



'ALĪ-MOḤAMMAD KHAN BAHĀDOR

'ALĪ-MOḤAMMAD KHAN BAHĀDOR, MĪRZĀ MOḤAMMAD-ḤASAN, historian of the Mughals and author of *Mer'āt-e Aḥmadī* (ca. 1111/1700-1177/1763). His ancestors had moved to India from Iran; in 1120/1708 his father, who came to the Deccan with the emperor Awrangzēb, was made the official *waqā'e'-negār* (chronicler) at Ahmadabad, which had been assigned as jagir to prince Mo'ezz-al-dīn Jahāndāršāh (emperor in 1124/1712-13). At this time Moḥammad-Ḥasan was eight or nine years old; after the death of his father in 1157/1744, he was granted his title of 'Alī-Moḥammad Khan as well as his *manṣab*, jagir, and position as *amīn*. Some time later, he fell from favor, but in 1159/1746 he was promoted to the office of *dīvān*, the last incumbent under the Mughals.

'Alī-Moḥammad Khan is best known for his history of Gujarat *Mer'āt-e Aḥmadī* (-e *ṣūba-ye Gojṛāt*), for which he began collecting material when he was appointed *dīvān*. He received some help from Mithalal Kayasth, the hereditary *ṣūba-nevīs*, but the latter died after about a year and a half. Since administrative records of the *ṣūba* had been almost destroyed by various officials, 'Alī-Moḥammad Khan had to gather information from local areas like cities, *sarkārs*, and parganas. In 1169/1756 he began systematic research and writing; the work was completed in Ṣafar, 1175/September, 1761. It is divided into a main part and a *kātema*; the former describes the history of Gujarat from pre-Islamic times to the year 1174/1760, including the defeat of the Marathas by the Abdālīs at the third battle of Panipat in 1175/1761. The



kātema contains statistical, biographical, geographical, and topographical information about Gujarat as well as curious sights and local weights and measures. The history of the sultans of Gujarat up to the Mughal annexation of the province is abridged from Sekandar Manjhu's *Mer'āt-e Sekandarī*; thereafter the author relies upon the well-known contemporary accounts of the reigns of Akbar, Jahāngīr, and Shah Jahān. He also reproduces the original text of a large number of official letters, firmans, etc., issued by the Mughal emperors. For the early years of Awrangzēb's reign, he depended on reliable informants; for the latter part and for the reigns of his successors, his source is his own personal observation. He was not only an eyewitness of the events, but was personally involved in many of them; yet he always tries to be objective. His work is devoid of metaphors and difficult expressions and is a reliable source for the history of his time.

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