xiva munosabatlarini qayta ko’rib chiqadi. Tadqiqotda Rossiya davlat tarixiy arxivi (RGIA), Rossiya davlat harbiy-tarixiy arxivi (RGVIA), Usmonli imperiyasi Bosh vazirlik arxivi (BOA) materiallari hamda ilgari nashr etilmagan Xiva devon hujjatlari jamlanmasi asosida yangi arxiv manbalari ilmiy muomalaga kiritilgan. Asosiy tezis – Xiva

passiv chegara hududi bo'lgan davlat emas, balki mustaqil siyosat yuritish imkoniyatiga ega bo'lgan subyekt sifatida namoyon bo'ladi. Xiva (Xorazm) davlati chegara diplomatiyasi, iqtisodiy muzokaralar va institutsional mexanizmlarni strategik jihatdan qo'llagan holda o'z muxtoriyatini saqlab qolishga muvaffaq bo'lgan. Diplomatik kodekslar, chegara kuzatuv hisobotlari va asir almashinuvi protokollarini tahlil qilish asosida, maqola Xivaning nosimmetrik hokimiyat munosabatlarini manipulyatsiya qilish, Rossiya imperiyasi bosimiga qarshi manevr qilish va vaqt omilidan strategik foydalanish usullarini ochib beradi. Tadqiqot XIX asr boshlaridagi Markaziy Osiyo davlatlararo munosabatlar dinamikasini qayta konseptuallashtirishga xizmat qiladi hamda chegara hududlari kontekstida "muzokarali suverenitet" tushunchasining nazariy ahamiyatini ko'rsatadi.

Kalit so'zlar: Xorazm davlati, Rossiya imperiyasi, Muhammad Rahimxon I, chegara diplomatiyasi, muzokarali suverenitet, arxiv tahlili.

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Introduction. Historiographically, the first quarter of the nineteenth century in Russo-Khivan relations has been framed predominantly as an inevitable march toward conquest. This teleological interpretation overlooks substantive evidence that the Khorezm State under Muhammad Rahimkhan I actively shaped the diplomatic landscape. Positioned at the crossroads of multiple imperial ambitions, Khiva exercised agency through calibrated protocols, economic bargaining, and performative diplomacy.

The diplomatic relationship between the Russian Empire and the Khiva Khanate during the reign of Muhammad Rahimkhan I unfolded within a fluid geopolitical environment rather than along a predetermined trajectory of conquest. The early nineteenth-century Eurasian frontier was not a static periphery awaiting imperial incorporation; it was a contested zone of negotiation where sovereignty was continually articulated through practice rather than formalized through treaty. In this environment, Khiva operated not as an isolated oasis polity but as a nodal actor embedded in transregional circuits of trade, information, and symbolic authority.

Muhammad Rahimkhan I inherited a state whose survival depended less on military confrontation and more on calibrated interaction. The khanate's leadership demonstrated awareness of imperial asymmetry yet refrained from framing diplomacy in binary terms of submission or defiance. Instead, Khiva institutionalized negotiation as a governing principle. Sovereignty was expressed performatively—through ceremony, documentation, economic bargaining, and control of mobility across desert corridors.

Rather than interpreting Russo-Khivan relations solely as a prelude to annexation, this study approaches them as a dynamic system of negotiated coexistence. The frontier functioned as a space of procedural diplomacy in which delay, ritual, economic leverage, and information management constituted political instruments. By foregrounding Khiva's adaptive capacity and strategic timing, the article situates the khanate within broader patterns of early nineteenth-century Eurasian statecraft, where small and medium polities maneuvered between expanding empires through calculated engagement rather than open resistance.

The first quarter of the nineteenth century constituted a critical yet understudied phase in the transformation of political relations between the Russian Empire and the Khiva Khanate. Situated at the intersection of imperial expansion, regional diplomacy, and transcontinental trade, Khiva was neither a passive frontier polity nor a mere object of Russian colonial ambition. During the reign of Muhammad Rahimkhan I (1806–1825), the khanate articulated a distinctive diplomatic strategy aimed at preserving sovereignty while engaging selectively with imperial powers [1].

This article re-examines Russo-Khivan relations in the period 1806–1825 through a reassessment of diplomatic practices, economic exchanges, and conflict-management mechanisms. Contrary to interpretations that frame these relations primarily as a prelude to Russian conquest, this study argues that Khiva maintained a measurable degree of agency, employing flexible and situational diplomacy to navigate asymmetrical power relations [2].

The novelty of this research lies in its integration of previously underutilized archival materials with a conceptual framework that treats Central Asian polities as active participants in international politics. By shifting the analytical focus from imperial intentions to negotiated interaction, the article contributes to a broader rethinking of early nineteenth-century Eurasian diplomacy and challenges teleological narratives of inevitable colonial domination [3].

Khiva's position within this landscape demands particular attention. Geographically situated between steppe, desert, and riverine trade networks, the khanate occupied a connective space rather than an isolated one. Its leadership navigated a world shaped simultaneously by imperial ambition, regional rivalry, commercial interdependence, and ecological limitation. To reduce Khiva to a defensive frontier state reacting to Russian initiative is to underestimate its capacity for initiative. Under Muhammad Rahimkhan I, the khanate did not merely respond to pressure; it structured interaction through institutional procedures, ritualized diplomacy, and calibrated economic engagement.

Muhammad Rahimkhan I inherited a political system whose endurance depended not on dramatic confrontation but on sustained management of relationships. The asymmetry between Khiva and Russia was evident, yet asymmetry does not equate to paralysis. In fact, unequal power relations often generate creative strategies of adaptation. The khanate's leadership appears to have recognized that sovereignty could be maintained through negotiation cycles, symbolic affirmation, and controlled access to trade routes. Rather than presenting diplomacy as a binary choice between submission and defiance, Khiva embedded negotiation into the fabric of governance. Diplomatic engagement became an ordinary extension of statecraft.

In our assessment, sovereignty in this context was performative and procedural. It was enacted through carefully composed letters, the regulated movement of envoys, the orchestration of court ceremony, and the structured management of caravans. Each of these practices reaffirmed the khanate's authority internally while communicating parity externally. Sovereignty was not a static attribute guaranteed by formal treaties; it was a dynamic practice reproduced through repetition and documentation. The absence of binding agreements during this period should therefore not be interpreted as diplomatic deficiency. It may instead reflect a preference for flexibility within a fluid strategic environment.

The frontier functioned as a laboratory of political improvisation. Delays in correspondence, negotiations over captive exchange, adjustments in tariff policy, and calibrated responses to border incidents constituted the everyday grammar of diplomacy. These actions reveal a state attentive to timing and aware of the value of ambiguity. Delay could generate leverage; ritual could neutralize tension; economic incentives could replace coercion. Such instruments were subtle, yet their cumulative effect was substantial. By pacing interaction and avoiding irreversible commitments, Khiva preserved room for maneuver within an asymmetrical relationship.

This study approaches Russo-Khivan relations between 1806 and 1825 not as a prelude to annexation but as a period of negotiated coexistence. We argue that the frontier should be conceptualized as a zone of interactive governance rather than unilateral expansion. Within this zone, both sides faced constraints. Russia confronted logistical challenges, fiscal limitations, and competing strategic theaters. Khiva confronted military vulnerability and exposure to regional volatility. Diplomacy, therefore, emerged as a mutually rational instrument. It mitigated risk, reduced uncertainty, and sustained channels of communication without foreclosing future options.

Historiography of Russo-Khivan Relations

The historiography of Russo-Khivan relations has long been dominated by imperial and Soviet scholarly traditions that prioritized Russian strategic interests and framed Central Asia as a zone of gradual incorporation [4]. Early nineteenth-century Russian accounts, often authored by military officers and diplomats, portrayed Khiva as a source of instability due to slave raids, hostage-taking, and resistance to Russian commercial penetration [5].

Soviet-era scholarship expanded the documentary base but largely preserved a unilinear interpretation of Russo-Central Asian relations. Khiva was frequently depicted as a feudal and stagnant polity whose political structures were incompatible with modernization [6].

From the late twentieth century onward, post-Soviet and Western historiography began to reassess these assumptions. Scholars emphasized the contingent nature of empire-building and the multiplicity of actors involved [7]. However, even within this revisionist scholarship, the early reign of Muhammad Rahimkhan I remains insufficiently explored [8].

Imperial Russian historiography of the nineteenth century framed Khiva primarily through the lens of security discourse—emphasizing captivity narratives, slave raids, and commercial obstruction [26]. Military memoirs and official frontier reports constructed a narrative of civilizational confrontation, often reducing Khivan diplomacy to evasiveness or duplicity [27].

Soviet scholarship broadened documentary access but retained structural determinism, interpreting Central Asian incorporation as historically progressive and economically inevitable [28]. The khanate's political institutions were frequently described as archaic, thereby obscuring evidence of administrative adaptation [29].

Recent scholarship has reoriented attention toward frontier hybridity and negotiated imperialism [30]. Yet even revisionist works often prioritize Russian strategic debates over indigenous institutional practice [31]. Manuscript collections preserved in St. Petersburg and Tashkent have only partially entered analytical circulation, leaving significant gaps in understanding Khiva's diplomatic architecture during the first quarter of the nineteenth century [32].

Methodology and Research Design. This study employs a qualitative historical methodology combining archival analysis, comparative reading of narrative sources, and contextual interpretation of diplomatic documentation [9]. The primary methodological approach is micro-analytical: individual diplomatic missions, trade negotiations, and conflict episodes are examined as discrete events embedded within broader political structures [10].

A comparative dimension situates Khiva alongside neighboring polities, such as the Bukhara Emirate and steppe confederations, highlighting both shared diplomatic patterns and

distinctive strategies [11]. Source criticism ensures that Russian, Khivan, and Ottoman materials are interpreted with attention to genre, purpose, and institutional bias [12].

This study combines microhistorical analysis of discrete diplomatic episodes with structural examination of frontier governance [33]. Archival triangulation—cross-referencing Russian administrative correspondence, Khivan manuscript codices, and Ottoman diplomatic memoranda—enables reconstruction of interactional dynamics beyond unilateral narratives [34].

Particular attention is paid to genre analysis. Russian military memoranda, Khivan farmāns, and Ottoman intelligence briefs are treated not as neutral records but as institutional texts shaped by audience, purpose, and political positioning [35]. Museum artifacts, including seals, diplomatic gifts, and ceremonial regalia preserved in regional collections, are incorporated as material evidence of sovereignty performance [36].

Sources and Archival Base

The empirical foundation relies on three main corpora:

Russian Archives: RGIA and RGVIA contain correspondence, border reports, and trade memoranda documenting interactions with Khiva [13].

Khivan Manuscripts: IOM RAS preserves Persian and Chagatai diplomatic codices detailing envoys, ceremonial protocols, and trade negotiation strategies [2].

Ottoman Reports: BOA collections offer comparative insight into how Khiva was perceived in a broader Islamic diplomatic horizon [12].

Together, these sources enable reconstruction of Khivan agency and strategic adaptation in the face of asymmetrical power relations.

Beyond RGIA and RGVIA materials, this research utilizes documentation from:

- **AVPRI (Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire):** diplomatic correspondence between Orenburg authorities and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs concerning Khivan envoys [37].
- **Institute of Oriental Manuscripts (IOM RAS):** Persian and Chagatai collections containing copies of diplomatic letters and internal administrative registers [38].
- **Institute of Oriental Studies, Tashkent:** manuscript fragments detailing tax arrangements and caravan permissions under Muhammad Rahimkhan I [39].
- **Savitsky State Museum of Arts (Nukus) and Ichan-Kala State Museum Reserve (Khiva):** preservation of khanate seals, diplomatic gifts, and inscriptions reflecting ceremonial sovereignty [40].
- **Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA):** Ottoman intelligence assessments referencing Khiva's regional positioning within the Islamic diplomatic sphere [41].

The integration of textual and material evidence strengthens the reconstruction of institutional continuity and diplomatic intentionality.

Main Analysis

Administrative Consolidation and Internal Governance

Diplomacy under Muhammad Rahimkhan I was inseparable from internal administrative reform. Archival tax registers indicate attempts to standardize customs levies on caravan trade, suggesting fiscal rationalization rather than arbitrary extraction [42]. Revenue from transit trade was systematically allocated to frontier security and envoy maintenance, demonstrating bureaucratic coordination [43].

Seal impressions preserved in museum collections reveal consistent titulature emphasizing sovereignty and divine legitimacy [40]. The replication of these seals across diplomatic documents underscores institutional continuity and centralized authorization.

Diplomatic Practices and Institutional Agency

During the reign of Muhammad Rahimkhan I, Khiva's diplomacy evolved into a structured and institutionalized practice. Envoys were appointed not as informal emissaries but as trained negotiators with specific mandates, reflecting the khanate's commitment to systematic engagement with external powers [8].

Persian and Chagatai diplomatic manuscripts indicate standardized formulas in correspondence with Russian officials, including honorifics, ritualized expressions of goodwill, and clearly defined reciprocal obligations [2]. These documents demonstrate that Khiva's diplomacy was governed by protocols and institutional norms, rather than ad hoc improvisation.

Russian archival reports corroborate these practices, noting that Khivan envoys often arrived with pre-approved letters and memoranda specifying conditions for trade, prisoner exchanges, and border management [14]. This procedural consistency reflects a bureaucratic approach to sovereignty, where legitimacy was continuously asserted through documentation and repeated interaction.

Khivan envoys operated under written mandates specifying negotiation parameters [38]. Russian officials recorded that envoys frequently refused to exceed instructions, indicating procedural discipline [44]. Diplomatic letters adhered to formulaic structures balancing deference with parity, reflecting awareness of hierarchical symbolism without conceding subordination [45].

Material diplomacy—exchange of textiles, horses, and crafted goods—functioned as reciprocal affirmation rather than tribute [40]. Museum-preserved artifacts corroborate Russian reports describing ceremonial receptions in Khiva's court complex [46].

Trade, Captivity, and Economic Leverage

Economic negotiation was central to Khiva–Russian relations. Trade caravans passing through Khivan territory were crucial for both khanate revenues and Russian commercial interests [4].

Captive exchanges, frequently framed in Russian reports as purely humanitarian, were in fact leveraged by Khiva to secure favorable economic and political outcomes [15]. Manuscript sources reveal repeated diplomatic correspondence linking the release of captives to trade permissions, tax exemptions, and the protection of caravan routes [16].

This interlinking of economic and political negotiation demonstrates that Khiva's strategy was highly rational and pragmatic, leveraging scarce resources to maintain autonomy within an asymmetrical power structure.

Trade Infrastructure and Caravan Governance

Recent examination of caravan permits in Tashkent manuscript collections reveals that Khiva regulated desert corridors through licensed intermediaries [39]. These intermediaries acted simultaneously as tax collectors and intelligence conduits [47].

Russian commercial memoranda from Orenburg document periodic negotiations over tariff ceilings, suggesting that economic exchange was not unilateral penetration but structured

bargaining [48]. Khiva occasionally suspended caravan access in response to frontier disputes, employing economic interruption as leverage [49].

Captivity Diplomacy Reconsidered

While Russian archives foreground the humanitarian dimension of captive recovery, Khivan correspondence links release procedures to reciprocal guarantees of non-interference and trade facilitation [50]. Captive exchanges often coincided with broader negotiation cycles, indicating integration into diplomatic rhythm rather than isolated crisis response [51].

Intelligence Networks and Information Processing

Ottoman memoranda in BOA collections describe Khiva as a politically alert frontier polity attentive to Russian movements in the steppe [41]. Russian reports, though dismissive, acknowledge that Khivan officials possessed updated knowledge of Orenburg administrative changes [52].

Merchants and Sufi networks functioned as informal information carriers, transmitting geopolitical developments across Bukhara, Persia, and the Caspian littoral [53]. This intelligence circulation enhanced Khiva's anticipatory capacity in negotiations.

Environmental and Logistical Constraints

Frontier diplomacy was shaped by ecological realities. Desert geography limited sustained military campaigns and favored negotiation [54]. Russian logistical memoranda reveal repeated difficulties in provisioning steppe expeditions, constraining coercive options [55]. Khiva's familiarity with terrain functioned as strategic capital.

Symbolic Architecture and Spatial Authority

Architectural patronage under Muhammad Rahimkhan I reinforced internal legitimacy. Restoration inscriptions within Ichan-Kala reflect continuity of dynastic authority [40]. Ceremonial space within the Ark citadel structured diplomatic encounters, embedding negotiation within ritualized spatial hierarchy [46].

Symbolic sovereignty was thus spatially performed, integrating architecture, ceremony, and documentation.

Frontier Management and Asymmetrical Diplomacy

Khiva functioned as an active agent within the Eurasian frontier, exploiting the porosity of borders and administrative gaps in Russian oversight [9].

Russian officials, constrained by distance and competing priorities across the empire, often accepted Khiva's calibrated proposals for trade, security, and prisoner management [17]. Archival correspondence shows that Khivan diplomacy successfully negotiated temporary privileges and delays, demonstrating sophisticated manipulation of frontier asymmetries [8].

This asymmetrical diplomacy relied on strategic patience and timing. Khiva frequently delayed responses to Russian demands until conditions favored negotiation, thereby maximizing leverage without provoking confrontation [18].

Negotiated Sovereignty and Symbolic Authority

A striking feature of Khiva's diplomacy under Muhammad Rahimkhan I was the absence of formal treaties with Russia during this period [8]. Rather than weakness, this reflects an intentional strategy of ongoing negotiation, allowing Khiva to preserve sovereignty while demonstrating goodwill.

Correspondence preserved in the IOM RAS shows repeated reaffirmations of mutual benefit and restraint without codification into binding agreements [19]. Russian reports often acknowledged these exchanges as sufficient for maintaining frontier stability [20].

Khiva's use of ritualized diplomacy, ceremonial gift-giving, and carefully worded letters functioned as symbolic assertions of authority, reinforcing internal legitimacy and external recognition simultaneously [21].

Regional Diplomacy and Balancing Powers

Khiva's diplomacy extended beyond Russia, encompassing neighboring Central Asian polities, including the Bukhara Emirate, Kokand, and Persian authorities [11]. Muhammad Rahimkhan I skillfully balanced multiple suzerains and neighbors, using Khiva's geographic position along trade routes to diversify contacts and reduce dependence on any single power [8].

Manuscript evidence indicates deliberate coordination of diplomatic language and ceremonial practice, ensuring consistency across interactions with different polities [22]. This multilateral diplomacy reinforced Khiva's position as an intermediary, allowing it to extract concessions without ceding sovereignty.

Regional Balancing and Multivector Engagement

Correspondence between Khiva and Bukhara demonstrates calibrated rivalry tempered by mutual recognition of Russian expansion [56]. Persian diplomatic notes preserved in manuscript collections reference Khiva as an intermediary in trans-Caspian trade [57]. Such multivector engagement diversified diplomatic exposure and reduced dependency on any single power center.

Temporal Strategies and Diplomatic Rhythm

Khiva employed strategic timing in its diplomatic engagements. Periods of intensified communication were interspersed with calculated silences, enabling reassessment of regional conditions and imperial priorities [9].

Russian archival reports note frequent delays in Khivan correspondence, initially interpreted as obstruction, yet often reflecting deliberate temporal management [23]. This allowed Khiva to maximize leverage while avoiding direct confrontation, demonstrating sophisticated understanding of frontier politics [4].

Conflict Episodes and Negotiated Resolution

Although episodes of tension occurred—such as disputes over captive subjects or trade violations—they rarely escalated into sustained military confrontation [24].

Khivan manuscripts reveal that negotiation and ritualized exchanges frequently resolved potential conflicts [25]. Russian reports often frame these resolutions as administrative routine, yet manuscript evidence shows that Khiva actively shaped the terms of compliance, turning potential crises into opportunities for diplomatic reaffirmation [8].

Conflict Episodes and Controlled Escalation

Disputes over border raids were typically followed by envoy dispatch rather than mobilization [58]. Russian frontier commanders frequently reported negotiated settlements mediated through gift exchange and oath reaffirmation [59]. The pattern indicates systemic preference for containment over escalation.

Intelligence, Information, and Knowledge Circulation

The circulation of intelligence was central to Khiva's diplomatic strategy. Envoys, merchants, and intermediaries transmitted information regarding Russian policies, frontier conditions, and regional politics [4].

Khiva systematically processed this information, integrating it into decision-making for trade, negotiation, and conflict management [8]. Russian sources frequently underestimated the sophistication of this intelligence network, highlighting asymmetries in perceived versus actual diplomatic capacity.

Conclusion. The reign of Muhammad Rahimkhan I (1806–1825) demonstrates that Khiva was an active diplomatic actor, employing institutionalized practices, strategic timing, economic leverage, and multilateral engagement to preserve sovereignty.

The study integrates Persian and Chagatai manuscripts, Russian archival correspondence, and Ottoman reports to reconstruct a balanced view of Khiva–Russian relations. It demonstrates that diplomacy, rather than passive resistance, was the principal tool by which Khiva navigated asymmetrical power relations [8].

These findings challenge deterministic narratives of Russian expansion and highlight the agency of Central Asian polities in the broader Eurasian geopolitical landscape. Khiva's experience exemplifies negotiated sovereignty, frontier diplomacy, and the intersection of symbolic, economic, and institutional strategies in early nineteenth-century international relations [7].

The expanded evidentiary base—archival, manuscript, and material—demonstrates that Khiva's diplomacy under Muhammad Rahimkhan I was institutionalized, strategic, and structurally adaptive. The khanate integrated fiscal reform, environmental knowledge, intelligence circulation, and ceremonial symbolism into a coherent diplomatic system.

Rather than a stagnant polity awaiting conquest, Khiva emerges as a frontier state practicing negotiated sovereignty. Its leadership exploited asymmetry through timing, documentation, and economic leverage. The absence of formal treaties reflects calculated flexibility rather than weakness.

By integrating underutilized archival repositories and material culture, this study reframes early nineteenth-century Russo-Khivan relations as a sustained process of interactive statecraft. Khiva's experience contributes to broader debates on small-state agency within imperial borderlands and challenges linear models of Eurasian expansion.

The reign of Muhammad Rahimkhan I invites a reconsideration not only of Khivan foreign policy, but of the conceptual vocabulary through which early nineteenth-century Eurasian politics is interpreted. What emerges from this study is not simply the correction of a regional narrative, but a broader methodological shift: the recognition that political agency in asymmetrical environments is often subtle, procedural, and embedded in routine rather than dramatic confrontation. Khiva's diplomacy did not rely on spectacular victories or formalized alliances. It relied instead on continuity, patience, and the disciplined repetition of institutional practice.

In our view, the most significant finding of this research is the realization that sovereignty on the Eurasian frontier functioned less as a fixed legal status and more as an ongoing performance. For Khiva, sovereignty was not guaranteed by treaty, nor secured by overwhelming force. It was enacted through correspondence, ceremony, calibrated economic

decisions, and the regulation of mobility across desert corridors. Each diplomatic exchange reaffirmed the khanate's capacity to act, negotiate, and define the terms of interaction. Even when concessions were made, they were framed within a narrative of reciprocity rather than submission. This capacity to frame interaction on one's own symbolic terms was itself an exercise of authority.

The asymmetry between the Russian Empire and the Khiva Khanate was undeniable. Russia possessed greater military resources, administrative infrastructure, and demographic weight. Yet asymmetry did not eliminate maneuverability. Khiva's leadership demonstrated that smaller polities could operate within imperial pressure zones by exploiting structural constraints faced by larger powers. Distance, logistical difficulty, and competing imperial priorities limited Russia's ability to impose immediate solutions. Khiva recognized these limitations and incorporated them into its diplomatic calculus. Delay, negotiation cycles, and procedural reaffirmation became instruments through which time itself was transformed into political capital.

Another crucial dimension concerns institutional coherence. Khiva's diplomatic behavior was not improvised. It was embedded within administrative routines, fiscal structures, and ceremonial hierarchies. The regularization of envoy mandates, the management of caravan taxation, and the careful maintenance of court ritual all contributed to a stable external posture. Stability, in this sense, was not stagnation. It was a deliberate cultivation of predictability. Predictability reassured counterparts, reduced the likelihood of escalation, and reinforced Khiva's image as a rational interlocutor. Through such consistency, the khanate projected continuity in a volatile frontier environment.

The absence of formal treaties during this period, often interpreted as diplomatic weakness, appears instead as strategic ambiguity. Binding agreements can constrain as much as they protect. By maintaining relations through correspondence and episodic negotiation rather than codified commitments, Khiva preserved room for reinterpretation and recalibration. Flexibility allowed adaptation to shifting imperial priorities and regional developments. In an environment where power balances were fluid, the avoidance of rigid commitments enhanced rather than diminished autonomy.

Equally significant is the integration of economic instruments into political strategy. Trade was not merely a source of revenue; it was a medium of leverage. The regulation of caravan routes, customs duties, and captive exchanges created negotiation nodes that could be activated when tensions arose. Economic interdependence generated mutual incentives for restraint. Khiva's leadership understood that the frontier was sustained by circulation—of goods, people, and information—and that controlling this circulation meant influencing the tempo of relations. Economic pragmatism thus reinforced diplomatic resilience.

The symbolic dimension of diplomacy under Muhammad Rahimkhan I should not be underestimated. Court ceremony, titulature, gift exchange, and architectural patronage were not ornamental embellishments; they were political statements. Ritual affirmed hierarchy internally while projecting parity externally. The careful calibration of honorific language in correspondence reflected a nuanced understanding of status politics. Symbolic gestures communicated firmness without provocation, and goodwill without subordination. In this interplay between representation and negotiation, Khiva demonstrated mastery of what might be termed symbolic equilibrium.

From a broader analytical perspective, Khiva's experience complicates linear models of imperial expansion. Expansion was not a smooth progression from influence to control. It was punctuated by pauses, accommodations, and recalculations. Frontier interaction produced zones of shared management rather than immediate annexation. In such zones, smaller states could extend their relevance by demonstrating utility. Khiva positioned itself as a stabilizing actor whose cooperation reduced costs for imperial authorities. This repositioning did not eliminate long-term vulnerability, but it postponed confrontation and preserved operational autonomy for nearly two decades.

This study also suggests that early nineteenth-century Central Asian polities deserve to be analyzed within the framework of international relations rather than solely imperial history. They engaged in balancing behavior, information management, and strategic timing comparable to that of European states. Their diplomatic cultures were shaped by Islamic legal traditions, steppe political customs, and Persianate administrative norms, yet they interacted pragmatically with European bureaucratic systems. Such hybridity challenges rigid civilizational dichotomies and underscores the interconnectedness of Eurasian political practice.

In reflecting on the broader implications, I would argue that Khiva's diplomacy under Muhammad Rahimkhan I exemplifies a model of negotiated endurance. The khanate did not seek confrontation, nor did it retreat into isolation. It pursued calibrated engagement. This approach required constant assessment of risk, disciplined messaging, and institutional coordination. It demanded the ability to absorb pressure without relinquishing symbolic authority. The fact that Khiva maintained this balance throughout a period of intensified imperial interest indicates strategic foresight rather than passive survival.

Moreover, the emphasis on interactive statecraft reorients attention from outcomes to processes. Whether or not eventual conquest occurred later in the century, the period 1806–1825 must be understood on its own terms. During these years, Khiva shaped the frontier environment as much as it responded to it. Political history should not collapse interim agency into retrospective inevitability. The decisions made, the negotiations conducted, and the institutional patterns established during this reign constituted meaningful exercises of sovereignty in their own right.

Ultimately, the case of Muhammad Rahimkhan I encourages a reevaluation of how power is conceptualized in imperial borderlands. Power was not only coercive; it was procedural. It resided in the capacity to define agendas, regulate exchanges, and sustain legitimacy. Khiva's leadership displayed an acute awareness that authority could be reinforced through moderation as effectively as through confrontation. By institutionalizing diplomacy and embedding it within fiscal, symbolic, and informational systems, the khanate transformed vulnerability into strategic adaptability.

In conclusion, Khiva during the first quarter of the nineteenth century should be regarded not as a peripheral prelude to empire, but as an active participant in a complex Eurasian diplomatic arena. Its leadership practiced a form of sovereignty that was negotiated, adaptive, and consciously performed. Recognizing this reality enriches our understanding of Central Asian political history and broadens theoretical discussions about agency under asymmetry. The experience of Muhammad Rahimkhan I demonstrates that even in the shadow

of empire, small states could shape outcomes through institutional discipline, temporal strategy, and symbolic intelligence.

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59. AVPRI reconciliation memoranda.

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IJTIMOYIY-GUMANITAR FANLARNING DOLZARB MUAMMOLARI

№ 5/2 (6) – 2025

АКТУАЛЬНЫЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ СОЦИАЛЬНО- ГУМАНИТАРНЫХ НАУК

ACTUAL PROBLEMS OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

“Ijtimoiy-gumanitar fanlarning dolzarb muammolari” elektron jurnali 2020-yil 6-avgust kuni 1368-sonli guvohnoma bilan davlat ro‘yxatiga olingan.

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