

Hunting and sports in the era of Oktay Khan (626-639 AH / 1228-1241 AD)

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Abstract

The Mongols were interested in hunting, not only as a major occupation for them, but as an entertaining hobby that they practiced in times of peace. As they were keen to continue to go out on hunting trips for the purpose of training and training the soldiers to be ready in most of the times and not fail to fight the midst of war and to prevent fighting among them. The Yassa law stipulates the necessity of practicing fishing at the times allotted for it and refraining from it at other times. The Mongols practiced other hobbies such as equestrian, wrestling and boxing, as they strengthen the body, develop it, and release its energies in a positive way. It is worth noting that Mughal women also practiced these hobbies and were not restricted to men only.

Keywords

hunting, equestrian, wrestling, sports, horses, matches

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Introduction

The study of the history of the Mongols is one of the important studies that attracted the attention of researchers, historians and specialists in the history of the Mongols and the Islamic East. The researchers were interested in studying the professions practiced by the Mongols, especially fishing, as it was not just a craft they practiced as a source of livelihood and livelihood, but it was a hobby that they practiced constantly in times of peace and they gave it a lot of attention for its importance in liberating their energies and developing their physical and intellectual abilities. The practice of hunting prevented the Mongols from fighting among themselves and sharpened their determination, strengthened their resolve, directed their energies to fighting their enemies, and made them ready for any war that might break out at any time. For this reason, the Yassa law stressed the necessity of practicing it in the seasons specified for it constantly, and refraining from it in other seasons, especially in which animals reproduce and grow. It is worth noting that the hunting trips took several months, and this is why the Mongols were keen to take their women with them. The Mongols were famous for their practice of wrestling, fencing, horse racing and equestrianism, and they were keen to bring gladiators from several countries. As well as the participation of women in the sport of wrestling, that is, it was not restricted to men only. Oktay Khan was keen to organize wrestling matches and attend them and reward those who win them, so he ordered them to be brought from several countries and choose the best among them.

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The Mongols were interested in architecture and construction, whether in Mongolia or China, especially after they mixed with civilized peoples. They merged with them and were affected by their civilization and their arts, and they borrowed a lot from them, especially in the field of construction and architecture (Al-Taai, 2021; Al-Taai & al-Dulaimi, 2021). But in spite of this, the Mongols did not abandon the practice of hunting and taking care of it, because it was an integral part of their social and economic life and an important sport and hobby. The Mughal law emphasized the importance and necessity of fishing at all ages because of its positive impact on their social, economic and military life. One of the most important provisions of the Yassa law is the organization of fishing rings because of their importance in training in fighting techniques (Schimmel et al., 2004). Hunting was legislated as a law in Yassa and it stated in its regard: (Everyone assigned to fight shall be trained in the use of weapons. He must be familiar with hunting and practicing it. In order to know how the hunter approaches the prey, how to maintain order and how to encircle the prey, by working with the rest of the hunters. Hunting, sending scouts to reconnaissance and search for information. When there is no war, the Mongols must devote themselves to hunting, and train their armies on it. The purpose of hunting is not prey as a primary requirement, but rather to strengthen the body, develop the energy of resistance in it, and acquire skill in riding and using crossbow) (Komaroff et al., 2002). For this reason, Oktay Khan was interested in hunting and was keen to practice it at his specific times, as he identified specific areas for its practice. The custom of Oktay Khan was to hunt in the three winter months of each year, or during the other nine months, and to sit every day on a chair outside the court, after he had finished eating (Kamola, 2019). He spent his time hunting in the mountains of Polenko and Galenko (Kamola, 2019). Oktay Khan accompanied his brother Chagatai (d. 638 AH / 1240 AD) in hunting sometimes (Kamola, 2019). Together, they headed to Karakul from Uzbekistan, to amuse themselves by watching geese hunting. They spent the winter there. Every week they sent fifty camels laden with geese to Genghis Khan as evidence of their hunting (Lanning & Couling, 1973). Chagatai established in the area of Qenas and Al-Malagh a place for hunting (Lanning & Couling, 1973). The fact that Oktay Khan accompanied his brother Chagatai on some hunting trips confirms that most of the sons of Genghis Khan were keen to practice it since their childhood, in implementation of their father's directives, as well as their passion for practicing it regularly. In the spring, Oktay Khan set up a tent a day's walk from the city of Karakorum and was called (Karchagan), due to the abundance of animals. Oktay Khan was keen to set up large tents to settle in some areas where animals are abundant, as the hunting trip sometimes takes several months (Kamola, 2019). Oktay Khan ordered the erection of a wall of wood and mud in the winter palace (Onk Fen) at a distance of two days, and they made doors for it, and they called it (Jihik). And at the time of the hunt, they would tell the soldiers in the outskirts, so that they might all join together, and they would head toward the wall when they pushed the hunting animals, and at a distance of a month from the road. They were hunting, moment by moment, chasing the animals

to Jihik, then the soldiers staring at them, standing side by side (Kamola, 2019). Oktay Khan entered first with his entourage, watched matches for a period of time, and practiced hunting himself. Even if he got tired, he climbed a hill in the middle of the square, then the princes entered according to their order, and took the commoners and soldiers to shoot, and then released some animals out of mercy and pity, while the supervisors of the kitchen were distributing all the hunting animals to all classes of princes and army leaders (Kamola, 2019). Oktay Khan took care of following up the process of hunting the animals himself and distributing the hunted animals to the princes and leaders fairly. Al-Hamadhani pointed out (A person presented three melons to Oktay Khan at the time of hunting, and since there was nothing of gold and clothing, he advised Moka Khatun to give that person the two rings that you have in her ears. He was told: This dervish does not know the value of these two rings, so let him attend Tomorrow, he receives from the treasury the gold and clothing issued by the firman. He said: The dervish cannot wait. And these two pearls will return to us) (Kamola, 2019; Lanning & Couling, 1973). This means that Oktay Khan even accompanied his women on fishing, as some fishing trips take several months.

Mongol sports and hobbies

The Mongols' hobbies and games varied, and they were keen to practice them in their spare time for training and exercise. Among their most famous hobbies and games are fencing and horse racing (Raphael, 2010). The Mongols were also interested in wrestling and boxing, and they enjoyed watching their matches. And they were bringing gladiators from Qara Khitai and Qipchaq. When Transoxiana and Iran were subjugated to them, they took a number of athletes in these two arts to Mongolia. Jochi Khan liked to watch women's wrestling in Khwarazm (Aigle, 2014). This confirms the participation of women in the sport of wrestling and that it was not exclusive to men, which confirms the great status enjoyed by Mughal women. The Mongols were very keen to practice different forms of sports, as they were interested in hunting, as it was one of the necessities of war for them. They were fond of wrestling and fencing, and they found pleasure in watching the matches that were held for this purpose, and during their campaigns they accompanied a number of these wrestlers (Aigle, 2014; Mukhia, 2008). Even their games were jihad and struggle. For them, horse racing meant running ten miles over the prairie back and forth, and their wrestling matches ended with their bones being crushed (Mukhia, 2008). Equestrian has an important center for the Mongols, and they of all ages used to spend a long time on horseback. He who did not accompany the horse knew that he was either poor, or without friends. This is because the Mughal does not delay in offering a horse to another who asks for it. And it was not men who specialized in this matter without women, but they were riding horses like men. They used bows and arrows, and had the ability to stay on the horse's back for a long time, and they would go with the men to fight. Without horses, the Mongols could not lead herds of other animals, or travel at great speed to remote places to escape the ice, or the drought of the desert (Mukhia, 2008). We note here the role of women in riding horses and using bows and arrows, and this indicates that women used to practice different sports and their role was not limited to doing housework only. The Mongols exaggerated their love for the horse race in which young and old participate in the tens, or hundreds, and it was reported that they held a race in which 4000 horsemen participated and prizes were awarded to the winners (Schamiloglu, 1990). The keenness of the Mongols to hold horse racing matches was demonstrated by holding their own competitions and awarding prizes to the winners.

Oktay Khan's interest in sports

Oktay Khan took care of various sports such as wrestling, holding matches for them and rewarding the winner from them. Oktay Khan ordered archers, wrestlers and wrestlers to participate in the matches, and it includes everyone who won his kindness, care and giving (Kamola, 2019). Oktay Khan wanted to watch wrestling very much, and most of the wrestlers were from the Mongols, the Qipchaq, and the Qara Khitai, and when the wrestlers became famous in Khurasan and Iraq, he sent a messenger to Gormagun to send him the best wrestlers. With thirty wrestlers with their animals and fodder (Kamola, 2019; Lanning & Couling, 1973). When they arrived at the Khan Palace, they were very pleased with their appearance, and Prince Eljiday of the Jalayer tribe was present (Kamola, 2019; Lanning & Couling, 1973). He said mockingly: (It is unfortunate that their animals, fodder and supplies have been lost and wasted). The Khan said: (Bring your wrestlers to

wrestle with this team. If your followers win, we will give them five hundred bags of cash, and if they are defeated, you will pay five hundred horses. And they agreed on that (Kamola, 2019). At night, the khan summoned Phila and gave him a cup, and he satisfied him, so he put his forehead on the ground (Kamola, 2019), and he said: (In the wake of the arrival of the generous king, I hope that the divine judiciary in this case is in accordance with his desire and satisfaction) (Kamola, 2019). As for Eljiday, he summoned from his squad a person named (Urghana). In the morning the wrestlers came (Kamola, 2019). Eljiday said: (It is stipulated that each of them catch the other's leg). Then they started wrestling. Oorgana caught Phila from his four limbs. Phila said to him: Keep holding me with all your strength and ability, and do not let me escape from you) (Kamola, 2019). After that he deceived him and swirled Organa around, and then struck the ground with a severe blow, so that the rattling of his broken bones reached the ears of near and far. The khan jumped out of its place (Kamola, 2019; Lanning & Couling, 1973). And he said to Phila, (Be careful, and watch your opponent." Then Eljiday said Are you worthy of the animals and fodder or not? Then he forced him to hand over five hundred horses) (Kamola, 2019; Lanning & Couling, 1973), and ordered his elephants to be given five hundred bags of cash, except for honor and livestock. He also ordered Muhammad Shah to give five hundred bags, and to each of their followers one hundred bags (Kamola, 2019). Then he said to Muhammad Shah (Do you wrestle with Pele? He said: I will wrestle with him. Al-Khan said, You are from one city and one family) (Kamola, 2019). He granted Phila a beautiful maidservant (Lanning & Couling, 1973). Through this, we note Oktay Khan's interest in wrestling matches, selecting distinguished wrestlers, bringing them from several countries, and honoring the winners of the competitions to encourage them.

Conclusion

This study resulted in a number of important results, the most important of which are:

1. The interest of the Mongols in hunting was not because it was a major occupation in their lives and a source of livelihood for them, but because it was an important hobby that they practiced continuously in their spare time during peacetime.
2. The Mongols were keen to practice the hobby of hunting in order to sharpen their determination, liberate their positive energies, develop their mental and physical abilities, and to prevent fighting among themselves and to be ready if war broke out at any time.
3. Oktay Khan was interested in hunting and was keen to practice it by himself and with his brother Chagatai. His custom was to hunt in the three winter months of each year.
4. The Mongols were interested in several games such as equestrian and wrestling, and women participated in a number of them, as they were not restricted to men only.
5. Oktay Khan was keen to organize matches for the wrestlers, bring them from the Qara Khitai and Qipchaq countries, and encouraged them by rewarding the winners among them.

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