



BUKHARA VIII. HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE KHANATE, 1500-1920

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There are about 70 extant works of Persian historiography which focus on the politics of the Shībanid–Abulkhayrid (Shaybanid) dynasty (r. 1500-99), the Janids (also known as Toqay-Timurids or Ashtarkhanids, r. 1599-1747), and the Maṅgits (r. 1747-1920). Their manuscripts are preserved in collections in Tashkent, Dushanbe, and St. Petersburg (Storey-Bregel, II, pp. 1115-81), and as of 2008, only a few works are available as imprints.

These historical works cover a wide range of form and contents. Hagiography, however, is not included in this survey, but it must be noted that extant hagiographical texts by far outnumber political writings (see the bibliography in Paul). The majority of these historical works were composed upon a ruler's request, and so they extol the patron's genealogy and political deeds in a highly ornate language, replete with metaphors and other rhetorical adornments. Only a few extant works were composed for a patron other than a ruler, or originated completely independent of any patronage. They often cover a much larger variety of subjects, and their style is less elevated so that



in the 19th and 20th centuries their language is sometimes even close to spoken Tajik. Up to the end of the 17th century the historical works range from the local historiography of Transoxania to the universal historiography of the Islamic world. But only in the 1830s did authors return to the writing of local historiography that does not focus on the regional ruler, and which extends to works such as biography-based anthologies of poetry and shrine catalogs. Historical works with a focus on the outside world, such as the history of the Ottoman or Russian empires, were occasionally authored after 1868, when the Khanate of Bukhara had become a Russian protectorate.

SHĪBANID HISTORIOGRAPHY.

Two Shībanid rulers were particularly interested in preserving the achievements of their rule for posterity: Moḥammad Šībāni Khan (r. 1500-10) and ‘Abdallāh Khan b. Eskandar (r. 1583-98). Most chronicles about their reigns establish their genealogy and describe their military campaigns.

Three works are particularly well known: the prose *Šaybāni-nāma* by Kamāl-al-Din Šir-‘Ali Harawi (b. ca. 1453, d. 1512), known as Malek-al-šo‘arā Benā’i (Bannā’i); the epic *Šaybāni-nāma* in Turki, composed by Mir Moḥammad-Šāleḥ K̄vārazmi (d. 1534), who served as a temporary governor of Khwarazm; and the *Šaraf-nāma-ye šāhi* (also known as *‘Abdallāh-nāma*) by Ḥāfeẓ-e Taniš b. Mir Moḥammad Boḳāri (b. ca. 1549), who was called Naḳli. The last two works are available in published editions (Storey-Bregel, II, pp. 1116-22; Hofman, pp. 294, 299-300).

Other authors have a wider concept of historiography. Faẓl-Allāh b. Ruzbehān Koṅji-Širāzi-Eṣfahāni (b. ca. 1455, d. between 1521 and 1533) was a renowned Iranian scholar who served the first Shībanid khans. His *Mehmān-nāma-ye Boḳārā*, which he completed in 1509, combined the biographies of the Shībanid rulers and their military exploits with the descriptions of numerous buildings, cities, and landscapes. But the work also comprises the author’s accounts of his many conversations with Moḥammad Šaybāni Khan and religious dignitaries about theological and legal matters. It seems that the Sunnite refugee tried to convince his patron to liberate Iran from the Shi‘ite Ṣafavids (tr. Ott, esp. pp. 41, 47).

Badr-al-Din b. ‘Abd-al-Salām b. Sayyed Ebrāhim Ḥosayni-Kašmiri was a prolific 16th-century author (Storey-Bregel, II, pp. 1133-34). In 1553-54 he entered the service of the influential Juybāri family, and dedicated his *Rawẓat al-reẓwān*



va ḥadiqat al-ḡelmān to a group of Juybāri *k̄vājas*. The *Rawzat al-reẓwān* preserves especially important information about the khanate's economic history.

The *Badā'e' al-waqā'e'* of Zayn-al-Din b. 'Abd-al-Jalil Wāṣefi (b. 1485 in Herat, d. between 1551 and 1566) was the most popular of the Shībanid historical works, if judged by the number of extant manuscript copies. Wāṣefi served several Chinghisid rulers and princes in Khorasan and Transoxania, and composed a remarkably personal account about the politics and culture of his time and his own experiences.

JANID HISTORIOGRAPHY.

Bukhara and Balk were the centers of the Janid dynasty, and several Janid rulers commissioned a "world history." The most extensive general history of Janids was written by Maḥmud b. Amir Wali (17th century; cf. Storey-Bregel, II, 1136-38), known as Amir *Ḳālat Kāsāni*, who had spent several years in India. Only parts of his *Baḥr al-asrār fī manāqeb al-akyār* are still extant, but they indicate that the work followed the model of traditional cosmography. Maḥmud b. Amir Wali presented a history of the prophets and the Islamic dynasties with a clear focus on Iran and Central Asia, but he also included a detailed description of Balkh and a memoir of his travels in India.

Chronicles dedicated to a specific ruler's reign concentrate almost exclusively on politics and military actions. Most of the authors are completely unknown, but they must have lived around 1700. In the 1950s three of these otherwise unpublished works appeared in Russian translation: the *'Obayd-Allāh-nāma* of Mir Moḥammad-Amin Boḳāri, the *Tāriḳ-e Moqim-kāni* of Moḥammad-Yusuf Monši, and the *Tāriḳ-e Abu'l-Fayẓ Ḳān* of the astrologer 'Abd-al-Raḥmān Ṭāle'.

The most popular Janid work is an anthology of chronograms (see [MĀDDA-ye TĀRIḲ](#)) with the dates of important events, which is ascribed to Āḳund Mollā Ṣaraf-al-Din (Storey-Bregel, II, pp. 1139-43). Though not an historiographical work, it is a work related to history, and the chronograms are accompanied with short biographical accounts, mainly of Central Asian rulers, scholars, and writers. The *Tāriḳ-e Rāqemi* circulated in different versions, and under various titles. In some versions, the historical events mentioned occurred between the 8th and the second half of 17th century, while other versions only draw on events between the 15th and the 17th century. The work's continued popularity is suggested by the early 20th century imprint under the title *Tāriḳ-*



e kaṭira.

MANGĪT HISTORIOGRAPHY.

About 40 historical works from the Manġit era have been preserved, and 15 works, which comprise both dynastic chronicles composed for patrons and historical works independent of patronage, were particularly influential (Epifanova, 1965; von Kügelgen, 2002a, 2002b).

Chronicles for Manġit patrons. The *Toḥfa-ye kāni* is the earliest court history, and its author Qāzi Moḥammad-Wafā b. Ṣāher Karminagi (1685-1769-70) worked probably as a librarian at the Manġit court. The chronicle focuses on Moḥammad-Raḥim (r. 1756-59) and Moḥammad Dāniāl Beg (r. 1759-85), and the author first follows how Moḥammad-Raḥim gained independence from Nāder Shah Afšār (r. 1736-47) to establish himself as Khan of Bukhara, and then describes in rare detail the enthronement ceremony and the ranks and duties of the Transoxanian elites and tribes (von Kügelgen, 2002a, esp. pp. 106-11, cf. Bregel, 2000; Sela). The work was continued up to 1782 by the otherwise unknown Dāmollā ‘Ālem Bik, but the continuation is only preserved in the work’s Dushanbe manuscript (Storey-Bregel, II, pp. 1150-52).

Mirzā Ṣādeq Monši (b. between 1753 and 1758, d. 1819-20; see Karimov) served as the secretary of Amir Šāh Morād (r. 1785-1800) and Amir Ḥaydar (r. 1800-26), and several of his works are cited by later writers. His historical works are the *Fotuḥāt-e Amir-e ma’ṣum va Amir Ḥaydar* and the *Tāriḳ-e manzum*. Each work is a *maṭnawi*, strung together from short chronograms which highlight important events between 1781-82 and 1819. Only two events are described in longer sections (von Kügelgen, 2002a, esp. pp. 120-27): Šāh Morād’s religious campaigns against the Shi’ites in Khorasan, especially in Marv, and his conflict with the Sunnite Afghan ruler Timur Shah Dorrāni (r. 1772-93; see [AFGHANISTAN X. POLITICAL HISTORY](#)).

Nāṣer-al-Din Tura al-Ḥanafī al-Ḥosayni al-Boḳāri, who was a son of the Manġit ruler Sayyed Moḳaffar-al-Din Khan (r. 1860-85), became the most renowned of the court historians of the second half of the 19th century. In the *Toḥfat al-zā’erin* Nāṣer-al-Din listed all shrines of Bukhara, and collected biographical details about the Sufis, learned men, and rulers buried there. Upon request of Bukhara’s newly founded Historical Society (*Anjoman-e tāriḳ*) Nāṣer-al-Din compiled between 1921 and 1922 the *Taḥqiqāt-e arg-e Boḳārā*, which contains valuable information about the city’s citadel since the Shībanid era. The *Āṭār*



al-salāṭin was planned as a compilation of the most dispersed historical accounts about the Shībanids, Janids, and Maṅgīts, but the work remained unfinished and ends with a list of the ten Maṅgīt rulers.

The court historians showed great loyalty to their Maṅgīt patrons. The first critical voice among them was that of Mirza ‘Abd-al-‘Azim Sāmi (d. 1907-08 or after 1914). Sāmi had served the Maṅgīts since his youth, but he was dismissed at the age of 60. He wrote two dynastic chronicles: the official *Toḥfa-ye šāhi* and the private *Tāriḳ-e salāṭin-e Maṅgītiya*. The *Toḥfa-ye šāhi* provides a positive and extensive account of the political history of Bukhara from the reign of the Janid ruler Sobḥānqoli Khan (r. 1682-1702) til 1899. In contrast, the *Tāriḳ-e salāṭin-e Maṅgītiya* is a much less detailed work, which begins with the reign of the last Janid ruler Abu’l-Fayz Khan (r. 1711-47) and ends in 1906. This private version offers a harsh critique of Amir Naṣr-Allāh Khan (r. 1827-60) and his successors, and only this version was edited and translated into Russian during the Soviet era. Sāmi (fol. 116b, tr. pp. 121, 128) condemns the khans for their killing of innocent people, and accuses them of military and economic incompetence, while he describes the Ottoman sultan ‘Abd-al-Ḥamid II (r. 1876-1909) as the epitome of a modern Muslim ruler who continues to defend the borders of the Muslim world against non-Muslims.

Chronicles for non-Maṅgīt patrons. Authors who wrote about the Maṅgīt dynasty for non-Maṅgīt patrons enjoyed of course more liberty toward their subject, and their works include some criticism of the Maṅgīt khans. ‘Āref Beg Efendi, who was an official at the Ottoman court (the French orientalist Ch. Schefer describes him as master of ceremonies, p. II), commissioned Mir ‘Abd-al-Karim b. Mir Esmā‘il Boḳāri (d. 1830-31) to compile a chronicle of the rulers of Khorasan and northern India after 1747. Boḳāri had served in the Maṅgīt chancellery of Amir Ḥaydar in Bukhara before he traveled in Khorasan and northern India. In 1804-5, he went on a diplomatic mission to Russia and the Ottoman empire, and afterwards he probably remained in Istanbul, where he got married, until his death. His chronicle covers many political events in Transoxania, Khwarazm (see [CHORASMIA ii. IN ISLAMIC TIMES](#)), and Khorasan, though the dates are often erroneous, and Boḳāri singles out rulers for their cruel and immoral behavior. But the work also includes descriptions of the regions’ inhabitants, the market goods of towns and whole regions, such as Kashmir and Tibet, as well as information about the distance between the various locations.

The *Bayān-e ba‘z-i ḥawādetāt-e Bokārā wa K̄vāqand wa Kāšġar* is the published



excerpt of a Manġit chronicle that Mirzā Šams Boġāri (b. 1804, d. after 1860) wrote at the request of the Russian Orientalist Vasilii V. Grigor'ev (1816-81). Mirzā Šams Boġāri had served several Manġit rulers, and was therefore well acquainted with the Manġit court and its internal conflicts over power. The account begins with Nāder Shah Afšār's campaign against Bukhara and Khiva in 1740, but the published excerpt starts with the detailed description of Amir Ḥaydar's accession to the throne in 1800. Although Mirzā Šams Boġāri omits many political events, his chronicle provides some interesting glimpses of the ruling elites of Kāšġar and Yārġand and of the power struggle among the Manġits, when he condemns, for example, Amir Našr-Allāh's brutality.

Independent historiography. It seems that already before the emergence of a Central Asian Islamic reform movement (*jadid*, *tajdid*, see [JADIDISM](#)), in the second half of the 19th century, some authors wrote historical works whose composition was not supported by patronage or the like. Among these independent authors Moḥammad-Ya'qub (d. after 1831), the twelfth son of the Manġit ruler Dāniāl Beg (r. 1758-85), was particularly influential. His chronicle is written in a straightforward and unadorned prose, and abounds with details about the Manġit tribe. The work is preserved in three versions that vary in length and focus, and circulated under two different titles (Miklukho-Maklaġ, III, pp. 313-19; von Kügelgen, 2002a, esp. pp. 150-57): *Golšan al-moluk* is the title of the two versions which extol the genealogies of the Turkic and Mongol rulers of Iran and Transoxania, combined with short notices about each reign, while the third version *Resāla* focuses on Manġit genealogy.

Another independent historian is Ķomuli (b. 1776-77, d. after 1847) who served as the judge (*qāzi*) of Urgut near Samarġand. He left an untitled work which today is known as *Tāriġ-e Ķomuli* (von Kügelgen, 2002a, esp. pp. 157-67), but the work was not much cited during Ķomuli's lifetime. The text begins with a lengthy account of how he, the son of a herdsman, overcame many obstacles to obtain a comprehensive education in the esoteric and exoteric sciences (*al-'olum al-zāhira wa'l-'olum al-bāṭina*). Ķomuli's intellectual autobiography is followed by the biographies of his teachers and of other Sufi sheikhs who belonged to the Naqšbandiya-Mojaddediya branch of Dahbed near Samarġand. The work includes a section dedicated to the Manġits, with many rare details about Šāh Morād whom Ķomuli greatly admired. But Ķomuli is an exception among Transoxanian historians because he discusses how in 1743 Nāder Shah Afšār attempted to end the Shi'ite-Sunnite hostilities in Najaf. Ķomuli idealistically judged Nāder Shah's political move as an effort to



implement an agreement, according to which Shi'ites and Sunnites would cease to consider each other infidels and which would thus end sectarian violence, warfare, and bloodshed (Kōmuli, fols. 187a-188b).

[Aḥmad Dāneš](#) (1827-97) is nowadays the most famous pre-Jadid author of Transoxania (von Kügelgen, 2002a, pp. 413-34). He was a man of many talents who in 1850 began his 30 years career at the Maṅḡit court as calligrapher, book illustrator, and astronomer. Between 1857 and 1874 the Maṅḡit rulers sent him three times to St. Petersburg as secretary of Bukharan embassies. His *Resāla* (the work is also known under other titles) was written between 1895 and 1897, and has more in common with a political pamphlet than with an account of political history. The work begins with Šāh Morād, and Daneš, occasionally drawing on dreams as his source of information (see [DREAMS AND DREAM INTERPRETATION](#)) describes Amir Šāh Morād and his son Amir Ḥaydar as angelic rulers who are the absolute opposites of Sayyed Moḡaffar-al-Din and his son Sayyed 'Abd-al-Aḥad Khan (r. 1885-1910). As in his other works, Dāneš propagates a Sunnite Islam which follows the teachings of the Naqšbandiya-Mojaddediya, and harshly condemns Shi'ism. Yet in the *Resāla*'s introduction he took the unconventional stand to consider unbelief (*kofr*) the reason that the non-Muslim societies are prospering. Believers are indifferent to the demands of this world because of their complete devotion to God, while unbelievers (sing. *kāfer*) are free to concentrate their efforts on improving their lives in this world because of their indifference (*ḡafla*) to God's Last Judgment (Dāneš, 1960, p. 7). It is less unusual that Dāneš adhered to a cyclical concept of history. On the one hand, events are interpreted according to their position within a society's cycle of rise and decline, which is completed every 50 and 500 years. On the other hand, the right faith is restored within 100 and 1000 year cycles. It was therefore important for Daneš to identify those who will foster renewal (*tajdid*) and development, and he counts among the reformers (sing. *mojadded*) not only ulema and rulers but also professionals. The group of professionals also comprised Christians and Jews, whom Dāneš considered unbelievers.

The historical writings of Mirzā Moḡammad Šarif Šadr, also known under his penname Šadr-e Žiā' or as Šarifjān Maḡdum (1867-1932), indicate that at the turn of the 20th century the perspective of Transoxanian historiography had widened (Epifanova, pp. 51-55). Moḡammad Šarif served as the judge in several provinces before eventually becoming in 1917 the supreme judge (*qāzi-kalān*) of the entire khanate. He supported the Jadid movement to some



extent, and compiled a number of historical works: a chronicle of the dynasties that ruled Transoxiana since Čengiz Khan (d. 1227); a short history of Iran and the Ottoman empire; and a concise history of the Islamic world, which begins with the pre-Islamic prophets and Iranian kings and covers the Islamic dynasties outside Central Asia before the Mongol conquest.

Only with Šadr-al-Din ‘Ayni (1878-1954) were ideas of the European Enlightenment introduced into Transoxanian historiography. The orphaned ‘Ayni had been a ward of Mirzā Moḥammad Šarif Šadr, and was later to become the leading figure of Soviet Tajik literature. ‘Ayni wrote his most important historical works during the khanate’s collapse in Uzbek and Persian, respectively. In *Bukārā inqilābi ta’riki uĉun mātiriyāllār*, a study of the Bukhara Revolution of 1920, ‘Ayni focused on the resistance against school reform and on the oppression of the Jadid movement activists who fought against tyranny, corruption, ignorance, and fanaticism. His *Ta’riq-e silsila-ye Manġitiya* is a study of the Manġit dynasty that reflects both his socialist convictions and the profound impact of the Jadid movement, and which offers the model of an ideal Muslim ruler. ‘Ayni accuses the ruling elites of ruining the society’s economy because they are living off the labor of others, thus causing poverty and famine. But he also criticizes the ruling elites for wreaking havoc on the foundations of Islam because they are relying on pseudoscience which in turn fosters bigotry, one of the reasons for the sectarian conflicts between Sunnites and Shi’ites.

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