



ABŪ ṬĀHER SAMARQANDĪ

ABŪ ṬĀHER K̄vĀJA B. MAWLĀNĀ [MOLLĀ] MĪR ABŪ SA'ĪD K̄vĀJA **SAMARQANDĪ**, MOLLĀ (first half of the 13th/19th century), author of a book named *Ṭamarīya* (see N. D. Miklukho-Maklaĭ, *Opisanie tadzhikskikh i persidskikh rukopiseĭ Instituta vostokovedeniya*, Moscow and Leningrad, 1955, nos. 82, 83, 84) or *Samarīya* (see A. Semyonov, ed., *Sobranie vostochnykh rukopiseĭ Akademii nauk Uzbekskoĭ SSR I*, Tashkent, 1952, no. 711; A. Mirzoev and A. Boldyrev, eds., *Katalog vostochnykh rukopiseĭ Akademii Nauk Tadzhikskoĭ SSR I*, Stalinabad, 1960, no. 245). It is dedicated mainly to *mazārs* (shrines) in Samarkand and its vicinity. Our knowledge about Abū Ṭāher is restricted to the little data he gives in this work. He must have been born in Samarkand, where both his grandfather Mawlānā Mīr 'Abd-al-Ḥayy K̄vĀja (1169-1243/1755-56 to 1827-28) and his father served as *qāzī-kalān* (head judge) of the town and its *welāyat* (district) (*Samarīya*, ed. Afšār, pp. 14, 97-99). The grandfather was also its *Šayḵ-al-eslām* (*Samarīya*, p. 97). He evidently knew a *majdūb* (ascetic) named Hedāyat K̄vĀja (d. 1244/1828-29), whose tomb was already a *mazār* at the time of the composition of *Samarīya* (p. 112). The work or a substantive part of it was evidently composed in 1251/1835-36; 16 Jomādā I 1251/9 September 1835 is given as the date when the author copied the inscriptions of the famous Mazār-e Šāh[-e Zenda] (*Samarīya*, p. 58) and as the death date of Solṭān Khan K̄vĀja Adā'. Abū Ṭāher then bore the title of *moftī* (*ibid.*, p. 99) and/or *šadr* (Semyonov, *Sobranie*, no. 711; Mirzoev and Boldyrev, *Katalog*, no. 245).

Abū Ṭāher's intention was to compose a trustworthy guide to the *mazārs*,



because “now the marks and signs which the author of *Qandīya* has mentioned have become obliterated and the tombstones have become nonexistent” (*Samarīya*, p. 13). Actually he went beyond these limits, mentioning burial places of residents of Samarkand from the “post-*Qandīya*” period, i.e., from the third decade of the 10th/16th century up to his own life time. (For the chronology of the emergence of the final Persian version of the *Qandīya*, see V. Bartold, *Sochineniya VIII*, Moscow, 1973, pp. 254-64; cf. *Qandīya*, ed. Ī. Afšār, Tehran, 1334 Š./1955, intro. pp. 6-8.) Chap. 9 of *Samarīya*, devoted to *mazārs*, is one of the longest and the most detailed of the eleven in the book; it comprises 53 of 106 pages in Afšār’s edition (pp. 54-116). The discussion of mosques and *madrasas* (chap. 8, pp. 39-53) is much less detailed. Other chapters treat of the city’s name (chap. 1), founding (chap. 2), geography (chaps. 3-7), customs of visiting burial places (chap. 10), and the idealization of the deceased as exemplary figures (chap. 11). Chaps. 10-11 and the conclusion (*kātema*) are missing in published editions but are included in the Russian translation of V. Vyatkin (see bibliog.); the latter’s version of chapter 9 is also somewhat more elaborate.

The work is the most important source on Samarkand’s topography in the first half of the 13th/19th century. It also gives very important, often unique data about many persons involved in the religious life and other cultural aspects of the town and its area for about three centuries. The language of the work features many Tajikisms. Especially remarkable is the auditive usage of the perfect throughout the text. Sporadically, forms legitimized in the written language only in the 1920s are also used, e.g., the “continuous” infinitive (p. 33), or the *-gī* participle (p. 51).

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