



JĀRČĪ

JĀRČĪ, a public crier, announcer or herald, derived from the Mongol *jar* (proclamation, announcement) and certainly also related to the Turkish *yar* as in *yarliġ* (Mo. *jarliġ*), meaning decree or order (Doerfer, pp. 277-78; see also explicitly in Naṭanzi, pp. 310, 322: *jār farmudan*). The term *jār* is first encountered in the manual by Hendušāh Nakjavāni, in a context denoting ‘summons to service’ (e.g., p. 16). In the Persian sources of the 15th century concerning Timur’s conquests and the subsequent Timurid period, the compound *jār rasānidan/rasāndan* is found with the meaning ‘to order, summon,’ chiefly in a military context (see examples in Doerfer, *loc. cit.*, also e.g., Ḥasan b. Šehāb, pp. 32, 116, 119). The term *jārčī* is perhaps used in the late 14th century by Zayn-al-Din (p. 122) but little can be learned from the context.

Jārčīs are found listed among the members of the private household (*kāšša*) at the review of troops carried out by Solṭān Ḳalil in Fārs in 1476, with the imputed role of ‘announcers;’ in this case, however (as also in Samarqandi, p. 713), the role of shouting orders (*jār*) is assigned to the muster-masters (*tovāčīs*) rather than to the *jārčīs* (Minorsky, “Review,” pp. 154, 160, 161, *idem*, *Tadhkirat*, 36). However, the *jārčīs* certainly had their own established position, at least by the end of the 15th century (Faḏl-Allāh b. Ruzbehān Ḳonji Ešfahāni, p. 242). Both *tovāčīs* and *jārčīs* had a role in mustering and mobilizing the troops at the beginning and the end of the Safavid period (Ḳoršāh b. Qobād, pp. 7, 101; cf. Naširi, pp. 223, 258, 305; Floor, p. 242), although Floor considers that the office of *tovāči-bāši* had given way, by the 1640s, to the *jārčī-bāši*.



Criers or heralds naturally have a role in both civilian and military capacities. Evidence of their existence is best documented in the Safavid period, at the end of which *jārčīs* are described as attached to several different departments of government, but always with the same essential function of shouting loudly (*be āvāz-e boland*). Thus the *jārčīs* of the household guard (*kešik*), who came under the authority of the master of ceremony (*Ešik-āqāsi-bāši*), shouted out the names of the permanent guards of the royal household on duty every night, to be recorded by the royal guard record keepers (*kešik-nevisān*; Mirzā Rafi'ā, pp. 24, 102). Under the same authority, the *jārčīs* are described as public announcers of the Divān (Minorsky, *Tadhkirat*, p. 47), thus presumably proclaiming orders and decrees issued by the government (cf. Floor, p. 243, citing Kaempfer, *Am hofe*). *Jārčīs* announced the taxes on staple foodstuffs every week and also shouted warnings to the people to remain indoors when the Shah rode out attended by the ladies of his harem (Doerfer, p. 279, citing Chardin and Olearius, respectively). The *jārči-bāši*, at the head of several *jārčīs*, was enrolled among the senior cavalrymen in charge of arsenal (*qorčīs*) and was in attendance at the Shah's stirrup whether on journeys or in audience. At camp (*ordu*), during the more general roll call of the great *qorčīs* than the reviews conducted by the Shah himself or the *qorči-bāši*, his duty was to shout out to each of the soldiers in turn to come for inspection, who was then paid his specified wages on the approval of the *qorči-bāši* (Mirzā Rafi'ā, p. 120).

In a military context, *jārčīs* were attached to the musketeers, under the jurisdiction of the commander of the musketeers (*tofangči-bāšis*) (Mirzā Rafi'ā, p. 26, Minorsky, *Tadhkirat*, p. 48; Floor, p. 184), and also to the artillery (*tup-kāna*), under the authority of the cannon commander (*tupči-bāšis*) (Mirzā Rafi'ā, p. 32; Minorsky, p. 51; Floor, p. 196), and in each case their payments were endorsed by the viziers of the respective departments (Minorsky, pp. 73-74). In these roles, their duty was presumably to shout orders to the troops, with powerful voices to carry over the din of battle (cf. Floor, p. 266). Evidence of these roles is relatively abundant also for the period of Nāder Shah's campaigns (see e.g., Marvi, pp. 137, 172, 265, 292, 565, 594, 917, etc.).



BIBLIOGRAPHY

- G. Doerfer, *Die mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen*, Wiesbaden, 1963.
- Willem Floor, *Safavid Government Institutions*, Costa Mesa, CA, 2001.
- Ḥasan b. Šehāb Yazdi, *Jāme' al-tawāriḳ-e Ḥasani*, ed. Ḥ. Modarresi Ṭabāṭabā'i and I. Afšār, Karachi, 1987.
- Hendušāh Naḳjavāni, *Dastur al-kāteb* II, ed. 'A. 'A. 'Alizādeh, Moscow, 1976.
- Faẓl-Allāh b. Ruzbehān Ḳonji Ešfahāni, *Tāriḳ-e 'ālamārā-ye Amini*, ed. John E. Woods, London, 1992.
- Ḳoršāh b. Qobād al-Ḥosayni, *Tāriḳ-e ilči-e Neẓāmšāh*, ed. M. R. Naširi and K. Haneda, Tehran, 2000. Moḥammad Kāẓem Marvi, *'Ālam-ārā-ye Nāderi*, ed. M. A. Riāḥi, 3 vols., Tehran, 1985.
- Vladimir Minorsky, "A civil and military review in Fars in 881/1476," *BSOS* 10, 1939, pp. 927-60.
- Idem, *Tadhkirat Al-Muluk. A manual of Safavid Administration*, ed. and tr. V. Minorsky, London, 1943.
- Mo'in-al-Din Naṭanzi, *Montaḳab al-tawāriḳ-e Mo'ini*, ed. J. Aubin, *Extraits du Muntakhab al-tavarikh-i Mu'ini (Anonyme d'Iskandar)*, Tehran, 1957.
- Moḥammad Ebrāhim Naširi, *Dastur-e šahriārān*, ed. M. N. Naširi Moqaddam, Tehran, 1994.
- Mirzā Rafi'ā Anšāri, *Dastur al-moluk*, in I. Afšār, ed. *Daftar-e tāriḳ I. Majmu'a-ye asnād o manābe'-e tāriḳi*, Tehran, 2001, pp. 477-651.
- 'Abd al-Razzāq Samarqāndi, *Maṭla'-e sa'dayn* II, ed. 'A.-Ḥ. Navā'i, Tehran, 2004.
- Zayn-al-Din, *Ḍayl-e Tāriḳ-e gozida*, ed. I. Afšār, Tehran, 1993.